

INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps.

ProQuest Information and Learning
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
800-521-0600

UMI[®]

Living in Canada: Experiences of Newcomer Youth
From the Former Yugoslavia

Valerija Karlović
Mount Saint Vincent University

A thesis submitted to the Department of Child & Youth Study
in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Masters of Arts (Child & Youth Study)

April, 2004

Copyright © 2004 by Valerija Karlović



Library and
Archives Canada

Bibliothèque et
Archives Canada

0-494-06995-3

Published Heritage
Branch

Direction du
Patrimoine de l'édition

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

NOTICE:

The author has granted a non-exclusive license allowing Library and Archives Canada to reproduce, publish, archive, preserve, conserve, communicate to the public by telecommunication or on the Internet, loan, distribute and sell theses worldwide, for commercial or non-commercial purposes, in microform, paper, electronic and/or any other formats.

The author retains copyright ownership and moral rights in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

AVIS:

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque et Archives Canada de reproduire, publier, archiver, sauvegarder, conserver, transmettre au public par télécommunication ou par l'Internet, prêter, distribuer et vendre des thèses partout dans le monde, à des fins commerciales ou autres, sur support microforme, papier, électronique et/ou autres formats.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur et des droits moraux qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

In compliance with the Canadian Privacy Act some supporting forms may have been removed from this thesis.

Conformément à la loi canadienne sur la protection de la vie privée, quelques formulaires secondaires ont été enlevés de cette thèse.

While these forms may be included in the document page count, their removal does not represent any loss of content from the thesis.

Bien que ces formulaires aient inclus dans la pagination, il n'y aura aucun contenu manquant.


Canada

“Tek kad smo prošetali shvatili smo da je Halifax prilično velik grad. Mislim da će nam biti stvarno lijepo i da ćemo se brzo navići na ovaj način života i sve ostalo u Kanadi”.

“It was when we went for a walk that we realized that Halifax is a fairly big city. I think we will have a good time here and will soon get use to this lifestyle and everything else in Canada”

Valerija Karlović,
January 29, 1995.
(Diary entry, 4th day in Canada)

DEDICATION

The thesis is dedicated to newcomer children and youth from the Former Yugoslavia.

May their hopes, dreams, and happiness be our inspiration for the future.

ABSTRACT

An increasing number of studies and personalized accounts recognize significant issues of Canadian immigrant children and youth as they and their newcomer families adjust to living in Canada. Challenges involved in learning English as a second language, adapting to the Canadian public education system, facing possible isolation and loneliness, and experiencing difficulty building new friendships in Canada are some of the impediments Canadian newcomer children and youth encounter following arrival, regardless of their particular cultural background and affiliation. These and other adjustment challenges are often compounded for immigrant and refugee children and youth from countries torn by conflict, and who, understandably, bring with them the impact of their extraordinary pre-immigration circumstances, their separation from, or loss of, cherished familial and other relationships, and uncertainty about their lives in a new country.

The present research, utilizing qualitative inquiry, elicited the voices, attitudes, perspectives, and opinions of newcomer youth from the Former Yugoslavia, for the purpose of exploring, discovering, and understanding their earlier and current adjustment experiences while living in Canada. Three focus groups (two with younger youth, 13-15 years old, and one with older youth, 16-18 years old) and four individual interviews were conducted with 26 volunteer participants recruited from the Former-Yugoslavian community in the greater Halifax Region Municipality. The interview sessions were audio-taped and collected data were transcribed, translated (one individual interview was conducted in Serbo-Croatian), and analyzed utilizing systematic cross-comparative coding, by which the researcher eventually organized the findings for discussion within

four major categories: Cultural Affiliation/ Retention, Pre-Immigration Experiences, Newcomer Experiences, and Supports and Services. Recommendations, in accordance with the research findings, are presented for the participant youth and various significantly related/ impacted groups (parents, schools, media, community, educational and government sectors).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I welcome this opportunity to acknowledge supports and contributions of many individuals and groups who, in various ways, influenced the success of this research.

First of all, I would like to thank my husband, Zlatko, whose tremendous support, care, and love helped me find the strength during the difficult times of this academic journey. Our ten month old baby, Vučko, also deserves a special mention for being my daily inspiration and joy. Additionally, I want to thank my mom, dad, and sister in Bosnia and Herzegovina for their continuous, long-distance emotional support and confidence in my strengths and abilities.

I would especially like to acknowledge a remarkable contribution to this research by my Thesis Advisor, Dr. Michael Fitzgerald, whose expertise, guidance and dedication were invaluable to the quality of this research. Dr. Fitzgerald's encouragements, generosity, and his positive attitude have made my graduate studies at the Mount Saint Vincent University (MSVU) such a pleasant experience. I also owe a tremendous appreciation to the members of my Thesis Advisory Committee, Dr. Carmel French and Dr. Deborah Norris, for their supportive attitudes, collaboration, and interests in this research. Furthermore, I would like to thank Lynne Theriault from the MSVU Registrar's Office for continuous support and assistance in administrative matters, and Mary Lyon and the other members of the MSVU Graduate Studies Committee for providing funding support for this research.

I also thank my friend, Helena Gorančić-Lažetić from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), who, through long-distance correspondence in Croatia, provided a translation for a transcript of the individual interview conducted in

Serbo-Croatian.

I also want to thank the following leaders of the various community programs for their time and efforts in sharing the information about their organizations' services: Minh Tan and Mohamed Yaffa from the Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association (MISA), Jennifer Thornhill and Kathryn Bates from the YMCA Newcomer School Support Program, and Barbara Campbell from the Multicultural Association of Nova Scotia (MANS).

I would further like to thank Amy Hawkins and the Sobeys' customer services management team for their support in providing a space (community room) for all conducted interviews. I would like to extend my appreciation to Peggy Dunbar from the Diabetes Care Program of Nova Scotia (DCPNS) for provision of technical (audio-visual/ information technology) support during the research.

I also want to acknowledge my team members from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Program at the IWK Health Centre, especially Laurence, Bruce, Carol, Brad, Melanie, Gen, Cathie, Dean, Tammy, Margie, Sara, Gustin, and Mike D. for their supportive attitudes, professional insights, and genuine interest in my research.

I am also thankful to my friends and child/ youth study colleagues, Sonia Cameron-Hage and Lisa Gallant, whose encouragements and shared academic and research experiences helped me to achieve my goals.

Finally, and most importantly, I wish to express my enormous gratitude to the newcomer youth from the Former Yugoslavia who shared their stories with me and contributed greatly in making this research a valuable educational resource. I also thank the youths' parents and families for their trust, co-operation and interests in this study.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	4
Purpose of the Study.....	7
Rationale For the Study.....	7
Research Questions.....	9
Personal Interest.....	9
Definitions of Terms.....	10
 CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	
Canadian Immigration.....	12
Newcomer Children and Youth.....	13
Barriers to Adjustment.....	14
<i>Language</i>	15
<i>School</i>	15
<i>Loneliness, Isolation, and Alienation</i>	16
<i>Generational Differences and Tensions</i>	17
<i>Pre-Immigration Experiences</i>	18
Children and Youth from the Former Yugoslavia.....	19
<i>Effects of War</i>	19
<i>Children's Identified Needs</i>	20
<i>Contemporary Concerns</i>	21
<i>Canadian Settlement Experience</i>	22
 CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY	
Sample.....	24
Qualitative Method.....	26
<i>Principles and Purposes</i>	26
<i>Rigor and Credibility</i>	27
Focus Group Interviews.....	28
Individual Interviews.....	31
Visual Images.....	33
Procedure/ Data Gathering.....	34
Data Analysis.....	37
Ethical Considerations.....	39

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS	41
Cultural Affiliation/ Retention	41
<i>Cultural Pride</i>	41
<i>Cultural Connections</i>	42
<i>Cultural Features/ Customs/ Traditions</i>	44
<i>Cultural Stereotypes</i>	51
Pre-Immigration Experiences	52
<i>Effects of War</i>	52
<i>Home-Country Experiences</i>	58
Newcomer Experiences	59
<i>Experiencing Difference</i>	59
<i>Adjustment Experiences and Challenges</i>	62
<i>Acquisition of English as a Second Language</i>	70
<i>Adoption of New Country</i>	74
<i>Living Between Cultures</i>	83
Supports and Services	85
<i>Utilizing Supports and Services</i>	85
<i>Suggested Supports and Needs</i>	93
 CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS	 96
Research Question 1	96
Research Question 2	99
Research Question 3	101
Research Question 4	105
Research Question 5	107
Research Question 6	109
 Limitations of the Research	 110
 Recommendations	
Recommendations for Future Research	111
Recommendations for Newcomer Youth	112
Recommendations for Parents/ Families	113
Recommendations for Child and Youth Care (CYC) Workers/ CYC Programs	113
Recommendations for Schools (Teachers/ School Administrators)	114
Recommendations for Community Services/ Supports/ Programs	115
Recommendations for Media	116
Recommendations for Government	117
 REFERENCES	 118

APPENDIXES (with selected accompanying translations*)	127
A) List of Newcomer Programs, Services and Supports in the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM).....	128
B) Sample Interview Questions.....	131
C) Letter of Introduction/ Focus Group*	133
D) Informed Consent/ Focus Group*	138
E) Background Information Form.....	141
F) Letter of Introduction/ Individual Interview*.....	144
G) Informed Consent/ Individual Interview*.....	149
H) Picture-Taking Process Instructions.....	154
I) Selected Sample of Independent Transcript Translations.....	157
 FIGURES	 159
1) Sample Profile.....	160
2) Selected Sample of Coding.....	162
 ILLUSTRATIONS	 164
1) Traditionally Decorated Easter Eggs.....	165
2) <i>Šape</i> – Traditional Cookies From the Former Yugoslavia.....	167
3) YMCA Newcomer School Support Program Site.....	169

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Every year, Canada becomes a new home for more than 200,000 immigrants from throughout the world (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, [CIC], 2002). Immigrants come to Canada for variety of reasons. Many choose to come to be reunited with their family members, who are already established in Canada ('family class' category), or for improved economic prosperity and business opportunity ('business/ economic class' category) (CIC, 2002). Other immigrants are in need of protection and often have no choice but to flee from their countries of origin, in order to escape war, violence, discrimination, persecution, or similar sources of danger ('refugee class' category) (CIC, 2000).

Many immigrants and refugees are children and youth. More than 20% of all Canadian newcomers (both immigrants and refugees) in the last decade are children from 0-14 years of age, while approximately 15% are youth between the ages of 15-24 years (CIC, 1999; 2002a). Upon arrival in a new country, many immigrant and refugee children and adolescents are often exposed to various environmental and psycho-social challenges, involving acquiring a new language (Fillmore, 2000; Samuel & Verma, 1992; Seat, 2000), school adjustment and achievement, relationships with peers (Bhattacharya, 2000; Grimaud, 1993; Olsen, 2000; Samuel & Verma, 1992), family and community tensions (Assanand, 1998; Fitzgerald & Rouvalis, 1995), identity conflict (Fantino & Colak, 2001; Spencer & Markstrom-Adams, 1990), prejudice or discrimination (Kaprielian-Churchill & Churchill, 1994; Viadero, 1998), poverty (Beiser et al., 1998, 2002), and overall adjustment in their respective new locales (Igoa, 1995; Kunz &

Hanvey, 2000; Miller, 1999; Nguyen et al., 1999; Seat, 2000). For many children and youth, making a new life in a new country may well be a stressful experience.

Particularly vulnerable are immigrant and refugee children and youth from war-torn countries. These children and youth may have been exposed to traumatic events in their countries of origin such as witnessing killings, rapes, shelling, and bombardments. War-affected children and youth come to Canada from widely diverse countries that suffer conflict, including Afghanistan, Sierra Leone, Uganda, Lebanon, Mozambique, El Salvador, and the Former Yugoslavia (Machel, 2000; Ousseimi, 1995). The impact of war has often had a damaging psycho-social affect both upon the development of children and adolescents, as well as their overall well-being (Machel, 2000; Ousseimi, 1995; Thabet et al., 2002). Most researchers who study war-affected children and youth focus on psychological effects of war and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) reactions among children and youth from war countries (Papageorgiou et al., 2000; Thabet et al., 2002). Beyond the demographic overviews and reports about refugee children and youth in and from war-zone countries (CIC, 1999a, 2002a; UNICEF, 2001, 2002;), there are considerably fewer studies that provide finer identification and description of the current socio-emotional adjustment of these children and their present-day needs following their arrival to a new country, or of responsive services available to these children and youth (Fantino & Colak, 2001). One such recently arrived group are Canadian newcomer children and youth from countries of the Former Yugoslavia.

There is extensive research available about war in the Former Yugoslavia (1991-1995) and recent conflicts in Serbia and Montenegro, including Kosovo (1999). The region's political structure and conditions, ethnic composition, and the eventual

disintegration of the country by war, have each received intense study by numerous scholars (Akhavan & Howse, 1995; Andryszewski, 2000; Cohen, 1993; Denitch, 1996; Flint, 1996; Greenberg & Isaac, 1997). Most of the research about the war children and youth of the Former Yugoslavia, however, has been conducted in the region of the war itself, comprised of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, and Serbia-Montenegro (Ajdukovic & Ajdukovic, 1993; Dybdahl, 2001; Goldstein et al., 1997; Kuterovac-Jagodic, 2000; Moreno, 2000; Nikolic-Ristanovic, 2001; Shapiro, 2000; Smith et al., 2001; Trebjesanin et al., 2000; UNICEF, 1994).

Among the aforementioned research, considerable focus has been given to the psychological effects of war on children and youth of the Former Yugoslavia, mostly comprising statistical reports about the children's and the youths' mental health related to PTSD (Ajdukovic, 1998; Ajdukovic & Ajdukovic, 1993; Dybdahl, 2001; Goldstein et al., 1997; Papageorgiou et al., 2000; Smith et al., 2001). Such quantitative measures have additionally been employed to assess children's attitudes about war (Kuterovac-Jagodic, 2000). Only a relatively few studies, however, have addressed children's experiences of war through qualitative investigation and, in doing so, provided children of the Former Yugoslavia with the opportunity to express their lived experiences and developed perspectives on the war in their own words and/ or through various creative arts activities (Moreno, 2000; Ousseimi, 1995; Trebjesanin et al., 2000; UNICEF, 1994). The need for measuring, assessing, and understanding the well-being of children from a 'child-centred' (where children express their experiences and views about themselves in their own words) rather than 'adult-centred' (which focuses on parents' and other adults' views about children) perspective has been critically overlooked (Andrews & Ben-Arieh,

1999). Such child-centred, qualitative studies are needed in order to learn and understand current daily experiences of refugee and immigrant children and youth of the Former Yugoslavia living not only within, but also outside of the region. In this context, there is a notable lack of literature related to the adjustment, encountered challenges, needs, available support, and overall lived experiences of Canadian newcomer children and youth of this cultural group.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore, discover, and understand the daily experiences of newcomer youth from the Former Yugoslavia, currently living in the greater Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM). In order to gain a sense of the general well-being of these youth, this study elicited their expressed perspectives as they recounted their experiences from the Former Yugoslavia in relation to their present day experiences living in Canada. The present study aimed to identify the youths' expressed needs related to their adjustment to Canadian society. By employing qualitative approaches, the study looked to engage the voices of Canadian newcomer youth from the Former Yugoslavia and allowed their life stories to be a primary factor in developing recommendations for appropriate supports pertinent to this particular group of young newcomers.

Rationale For the Study

Immigrants from the countries of the Former Yugoslavia comprised one of the top ten cultural groups who arrived in the HRM between 1991-1996 (CIC, 2000), with

another large group of immigrants and refugees from this region arriving in Nova Scotia following the Kosovo crisis in 1999 (CIC, 1999b). Many newcomer youth from the Former Yugoslavia, therefore, currently reside in the HRM and participate daily within the community attending schools, learning English, and making friends in a new country. Daily experiences of these youth constitute part of a broader adjustment process which may well affect their overall well-being. The adjustment of these youth, however, is complicated by the region and circumstances from which they came. Many of these youth, having suffered the deeply damaging effects of military conflict, are left with feelings of loss, uprootedness, displacement, fear, anger, helplessness and hopelessness (Ajdukovic & Ajdukovic, 1993; Dybdahl, 2001; Goldstein et al., 1997; Moreno, 2000; Sherrow, 2000), that, in turn, become compounded by recognized everyday challenges related to new settlement. Among such challenges, the acquiring of an additional language, learning of new social practices and norms, attending new educational institutions, and developing new social acquaintances and friendships (Bettencourt, 2002; Chamberlain, 2001; Fantino & Colak, 2001; Kilbride et al., 2000; Seat, 2000; Statistics Canada, 2001; YMCA, 1995;) may, for some, be undertaken while emotional and/ or psychological scars/ stresses from their former experiences remain unattended within themselves, their families, or their communities. Such particular issues of adjustment, in the context of the background effects emanating from the Balkan conflict, needed to be addressed in order to increase the quality of community services and supports for the newcomer youth of the Former Yugoslavia. A qualitative approach was applied with a view of hearing the voices of these youth, recognizing the importance of their experiences and representation of their expressed needs.

Research Questions

- 1) What meaning does their cultural affiliation have for youth of the Former Yugoslavia (YFY) now living in Canada?
- 2) In what way(s), if any, do YFY view their lives and well-being as having been affected by their experiences of the war?
- 3) How do YFY view their current daily experiences of living in Canada?
- 4) What particular needs do YFY identify in relation to their current socio-emotional well-being and overall development?
- 5) What awareness do YFY have of programs, services and supports available to newcomers within the community (Appendix A)?
- 6) Are there kinds of services and supports, currently undeveloped or unavailable, that YFY would suggest as useful to them?

Personal Interest

The inspiration for the proposed research came from my personal experiences of being a Canadian immigrant from the Former Yugoslavia. I came to Canada 9 years ago from Serbia and Montenegro where I was a Bosnian war refugee for several years prior to immigrating to Canada. I became a refugee when I was 18 and by the age of 21 I had also experienced the challenges of living as a young immigrant. Even though I am a Canadian citizen today, I still have vivid memories of living as a new immigrant in Canada. Sometimes, I still consider myself a newcomer, depending on the novelty experiences I encounter on a daily basis.

My personal socio-emotional challenges in Canada (such as missing my family

back home) inspired me to turn my focus in child and youth study to refugee and immigrant children and youth living in Canada, particularly to newcomer children and youth from the Former Yugoslavia. Due to my lived experiences of war in the Former Yugoslavia, and later experience of being first a refugee and then a Canadian immigrant, I feel 'culturally attuned' (Hoskins, 1999) to work with children and youth from this region. I feel a need to reach out to these children and youth and to become an advocate for this particular group of young newcomers in the HRM. This research is my contribution to a better life in Canada for these children and youth who, innocently, have experienced the extraordinary injustice of war.

Definitions of Terms

Youth	For the purpose of this research, the term refers to persons between twelve and eighteen years of age, inclusive.
Newcomers	For the purpose of this research, the term refers to all immigrants (including refugees) who arrived to Canada within the last ten years.
Immigrants	Persons who come to a new country for the purpose of permanent settlement.*
Refugees	Persons who flee their country of origin for safety reasons, such as to escape war, political oppression, or religious/ ethnic persecution.*
Adjustment	For the purpose of this research, the term refers to newcomers' experiences in a new country.
Settlement	Newcomers' establishment in a new country. *
Former Yugoslavia (ex-Yugoslavia)	The term refers to the now disintegrated country, the area of which is currently comprised of the following new countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia, and Macedonia.
Balkan conflict	For the purpose of this research, the term refers to the war in the

Former Yugoslavia.

- Cultural affiliation** For the purpose of this research, the term refers to one's connectedness with his/her culture of origin.
- Well-being** For the purpose of this research, the term refers to children's and youth's states of happiness, health, and felt success.*
- Pre-immigration** For the purpose of this research, the term refers to that period of newcomers' lives prior to immigrating to Canada.

*Adapted from Your Dictionary at: <http://www.yourdictionary.com>

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Canadian Immigration

One of the most recognized characteristics of Canada as a country is its federal multicultural policy, which makes Canada "a land of many cultures" (CIC, 1997, p.8). It is estimated that every sixth Canadian resident was born outside of Canada (CIC, 2002). Canada's immigration programs were established in 1867, and, to the present day, continue to attract, welcome and help immigrants from all over the world (CIC, 2000a, 2001). It is often recognized that Canada is a "nation of immigrants"(CIC, 1997, p.8) who, with their diverse experiences, talents, skills, and customs, help to enrich Canada's social, cultural and economic development (Arthur & Bayat, 2001; CIC, 2000a, 2002).

Every year Canada accepts more than 200,000 immigrants (CIC, 2002). Many of these immigrants come to Canada to be reunited with their families who already live in Canada. Under the immigration policy, these immigrants obtain visas to enter the country through the 'family class' category (CIC, 2002a). A large number of immigrants (almost 58 %) are skilled workers and business entrepreneurs who enhance Canada's labour market and economic growth (CIC, 2002a). These immigrants fall under the 'economic class' category of Canadian immigration policy (CIC, 2002a). Another important Canadian immigration category is the 'refugee class', with its humanitarian objective to assist people in need of protection from war, political conflict and violence, torture, discrimination, or persecution (CIC, 1999, 1999a, 2002a).

Whether they are joining their families, are skilled workers, business people, or

refugees, all recently arrived immigrants are often collectively referred to as 'newcomers'. The term is widely used in the literature and publications of federal immigration programs, including immigration agencies and organizations within local communities helping immigrants to settle successfully in Canada (Arthur, 1999; CIC, 1997; MISA, 1999; YMCA, 2002).

Newcomer Children and Youth

One third of all immigrants who come to Canada each year are children and youth and many of these young immigrants are refugees from countries of political conflict and strife (CIC, 1999, 1999b). It is often recognized in the literature concerning immigrants that adjusting to a new country can be a challenging and difficult experience for both immigrant and refugee children and youth (Bettencourt, 2002; Kilbride et al., 2000; Kunz & Hanvey, 2000; Seat, 2000). Fantino & Colak (2001), however, further emphasize the compelling struggle that many refugee children and youth from areas of war and armed conflict experience as they look to resettle and adapt to a new society. This is especially so for children and youth old enough, and therefore more likely, to have experienced the terror of war before emigrating from their respective regions of origin (Kilbride et al., 2000; Samuel & Verma, 1992; Seat, 2000). Whether they are children or youth, immigrants or refugees, however, studies suggest that many young newcomers may well experience similar psycho-social challenges in adjusting to a new society (Chamberlain, 2001; Igoa, 1995; Kaprielian-Churchill & Churchill, 1994; Kilbride, et al., 2000; Kunz & Hanvey, 2000; Seat, 2000). Increasingly, literature addressing immigrant and refugee experiences places the discussion of settlement and adjustment in the context of 'models

of cultural change' (Santrock, 1998): acculturation (Nguyen et al., 1999; Williams & Berry, 1991), assimilation (Miller, 1999) and integration (Chamberlain, 2001; Kilbride et al., 2000; Samuel & Verma, 1992; Seat, 2000). According to Santrock (1998):

Acculturation is cultural change that results from continuous, firsthand contact between two distinctive cultural groups.

Assimilation occurs when individuals relinquish their cultural identity and move into the larger society.

Integration involves the maintenance of cultural integrity as well as movement to become an integral part of the larger culture. (p.280-281)

For most newcomer children and particularly youth, their adjustment and adaptation to a new society is a process of acculturation (Nguyen et al., 1999; Williams & Berry, 1991) and integration (Chamberlain, 2001; Kilbride et al., 2000; Samuel & Verma, 1992; Seat, 2000), and less often a process of assimilation (Miller, 1999) as their culture of origin often continues to play an important stabilizing role in their new lives (Santrock, 1998).

Barriers to Adjustment

Studies of Canadian immigrant and refugee children and youth show that the processes of adjustment to Canadian society for these young newcomers is often accompanied by such stressors, challenges, and potential barriers as a new education system (Bettencourt, 2002; Fantino & Colak, 2001; Seat 2000; Statistics Canada, 2001), an additional language (Chamberlain, 2001; Kilbride et al., 2000; Seat, 2000), racism and discrimination (Kaprielian-Churchill & Churchill, 1994; Kilbride et al., 2000; Kunz & Hanvey, 2000), pre-immigration conditions and circumstances (Kilbride et al., 2000; Seat, 2000), poverty (Beiser et al., 1998, 2002), loneliness, isolation, alienation

(Chamberlain, 2001; Seat, 2000; YMCA, 1995), and intergenerational conflicts within families (Abu-Laban et al., 2001; Assanand, 1998; Fitzgerald & Rouvalis, 1995; Kaprielian-Churchill & Churchill, 1994; Kilbride, et al., 2000).

Language

Canadian immigrant children and youth are often immediately faced with the challenge of communicating in one or both of Canada's official languages. As one young newcomer expressed, "My main challenges when I came to Canada were to learn English and to make friends" (13 yr. old Canadian immigrant boy from Columbia, YMCA, 1999, p. 21). In this respect, Kunz & Hanvey (2000) reported that "most immigrant children and youth can not speak English or French when they arrive" (p.6), although research does indicate that immigrant youth between the ages of 15 and 24 are more likely to speak some English before arriving in Canada owing to previous schooling (Kunz & Hanvey, 2000). Notwithstanding, such earlier schooling may, itself, have been irregular or severely disrupted, given the conditions under which these children and their families left their former homes, and, in terms of English or French proficiency, immigrant and refugee children and youth often remain at great disadvantage when starting school in Canada.

School

School adaptation in Canada is often difficult for both newcomer children and youth related to learning a new language, adjusting to a new, Canadian curriculum, and making new friends (Igoa, 1995; Kaprielian-Churchill & Churchill, 1994; Kunz & Hanvey, 2000). Additionally, newcomer children and youth often become subjects of

lack of understanding, racism, or discrimination (Bettencourt, 2002; Chamberlain, 2001). As an immigrant teenage girl from Kuwait explains: "They [Canadian peers in school] do not understand what it is like to be different. I often felt judged because of my culture" (YMCA, 1999, p.13). Similarly, Canadian immigrant youth, in a study by Kunz & Hanvey (2000), spoke of racism when asked about negative features of Canada, and recounted being discriminated against in school by both peers and teachers. In this regard, Kilbride et al. (2000) and others (Chamberlain, 2001; Eisner-Zigman, 1993; Kaprielian-Churchill & Churchill, 1994; Kunz & Hanvey, 2000) call for educational strategies aimed at dispelling racist attitudes and behaviours, and meaningfully recognizing and including newcomer students, beginning with improved preparation and ongoing training of educators and administrators. As a newcomer youth from Iran expressed: " I think that one thing that would make this whole experience easier, would be if teachers talked more in class about other countries and how life is for newcomers" (YMCA, 1999, p.9).

Loneliness, Isolation, and Alienation

Loneliness, isolation and alienation are common problems for newcomer children and particularly youth (Kunz & Hanvey, 2000; Seat, 2000). In 1995, 35 % of immigrant youth who participated in a study by YMCA of Greater Halifax/ Dartmouth reported that loneliness, isolation and/ or alienation was a "major problem" for newcomers, with an additional 58 % identifying these social factors as "sometimes a problem" (p. 34). One participant in a study about factors affecting the settlement and adaptation of Canadian newcomer youth (Seat, 2000) stated that "he felt abandoned and ignored as a student and set in the back row of his classroom" (p.26). Kunz & Hanvey

(2000) note that social isolation is often linked to a young newcomer's ability to speak English or French (i.e., be able to communicate effectively) and may well also reflect deeper sadness related to the effects of transition, displacement, the unfamiliar, and the missing of relatives and friends who remain in their countries of origin.

During difficult times, young newcomers seek comfort from their families, friends, community members and religious organizations (Kilbride et al., 2000). Since both immigrant parents and their children are posed with the broader challenge of adjusting to a new society, it might be assumed that newcomer children and youth would mostly likely turn to their parents to talk about their concerns and problems. One study suggests, however, that many newcomer youth feel that a friend of the same ethnic origin might best provide support when discussing such issues (YMCA, 1995). The most recent young immigrants, however, often have difficulty seeking any support (Kunz & Hanvey, 2000). Kunz and Hanvey (2000) suggest that this may be "because it takes time to develop close friendships and those that they had developed earlier were left behind when they immigrated" (p.6). Talking to parents about personal adjustment issues and concerns is not always the first choice for young newcomers because parents often have different perspectives about such issues, and these intergenerational differences and tensions may cause additional stress (Assanand, 1998; Fitzgerald & Rouvalis, 1995; Kunz & Hanvey, 2000; YMCA, 1995).

Generational Differences and Tensions

In general, newcomer children and youth tend to integrate into a new society at a greater pace than their parents. Within the process of trying to 'fit into' their newly adopted society and peer group, however, newcomer children often accept and

incorporate mainstream Canadian values, customs, and beliefs within their daily lives and relationships that may serve as the source of discord within their families and ethnic communities (Assanand, 1998; YMCA, 1999). Children's closeness to Canadian culture may be perceived by parents as a sign that their children are abandoning their culture of origin and, therefore, distancing themselves from the cultural values of their parents (Assanand, 1998). In turn, generational tensions and conflicts between parents and children may develop that undermine the stability and well-being of families (Fitzgerald & Rouvalis, 1995; Kilbride, 2000; YMCA, 1995). Family communication and understanding may be adversely affected as children acquire fluency in a new language earlier or more rapidly than their parents (Berman, 2001), particularly while some parents insist on communicating in native language within the family home (Assanand, 1998). Newcomer parents are often dealing with parenting dilemmas in their new country that involve different styles of living, values, and beliefs within their new society which may dramatically contrast with, and be viewed as undermining of the cultural values and practices of their former communities and daily family lives (Assanand, 1998).

Pre-Immigration Experiences

Pre-immigration conditions and circumstances have been highly correlated to the successful or maladaptive adjustment of new immigrants (Kilbride et al., 2000), especially for refugee children and youth exposed to the traumatic events of war, or other forms of human tragedy (Seat, 2000). For these children, the inherent challenges of adjustment to a new country may be significantly compounded by their distressing former experiences, at times involving deep cultural/ ethnic/ religious frictions that have received considerable media attention and been the focus of increasing research study

(Fantino & Colak, 2001; Kaprielian-Churchill & Churchill, 1994).

Children and Youth from the Former Yugoslavia

Effects of War

Children and youth of war have received global attention, particularly from concerned human/ children's rights groups, including United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Save the Children, War Child (Sherrow, 2000), and have been the focus of numerous international studies that document the tragic effects upon victims of such conflicts (Berman, 2001; Garbarino, 1993, 1993a; Jones, 2000; Ladd & Cairns, 1996; Ousseimi, 1995). It has been widely recognized that children and youth are often the most innocent victims of war, suffering psychological and physical injuries, disruption of parental care, and displacement (Garbarino, 1993). In 1999, it was sadly reported that "in the past ten years two million children have been killed in armed conflict, six million have been badly injured and countless children have been forced to witness or even take part in horrible acts of violence" (Guardian, 1999, C/4).

The Former Yugoslavia represents a country in which children, youth, and their families, have been recognized as "multiple victims of war" (Nikolic-Ristanovic, 2001, p.577), within a region that has recently experienced the civil wars in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina (1991-1995) and the 'Kosovo crisis' in Serbia-Montenegro (1999) (Akhavan & Howse, 1995; Andryszewski, 2000; Cohen, 1993; Denitch, 1996; Flint, 1996; Greenberg & Isaac, 1997). The impact of these catastrophic regional wars has profoundly affected all ethnic and cultural groups involved including Croats, Serbs,

Muslims, and Albanian-Kosovars. During the war in Bosnia, alone, more than 200, 000 people were killed, including 17,000 children (Greenberg & Isaac, 1997). Among the survivors, in all countries of the Former Yugoslavia that were affected by war, children and youth particularly suffered "injuries, emotional trauma, poverty, and homelessness" (Sherrow, 2000, p. 41).

Although military and political analysts, media pundits, and scholars have offered their assessment of the war in the Former Yugoslavia (Andrzejewski, 2000; Cohen, 1993; Denitch, 1994; Flint, 1996; Greenberg & Isaac, 1997), a deeper and more personal understanding of its effects has come from the voices of its young survivors, such as ten year old Aleksandar, who, having experienced war during the 1999 NATO bombing of Serbia and Montenegro, commented: "War is when we are all sad, when bombs are falling and when we are all afraid" (Trebjesanin et al., 2000, p. 371). These negative psychological, social and emotional effects of war on children and youth have been the focus of considerable research over the past decade (Ajdukovic, 1998; Ajdukovic & Ajdukovic, 1993; Goldstein et al., 1997; Papageorgiou et al., 2000), that not only documents the experiences of, but poignantly highlights the wide-ranging needs of war's youngest victim survivors.

Children's Identified Needs

Through working with refugee children in Croatia, Ajdukovic and Ajdukovic (1993) identified several distressing circumstances that these children faced: the loss of important others, the loss of physical capacity, the loss of parental support and protection, the loss of home, living with distressed adults, family separation, missed educational opportunities, poor physical environments, malnutrition, and possible

incarceration. Refugee children from Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo were also identified as having lived through similar traumatic war experiences and facing like circumstances in their lives (Dybdahl, 2001; Goldstein et al., 1997; Moreno, 2000). Not surprisingly, many researchers who have studied children and youth from the war zones of the Former Yugoslavia have found a positive relationship between traumatic war experiences and such mental health problems as depression, anxiety, and other PTSD symptoms (Ajdukovic, 1998; Goldstein et al., 1997; Papageorgiou et al., 2000; Smith et al., 2001). Additionally, Goldstein et al. (1997) reported that many children experienced sadness and hopelessness about their future believing that "they would never be happy" (p.875) and that "life was not worth living" (p.875).

Contemporary Concerns

The lingering effects of war and distress upon children and youth of the Former Yugoslavia, while gaining some attention, have been less documented in the research literature (Ajdukovic, 1998; Moreno, 2000; Papageorgiou et al., 2000). As earlier outlined, (see Barriers to Adjustment), research describing the adjustment of newcomers to Canada, including certain individual, familial, and community challenges, has provided rich information that speaks to issues of settlement and general adaptation to a new society. As Ousseimi (1995) has noted, "For a long time, Yugoslavia's children will carry memories of hiding in a bomb shelter and being scared" (p.77). Many of these children are adolescents now, having had to leave their countries of origin and seek refugee or immigrant status elsewhere in the world.

Canadian Settlement Experience

Many children and youth from the Former Yugoslavia live in Canada today. Most of the families from Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia came to Canada between 1991-1996, following the war in these regions (CIC, 1999). Immigrants and refugees from Serbia and Montenegro mostly arrived in 1999 after Kosovo conflict (CIC, 1999a). Between 1999-2001, 15 % (12,725) of all refugees who came to Canada in that period were from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia-Montenegro (CIC, 2002a). During the same period, additional 9,000 people from these regions came under the immigration categories other than refugees (CIC, 2002a). Out of all immigrants who came to Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) between 1991-1996, 5 % (265) were from countries of the Former Yugoslavia (CIC, 2000). Today, Halifax is home to approximately 200 newcomer families from the Former Yugoslavia, including about 100 people from Kosovo (Arthur, 2000).

According to reports by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (2000b), newcomers from the Former Yugoslavia have settled well into the community of the greater HRM. However, there are no detailed reports about the challenges and experiences that these immigrants encounter daily in the process of adjusting to Canadian society. Furthermore, there is lack of knowledge about youth from the Former Yugoslavia in Canada and the greater HRM. Most Canadian studies about immigrant youth generally focus on adjustment issues and challenges of all young Canadian newcomers as a mosaic of different cultural groups (Kilbride et al., 2000; Kunz & Hanvey, 2000; YMCA, 1995). Youth from the Former Yugoslavia are included in such studies, however, only little attention has been given to specific circumstances of young newcomers from this region

(Kunz & Hanvey, 2000). The most valuable projects that include these youth are perhaps those that portray lives, experiences, attitudes and thinking of these young newcomers who have come from war countries and are now living in Canada. One such project was conducted by YMCA of Greater Halifax/ Dartmouth Newcomers School Program (YMCA, 1999). This resulting booklet, "School Stories", provides an absorbing collection of life accounts told by immigrant youth from different countries, including youth from the Former Yugoslavia. Such stories are a valuable source of knowledge about young immigrants' experiences in Canada, similar to a famous story from a diary of one 12 year old girl from Sarajevo who, in her words, told the world about the dramatic events of her life during the war (Filipovic, 1994). Qualitative approaches are particularly well-suited to gathering the voices of these young immigrants, as they express and represent their lived experiences and current needs.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The sample consisted of 26 newcomer youth (fourteen males and twelve females) from countries of the Former Yugoslavia (predominantly from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia-Montenegro, and Slovenia). All youth were between the ages of 13-18 years, inclusive, and currently reside with their families of the ex-Yugoslavian community within the greater Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM). In addition to possessing cultural origin and continuing affiliation with respective countries of the Former Yugoslavia, youth were selected for the sample group owing to their greater likelihood (by merit of age) to recount events/ effects of the Balkan war, and of their subsequent new settlement in Canada. Additionally, the sample group youth, again by merit of age, were deemed to be more likely to offer greater articulation and perspective on matters related to their adjustment experiences and current needs than would have younger children, as other studies addressing immigrant youth have found (Kilbride et al., 2000; Samuel & Verma, 1992; Seat, 2000).

All participants within the sample have immigrated to Canada within the last eleven years (most arrived between 1999-2001) and were between the ages of three and fourteen at the time of immigration/ arrival . Most of the youth and their families had immigrated directly from their predominant countries of origin, although a few resided in other host countries en route to eventual immigration to Canada.

The majority of youth participants identified Serbo-Croatian/ Bosnian as their

mother tongue while few spoke Slovenian, Albanian and German as a first or additional language. Half of all participants in the research felt most comfortable speaking in English, while others felt equally comfortable speaking in English or their mother tongue, yet notably, approximately one quarter of youth participants did indicate on their Background Information form an overall preference to speak their mother tongue in given situations. Only one participant, with regard to the individual interviews, expressed a clear preference to speak in a home language (this presented no particular difficulty for the researcher, constituted an option offered to all participants, and served as a general enhancement to the held discussion).

All participants were attending schools in the local HRM (grades 6-12), with the exception of one participant who was attending first year at university. More than half of the participants had never received any services or supports for newcomer families in the community, although many were familiar, at least by name, with several helping organizations in the HRM. (For a summary of the demographic information see Figure 1)

Participants were divided into two age groups, a younger group (13-15 years) and an older group (16-18 years). Due to the large number of younger participants (18), two focus groups were conducted for these youth (nine participants in each), while one focus group was held with the older participants (total of eight). Each focus group consisted of an approximately equal number of male and female participants. The individual, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 4 participants, two from each of the sample age groups.

Qualitative Method

Principles and Purposes

A qualitative approach was utilized in this study as the most appropriate method to explore and identify the perceptions, thoughts, and perspectives of youth related to their experiences of the events in the Former Yugoslavia, their new settlement and adjustment to living in Canada, and the current nature and quality of their daily lives as newcomer youth from the ex-Yugoslavian community. Given that the aim of the present research was to elicit the first hand accounts and personal lived experiences of the study participants, Berg's (1998) view that qualitative research "refers to meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things" (p.3), guided the qualitative intention and direction of the study.

Denzin & Lincoln (1994) state that "qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (p.2). In the present study, the *phenomena* that the researcher attempted to *make sense of* and/ or *interpret* were the daily experiences of Canadian newcomer youth from the Former Yugoslavia, in terms of the personal meanings that they bring to these experiences. This qualitative approach to the study ensured *capturing the individual's point of view, examining the constraints of everyday life and securing rich descriptions* (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998).

Qualitative researchers emphasize context, an inductive approach, and the value of examining process (Bogdan and Biklen, 1998). As such, findings in qualitative research are placed " in a social, historical, and temporal context" (Patton, 1990, p.40), since the researcher was concerned with a deeper understanding of how the participants

have developed their meanings of topics and experiences under study (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). In the present study, for example, one of the concerns was how did newcomer youth from the Former Yugoslavia relate their current experiences to those prior to immigrating to Canada. This consideration of social, historical, and temporal factors in qualitative research is also known as 'context sensitivity' (Patton, 1990).

The inductive approach is another recognized characteristic of qualitative research (Glesne, 1999; Patton, 1990; Strauss, 1987). With inductive analysis, researchers develop understanding and discover personal meanings of the informants during the process of collecting the data (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). There are no established hypotheses at the beginning of the study and, as Bogdan and Biklen (1998) emphasize, "you are not putting together a puzzle whose picture you already know" (p.6). Rather, the process of inductive research begins with exploration during the process of collecting the data that gradually leads toward identification of general patterns and categories (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Patton, 1990). Qualitative research is not so focused on final products or outcomes, as upon conditions and process under which meanings are constructed (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). Therefore, the process in qualitative research is related to both context and inductive analysis, in which emerging meanings and knowledge are developed over time.

Rigor and Credibility

Accountability and credibility, applied to the systematic collection and analysis of data, are key concerns of naturalistic inquiry. As Miller and Crabtree (1994) outline, qualitative research emphasizes that "Local context and the human story, of which each individual and community story is a reflection, are primary goals of qualitative research, and not 'generalizability'" (p.348). Qualitative researchers, therefore, repeatedly study

their data to check if their interpretations, notes, categories, explanations and constructed meanings reflect the nature of the inquiry and the views of the participants in the study (Patton, 1990), or, as Janesick (1994) offers, “whether or not a given explanation fits a given description” (p.216). In undertaking such measures, qualitative researchers look to ensure the ‘trustworthiness’ and ‘density’ of their investigations (Kincheloe & McLaren, 1994, Morse, 1989), while retaining “the human and passionate element of research” (Janesick, 1994, p.217).

In order to further strengthen trustworthiness within qualitative study, the following has also been suggested:

1. prolonged engagement and persistent observation – extended time in the field so you are able to develop trust, learn culture, and check out your hunches,
2. triangulation – use of multiple data-collection methods, multiple sources, multiple investigators, and/or multiple theoretical perspectives,
3. peer review and debriefing – external reflection and input on your work,
4. negative case analysis – conscious search for negative cases and unconfirming evidence so that you can refine your working hypotheses,
5. clarification of researcher bias – reflection upon your own subjectivity and how you will use and monitor it in your research,
6. member checking – sharing interview transcripts, analytical thoughts, and/or drafts of the final report with research participants to make sure you are representing them and their ideas accurately,
7. rich, thick description – writing that allows the reader to enter the research context,
8. external audit – an outside person examines the research process and product through “auditing” your field notes, research journal, analytic coding scheme, etc.

(Creswell, 1998, summarized in Glesne, 1999, p.32)

Focus Group Interviews

Given the purpose of the proposed study, *to explore, discover and understand* the adjustment experiences of immigrant youth from the Former Yugoslavia to living in

Canada, focus group interviews were selected as an appropriate and convenient method to gather perspectives of youth regarding shared topic matter. Such groups allow and encourage open discussion (on focused subjects) and often benefit from the stimulating effect of group comment, as it generates a sense of 'relatedness' and 'permission' to speak to particular themes and issues. In the present research, all youth who participated in the study were newcomers from the Former Yugoslavia and, therefore, have each been posed with adjusting to Canadian society, a topic of specific and keen interest to the researcher.

The underlying assumptions for choosing the focus group technique in this study were that: 1) youth are capable of talking about themselves, their experiences, feelings, perceptions and attitudes, 2) the group interaction and dynamics often encourage participants to speak openly about the topic, and 3) the comfortable group atmosphere elicit a range of responses that add to the richness of data obtained (Vaughn et. al., 1996). Implicit within this description is the premise that group interviewing is not intended to obtain a group consensus on the issue, but rather to elicit a rich variety of perception, feeling, and opinion, through active discussion between the participants about the topic in question (Patton, 1990; Rubin & Rubin, 1995; Vaughn et al., 1996) This dynamic group interaction is also called "group energy" (Berg, 1998, p.101) in which the researcher's direct contact with subjects is identified as a valuable characteristic of focus group interviews (Vaughn et al., 1996). Fontana & Frey (1994) cite additional benefits of this data collection technique by emphasizing that focus groups are often inexpensive, flexible, data rich, stimulating to participants, elaborative, and "over and above individual responses" (p.365).

Focus groups, however, do have certain disadvantages. There is a limited number of questions (usually no more than ten) (see Appendix B) that can generally be asked during one focus group interview, owing to time constraints and that all participants are encouraged to respond to each question (Patton, 1990). Further, due to the particular nature of group dynamics, a researcher or a group facilitator needs to be knowledgeable, skilled and experienced in managing the process of the group interview, including appropriately addressing participants who are dominating the group, as well as engaging reluctant participants to be involved in discussions (Bechhofer & Paterson, 2000; Corey & Corey, 2002 ; Fontana & Frey, 1994; Patton, 1990; Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Morgan (1995) suggests that some topics might be particularly sensitive to talk about in a group setting and that participants might be reluctant to share their views in front of others. In such cases it is helpful for the researcher or the group moderator to have similar background characteristics as the group participants to be able to establish trust and rapport (Carey & Smith, 1992, as cited in Morgan, 1995). Similarly, Krueger (1995) reports that in many communities it is hard to recruit participants who are total strangers to each other and that familiarity between focus group members may, actually, serve as a contributor to successful group discussion.

When conducting a focus group with children and adolescents, Vaughn et al. (1996) emphasize certain considerations in terms of group size, group setting, length of the focus group meeting(s), and the age of group participants. The group size of focus groups with children and adolescents needs to be smaller than for adult groups (Vaughn et al. 1996) where the number of participants is often between 6 and 12 (Asbury, 1995; Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Accordingly, in the present study, all focus groups were

either 9 (younger) or 8 (older) youth participants in each group.

It is also recommended that the setting of the focus groups ensure a comfortable room with easily moveable furniture that can be arranged in a circle, or as most suitable for the group interview (Vaughn et. al, 1996). The location of the focus groups needs to be familiar and accessible to participants, with (free) parking. In the proposed study, the focus group interviews were conducted in a community room of a local Sobeys grocery store, where all effort were made to ensure the above recommendations.

The average length of focus groups with adults is usually between 90 and 120 minutes, however a shorter meeting time (45-60 minutes) is recommended with children and adolescents (Vaughn et al., 1996). Finally, in order to ensure appropriate facilitation (use of language and activities) of focus groups, in terms of developmental level of participants, it is also recommended that the participants in focus groups with children and adolescents be of similar age (Vaughn et al., 1996), a key consideration in the forming of, in this study, age-related focus groups.

Individual Interviews

In addition to focus group interviews, semi-structured individual interviews were conducted with 4 youth who expressed further interest in the research topic beyond participation in the focus groups. Given the purpose of the proposed study, individual interviews were utilized as an additional technique in exploring, discovering and understanding participants' experiences, attitudes and views about the research topic. Similar to focus groups, individual interviewing is a "method of obtaining the participant's perspective" (Greig & Taylor, 1999, p.127). Rubin and Rubin (1995)

identify qualitative interview as “an intentional way of learning about people’s feelings, thoughts, and experiences” (p.2). Therefore, an underlying assumption of using this technique is interest in other people’s stories (Seidman, 1991). In the present study, the researcher had a genuine interest in listening the experiences and perspectives on the adjustment process of young Canadian newcomers of the ex-Yugoslavian community.

Semi-structured interviews can be defined as a medium between unstructured and structured interviews (Berg, 1998). While the interviewer has already prepared a set of questions (see Appendix B) as a general systematic guideline for the interviewing process, there is room for flexibility in terms of the researcher’s direction to focus more on some questions depending of the participants’ responses and/or interests (Bechhofer & Lindsay, 2000; Berg, 1998; Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Before moving to another question, the researcher, therefore, might ask the participant to elaborate on a specific issue relevant to the research topic, in order to obtain more in-depth, rich and detailed data (Berg, 1998; Glesne, 1999).

Rubin and Rubin (1995) state that “qualitative interviewing requires intense listening, a respect for and curiosity about what people say, and a systematic effort to really hear and understand what people tell you” (p.17). This statement elicits the issue of language, culture and accurate understanding of what is being said by the participants. Even when people speak the same language, misunderstanding might occur due to cultural differences (Fontana & Frey, 1998; Rubin & Rubin, 1995). In addition to familiarizing himself/ herself with the participants’ cultures (Rubin & Rubin, 1995), the researcher should ask participants for clarification whenever the researcher does not understand the meaning of the participants’ responses (Seidman, 1991). In the present

study, the researcher had an advantage in terms of language and cultural understanding, through her personal experience with the culture in question as well as her fluency in the Serbo-Croatian/ Bosnian tongue. These attributes, on the part of the researcher, served to establish a comfortable atmosphere, trust, and rapport with the participants (Fontana & Frey, 1998), as the researcher offered youth a choice of which language to be spoken during the interviews, either English or Serbo-Croatian/ Bosnian. Each interview was audio-taped and took approximately 45-60 minutes to complete.

Visual Images

Visual images, such as films, videos and photographs, are sometimes employed by social scientists as an additional means to record, analyze and communicate social life (Harper, 1994). Creating meaning through images is a process that involves “interaction between the social and personal aspects in any given culture” (Weber, 2002, pages unknown). The meaning(s) of a created image (photograph, film, video) depend on factors, such as who made the image and for what purpose (Banks, 1995; Rose, 2001), and are obtained both through its context (Becker, 1994), and constructed significance (see Qualitative Method).

Visual images in the social sciences may be produced by either the researcher or study subjects (Banks, 1995), yet it is incumbent on the researcher to carefully define the purpose and use of the images in the research study (English, 1988). Depending on a particular research question or interest, images can be employed with a variety of intentions and aims: as data, as documentation, or to elicit data (Weber, 2002). Using images, such as photographs, to elicit data can also assist with the development of more

open, exploratory, and reflective communication between the researcher and the study informants (Glesne, 1999; Harper, 1994).

The use of photographs within qualitative research has been termed *photo-elicitation interview[ing]*, in which the “interview/ discussion is stimulated and guided by images” (Harper, 1994, p.410). Photographs that reflect informants’ everyday lives and associations could possibly be images derived from participants’ home albums or perhaps made by participants prior to the interviewing (Harper, 1994). The employment of photographs, in such a manner, serves to draw participants more meaningfully into the research by incorporating their selected, or created, representations of self and others.

In the present study, photo-images produced by participants were used as a method of eliciting data in the individual interviews. The photographs were utilized during the interview as a creative approach to engage the youth, as well as a method to elicit and connect responses from the interview questions to the photographs. The use of photographs was chosen in the present study with the rationale of giving the youth an additional (creative) way of expressing themselves. The photographs were not used as data and, therefore, were not analyzed by the researcher. The interpretations and the meanings of the photographs were made only by the participants themselves (see Illustrations 1, 2, & 3).

Procedure/ Data Gathering

Once the approval of this research proposal was obtained by both the Thesis Committee and the University Research Ethics Board, the researcher started the process

of recruiting volunteers for the participation in the study. The researcher utilized personal contacts within the ex-Yugoslavian community by sending the families the letters of introduction about the research (see Appendix C) together with the forms of informed consent (see Appendix D). The letters of introduction and the informed consent forms were written in both English and Serbo-Croatian/ Bosnian making it convenient for the families by providing them with the opportunity to fully understand the nature of the present research. There were follow up telephone calls by the researcher to answer any questions that the parents/ youth had prior to participation in the research. Pre-stamped, self-addressed envelopes were provided for the signed informed consent forms to be returned to the researcher.

Once the informed consents were collected, arrangements were made with a local grocery store (Sobeys) that provided a meeting room as a community service/ courtesy, in order to schedule dates and times for the focus group sessions. Two focus groups with younger youth (13-15) were conducted on the same day and the third focus group with the older youth (16-18) was held the following week. Participants were given advanced notice (approximately a week) prior to the dates of scheduled focus group interviews. Detailed information about the location was provided to ensure accessibility by the participants.

The setting of the focus group interviewing room was prepared by the researcher prior to the participants' arrival at the location. This included preparation of the seating furniture, setting up the audio-taping equipment and ensuring that light refreshments were available during the interview. Upon the participants' arrival, the researcher greeted all participants, introduced herself, and briefly reviewed the purpose and format of the

focus group. Participants' rights (see Ethical Considerations) and responsibilities (such as showing respect for others in the group and supporting confidentiality) regarding their participation were stated by the researcher at the beginning of the interview. Every effort was made by the researcher to make the participants feel comfortable in the setting. Participants then filled in the Background Information form (see Appendix E) provided by the researcher before the focus group discussion commenced. Each focus group session was audio-taped and lasted approximately 90 minutes. The researcher thanked the participants at the end of the interview and provided them with a token of appreciation (free movie passes and \$15). The participants were asked at that time whether they would be interested in being further interviewed individually as part of this research project.

Based upon the researcher's evaluation of the focus groups, 4 youth who gave indication in the focus groups of varying perspectives, expressed particular interest in the research topic, and subsequently indicated to the researcher a willingness to share further information, were contacted by the researcher and offered an opportunity to participate in individual interview sessions. Individual arrangements were made to provide the participants and their parents with letters explaining the purpose and format of the individual interviews (see Appendix F). Informed Consent forms (see Appendix G), signed by both the youth and their parents, were collected by the researcher prior to interviewing. Since the individual interviews included the use of photographs produced by the participants (see Visual Images), the participants were given disposable, single-time-use cameras, along with instructions to take pictures related to the research topic (see Appendix H). The participants were asked to take pictures that would represent their life in Canada. One week was provided for the pictures-taking process prior to the

researcher collecting the cameras. Once the films were developed, the researcher delivered unviewed pictures and negatives to the participants. The participants were asked to select the pictures that they wished to share with the researcher and to bring them to the individual interview. The researcher later contacted the participants and arranged the dates, times, and the location (Sobeys' community room) for the individual interviews.

Individual interviews were also audio-taped and lasted approximately 45-60 minutes. Participants were offered a choice to communicate in either English or Serbo-Croatian/ Bosnian (one interview was conducted in Serbo-Croatian, all others in English). The researcher reviewed the participants' rights (see Ethical Considerations) with the youth prior to the beginning of each individual interview. All effort was made by the researcher to make the participants comfortable during the interviews. In addition to further exploring some of the questions from the focus group interviews, the participants shared with the researcher selected pictures (see Illustrations 1, 2, & 3) which they had produced and provided interpretations of the images. Participants were thanked at the end of the interview and were provided a further token of appreciation (\$10). The participants were informed that the photographs would be returned to them at the end of the study. The interview transcripts were later sent to the participants to verify the accuracy of the data.

Data Analysis

Data analysis in qualitative research involves "working with data, organizing them, breaking them into manageable units, synthesizing them, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998,

p.157). The process is systematic and time-consuming (Krueger, 1995; Patton, 1990). Therefore, guidelines and step-by-step strategies are developed to assist researchers manage possibly overwhelming amounts of collected data (Glesne, 1999; Huberman & Miles, 1998; Patton, 1990; Seidman, 1991; Vaughn et al., 1996).

In the present study, the audio-taped interviews were transcribed verbatim (word-by-word) in order to obtain complete and accurate data prior to proceeding with analysis (Patton, 1990; Spradley, 1980). The audio-recorded data from the interview conducted in Serbo-Croatian/ Bosnian were translated by the researcher and an additional independent translator (the second translation was utilized for comparison to ensure the accuracy of data) (see Appendix I) . Therefore, prior to analysis, all data transcripts were available in English.

Several electronic and hard copies of data transcripts were made for working with the data throughout the analysis process (Patton, 1990). One copy was kept aside and was treated as an original for the purpose of locating raw data when necessary during the process (Patton, 1990). Other copies served as working material for writing, cutting, and pasting, and were shared with a second coder involved in the analysis for purposes of comparing discovered themes, patterns, and conceptual links within the data (Patton, 1990). Such shared and constant comparison of the data also enhanced the 'trustworthiness' of the interpretations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, cited in Glesne, 1999).

The transcripts were analyzed by utilizing a coding system that involved " the discovery and naming of categories" (Strauss, 1987, p.27), and that served to "bring together the similar ideas, concepts, or themes" (Rubin & Rubin, 1995, p.238) Particular words and phrases were identified as "meaningful units" (Kidd & Kral, 2002, p.415) by

in vivo coding to capture “important attitudes, perceptions, feelings, and processes contained in the participant’s experience, as well as the context in which they occurred” (Fitzgerald, 1994, p.467). After continued comparison of identified *codes* and discovery of similar *patterns*, the emerging *themes* were eventually clustered, collapsed, and conceptualized into *categories*, for the purpose of discussion (Fitzgerald, 1994; Huberman & Miles, 1998; Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Identifying codes, themes, and categories was an ongoing process throughout the analysis, as new connections and insights appeared (Rubin & Rubin, 1995; Seidman, 1991) (see Selected Sample of Coding, Figure 2).

Ethical Considerations

Prior to participation in the study, all youth and their families were fully informed about the nature and the purpose of the study. The participants and their parents were also made aware of the approval of the research (see Appendix C) by the MSVU University Research Ethics Board (UREB) and provided contact information regarding the Thesis Supervisor and the Chairperson (UREB), respectively, should they have had any further questions about the research.

Participation in the study was voluntary with the right to freely withdraw from the study at any time. Informed consents, signed by both youth and their parents, were collected prior to the interviewing process. Participants’ anonymity and confidentiality were emphasized throughout the research. Interview transcripts were coded, in order to protect participants’ identities, and all data regarding the participants was safely stored during the research. Participants were advised of eventual destruction of the participants-

related research materials following the completion of the study. All materials were used for the research and educational purposes only.

While there was no anticipated risk or harm related to the participation in the study, it was possible that the discussion about pre-immigration experiences (such as war, conflict, or resettlement) might evoke uncomfortable memories among some youth depending on their personal experiences. The participants were informed of the researcher's immediate availability to offer support in such cases. No further discussion about the war would have continued if any participants expressed being uncomfortable to talking about such issues. The researcher was also prepared to take additional steps in providing support, if necessary, by contacting participants' families and providing them with contact information about community based helping services, with which the researcher was familiar through her work at the IWK Health Centre's Child and Adolescent Mental Health Program. In the conduct of the research, however, no interventions were necessary as none of the participants displayed or otherwise conveyed psycho-social upset related to the research topics.

Photographs produced by participants were used only during the individual interviews. Photographs were not shared or viewed by other participants or anyone other than the researcher and her advisor. Consent from the participants who took the pictures was granted for the inclusion of the pictures in the thesis (see Illustrations 1, 2, & 3). None of the photographs utilized in the thesis contained of the participants or other identifying information. Participants were informed of the eventual return of the pictures to them (youth) upon the completion of the study.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Through discussions involving both focus group and individual interviews, participating youth provided valuable insights about their experiences as Canadian newcomers from the Former Yugoslavia. The thoughts, perspectives and attitudes that youth expressed are related to both their experiences from their home country as well as their current daily experiences living in Canada. In addition to conveying a wide range of experiences concerning their cultural identity, pre-immigration conditions and circumstances, adjustment challenges, and supports, the youth voiced their needs as developing adolescents of the Canadian ex-Yugoslavian community. As a result of the data analysis, the research findings are organized and reported according to the following four major descriptive and conceptual categories: *cultural affiliation/ retention, pre-immigration experiences, newcomer experiences, and supports and services.*

Cultural Affiliation/ Retention

Cultural Pride

When asked what it meant for them to be members of their cultural group from the Former Yugoslavia, the youth expressed close affiliation with and continuing attachment to their home regions and communities. The youth cited that having experience and knowledge of another culture, involving for them fluency in at least one language other than English and French, was a source of tremendous pride and distinction from many of their peer group:

I feel really proud because being from a different country
and knowing stuff from different views, to me it's unique. It

means I'm unique. So, I would never say, "Oh, I wish I wasn't from there", or anything like that.

It means a lot because it's my background and culture so I respect it. I think it's cool.

Because you have all these years in history and culture.

Over there we had, like, twelve century works of art...

...civilization roots are from there.

...education was free...

...people, or kids, get raised better from my country.

Oh, we were very good soccer players!

Cultural Connections

Youth participants emphasized the importance of remaining connected to members of their cultural group. While making new Canadian friends since arriving in Canada, the youth (and their families) had actively sought and maintained friendships with fellow newcomers from their home country or region. They felt that having friends from home their country had helped both themselves and their parents to remain close to their cultural roots and thus benefit from a sense of belonging and inclusion within an extended cultural community of families. Youth cited informal home gatherings among members of their cultural group as one cultural practice indicative of, and conducive to, retaining connection with one another:

...to have your own group. It's, like, there is somebody like you in the community. In a different community. You can share the same thing, same differences with somebody else... Like, "Oh, in Europe is like this and here is like this", you know. Then you agree.

...people are kind of connected and we hang out with each other and we are really tight.

There would be food and they would be talking, laughing, telling jokes... Just, I think it is an ideal thing. If I didn't grow up in that kind of way I don't think I would be the same person because it's just kind of part of me when people come.

While socializing with members of their cultural group in Canada provides the youth and their families with a rich sense of close cultural affiliation, a number of youth expressed concern and sadness over a growing feeling of detachment, through loss of ongoing contact, from their families and friendships in their countries of origin. For some youth, their ages at the time of immigration had left them with few, and quickly fading, memories of those remaining. Although, in some cases, efforts to retain these connections had been made, several youth wondered whether they or others would continue to be recognized, have meaning, or otherwise relate to one another any longer. For some, such considerations involved feelings of regret and guilt over the loss or diminishment of earlier important relationships, including uncertainty about how they (friends and extended family members) might respond to one another if together:

Sometimes I just can't sleep... "What about my friends?", "What about this?", "What about that?", "When I'm gonna go home?, When I would see them?, How are they gonna react to me?"... and I think, "Am I gonna fit in, am I gonna be too different or something?"

I don't really remember my family. So, when they say, "Oh, remember your grandma?", I go, "No". I feel bad because, I remember, I answered the phone when they called and I go, "Who's this?" They'll go, "Don't you remember me?", and I'll go, "No".

...I don't really know what's gonna happen when I do go back there. I don't really want to know if I do want to go back there because I don't want to be disappointed. That

would be much worse, knowing that, “Ok, I am there but there is nothing there”. So I keep on hoping.

Another hard thing was just being so far away from your relatives because you have so many over there. And you can not say, “Well, I am going to my grandma’s” like how Canadian person would say, “I’m going to my grandma’s house”. And you just kind of feel a bit jealous.

On weekends, I talk to my cousins over computer, just to kind of stay in touch.

For those remaining in contact with families and friends within their home regions, their communication often took the form of letter-writing, including e-mail, and telephone calling. While most participants had not returned to their home areas, for those who had, it was something of a bitter-sweet experience, in which they felt it was “...just not enough once a year” and desired to go “back home” more often.

Cultural Features/ Customs/ Traditions

Importance of family As youth expressed their experiences and feelings related to losing contacts and missing their extended family members and friends from home, they emphasized the importance of family as a distinct feature of their culture. Participants spoke about their positive experiences and perspectives of family and their cultural community at large. While the family unit is most respected among these youth, they also value the closeness between community members in their country, such as neighbors and friends. These youths’ perspectives were often expressed in relation to their current lives and experiences in Canada:

[You] have much of a relationship with your family, like, brother, sister, mother. Many times you feel like your [Canadian] friends hate their brothers and sisters. You don’t really hear that in our culture, in Yugoslavia.

Somebody earlier said that family is very important to us and I think that's very true. We have a lot of respect for family. So, family is a big issue for me. Over there, you know, you kind of get together, the family and neighbors, roast a pig, whatever, have some fun in the back yard, but here... I don't know.

...the families are so close together. Like, every weekend my aunts and uncles would come to my house to sleep over. I had a huge house so, like, there was place for everyone. And then they had, like, lots of kids and they were once together and we had so much fun. And here is, like, boring.

...everybody worked like as a family because everybody knew each other around there.

Parental guidelines and expectations At the same time that youth conveyed respect for their parents and families, they did cite certain cultural norms and practices within the family that they felt challenged them more so than the families of their Canadian counterparts. Specifically, parental guidelines and expectations relative to their behaviour were seen, by most youth, as considerably stricter than those set by their Canadian peers' parents. While youth stated that they generally attempt to respect these norms, expectations and practices, they also make constant effort to negotiate with their parents a degree of relaxation with certain restrictions in order to be more compatible with their Canadian peers, and enjoy perceived individual and social freedoms available in Canada:

Sometimes it doesn't really bother me, I'm used to my parents. I know they are just looking out for me... but sometimes I just want to go outside.

[Canadian] kids do stuff they are not supposed to. In our country, if our parents tell us not to do stuff, we're not allowed to do that... we would get in big trouble.

My parents have very different standards than people, Canadian parents, here. Sometimes, when I say, "Mom, can

I go there and do this", she's like, "No!". I'm like, "But my friends are doing that, they are going there" and she's, like, "Ok, if they are going, then I don't want you to be left out". She's more relaxed than she was before. She's trying to accept Canadian culture, as well. She 's kind of changing... you have to adapt to it to a certain point. I'm not saying you have to forget about your culture... but you kind of have to adapt to survive.

Retention of language Youth identified their parents' strong encouragement to retain their home language(s), as another example of additional pressure they experienced within their families, distinct from their English Canadian peers:

Parents are getting older and they want to keep their language.

I speak English but they make me speak Serbo-Croatian. Then, when I speak Serbo-Croatian they get mad again and tell me to speak German. It's just confusing. They don't want me to forget German and they don't want me to forget Serbo-Croatian.

There is a lot of time they'll make you to speak your own language, but my mom and dad don't care.

While youth generally viewed negatively increased pressure by parents for them (youth) to retain their native language(s), several youth did express that speaking their respective native languages contributes positively to their current cultural identity and remains a critical cultural feature to be practiced and passed on to future generations:

Because, I think, coming from Serbia, knowing the language, you should always speak and practice it. It's my mother language [and] I think that any opportunity I get I should speak it...It would be a waste not to speak it. It would be a loss, you know, to not to speak it and then maybe forget it.

I don't want to forget it... it's cool that I know two different languages.

Because you're going to have children and if they don't know it you can't pass it on. Because you want to pass it on, your own traditions.

Practice and barriers in language retention Youth stated that most often they speak their native language only at home and otherwise use English at school and in the community. Unfortunately, the learning and constant practice of a new language (English), while living in Canada, combined with the lessening of contact with one's home region/ country, has served as a formidable barrier for many youth to retain fluency in their mother tongue(s) (e.g., Serbo-Croatian/ Bosnian/ Albanian). For some, this involved embarrassment when conversing (or visiting) with friends and family from home:

When I speak with my grandma, she can't speak English... but whenever I speak [native language], I sound all messed up, like I don't know anything. [I feel]...embarrassed.

I think it's kind of hard to keep up the language because you can only speak it at home with your family... when you're at school or when you're wherever, it's all English, so it's kind of hard to keep it.

With family I usually speak our language, but sometimes it's English.

... Because there are lots of things that I forgot in our language now that I have to say in English...

Despite certain unwelcome pressure from parents to retain their home languages, youth, themselves, tended to embrace their native languages as sources of cultural pride and distinction. At times, however, they feel conflicted by the lack of opportunity or permission to practice their language outside of home, particularly at school, although others, including their teachers and school administrators, often expressed curiosity and interest in their (the youths') native languages:

They said we can't speak our language.

Teachers, they tell you you're not allowed to speak your

language in school...

...they don't want you to speak your language in school at all, but then... they ask you how do you say this in your language. Like, even the principals. Like, c'mon, "you told me not to speak it and you want me to speak it now".

Somewhat mischievously, yet with good humour, other participants spoke of using their native language in school and in the community to their advantage. They reported using their language as a device for secretive or confidential communication among their ex-Yugoslavian peers:

And you can cheat if you're doing something. Like, you can talk about somebody when they are right there and they wouldn't know.

...sometimes it's fun. When we play sports, let's say, if [we] play basketball against Canadians, and we talk in our language, so they don't know which way to go...they have no idea, and it's fun.

...sometimes we play hide and seek and, when we count, we cheat in our language.

Traditional celebrations and food While language was identified by youth as a significant and critical feature of their culture, youth also spoke of holidays, traditional food, music, dances, costumes, celebrations, and cultural events that play a key part in their cultural community. Most youth reported that their families still celebrate traditional home country holidays and prepare traditional foods:

I think it's neat to keep it up and celebrate it, because our Christmas and our Easter is different than Canadians' ... so it's important to keep it.

Yeah. We celebrate Christmas on January 7th instead of December 25th, although I still get the present on the 25th. And this weekend would be Easter instead of last weekend

Those were the Easter eggs that we made and there were

only four left. We make it from onion skins. (see Illustration 1)

In relation to the customs and traditions that they retain while living in Canada, youth also spoke about different traditional food from their country. Many participants stated that their families continue to make many dishes from their home country, much to the youths' reported enjoyment:

My parents still make food from there...

We do the same here. We still eat *pita*,... *baklava*,... *čevapi*.

My mom makes *pita* every week.

Traditional cookies *šape*. (see Illustration 2)

Social gatherings As earlier mentioned, the youth gave special emphasis to the shared nature of such celebrations and practices within their cultural community. Social gatherings of people from the ex-Yugoslavian community, during which members have a chance to meet, talk, dance, and listen to the music from their home country, whether more formally organized in the broader community or less formally organized through private home parties, were seen as highly enjoyable and important activities which fortified the youths' sense of cultural identity:

It is fantastic to me to have a place where our people can gather and where you can get to know our people here. Because there are not many of us here. Here there are only few of us and I think that these events are fantastic. It's nice. I mean, lot of our people come. There are many younger people and they are all our [ex-Yugoslavian] people. And it's nice to see people and our food. They bring a roast pig, *pitas*, our cakes, all kinds... It's nice.

It's important because there are the people from where we come from... They are people from the Former Yugoslavia. It's just sort of a gathering. We don't do it every day, it's just, like, once a month or whatever. So, it's special... you always get excited when it happens.

We were dancing after the church ceremony... I'm not sure what kind of dance that was... I think that's traditional... It's from Serbia.

Like the kitchen parties or whatever they call it here. Like, my parents always have so many people in the house and it's like a big party.

In this context, a few of the study participants spoke of the focus groups themselves as a welcome opportunity to meet and share among their newcomer peers from the Former Yugoslavia:

And this also, this meeting that we had [focus group], I met few people there that I have never met before. It is nice, you know; to speak our language, about our culture, religion, our life.

Religion While youth participants did not refer to their own religious affiliation or spirituality, per se, they did speak of the deep significance that religion occupies within their families and cultural community. Here, they conveyed appreciation of their parents' teaching roles and expectations, which have assisted their own learning and development of respect for the place of religion as a galvanizing force in individual households and among ex-Yugoslavians:

Me and my brother are not baptized. So he [father] tries to teach us. He bought a Bible in our language for us to read and all that. It's not, like, "I'll make you".

...my dad doesn't force anything or stuff like that. He just, you know, tell us so you're informed about culture, Orthodox religion and stuff like that. You don't have to do it. It's just so you know how it's done. I like it. I like knowing stuff.

My mother has been raised in a mixed marriage and my father has been raised in another religion. And then they came together and they had, like, three religions to share... they respect all of it. I just don't know what they really follow because they follow everything... It's kind of funny

but you also learn about it... I read about it and I try to know as much as I can. So, you know, the more you know, the more you respect.

Sports and physical activity Finally, in speaking of their home country traditions, customs and values, youth identified sports and physical activity as valued cultural features. Male participants, especially, expressed pride in their athletic activities in Canada which they associate with their cultural backgrounds and experiences in the Former Yugoslavia, where organized team sports and general daily physical activity among children and adolescents seem at a higher level than in North America:

I play soccer, too... because it brings something back from my country... In Bosnia, it's like the favorite sport there, so, I just want to bring it here... because it's not really big here.

Cultural Stereotypes

Almost all focus group participants reported that they regularly encounter being culturally misidentified, misrepresented, misassociated and misunderstood (e.g., media) in Canadian society. Youth especially expressed resentment that the Former Yugoslavia and all its people are often negatively associated with the war. Participants felt that lack of knowledge and misinformation about their culture were main contributors to many Canadians stereotyping ex-Yugoslavs and depicting them as individuals both hardened by conflict and perhaps given to aggression themselves. At the least, youth spoke of frustration experienced when being asked so many questions about the Balkan wars, with the assumption that they have intimate knowledge of former atrocities. Mostly the youth wanted their Canadian peers to reconsider attitudes of judgment or superiority based on thinking that Canadians are immune from such social devastation and uprooting:

People thought I was criminal or something, because I came

from a different country and they heard there was a war over there...they think I'm gonna hurt them or something.

They'll ask you: 'Do you find guns in the ground and shoot people?' ... "Are you gonna kill me?" I just don't answer. I just walk away.

...when Serbia got accused of mass murdering people... they're [Canadians], like, "Oh, you're evil" and stuff, you know. I'm, like, "You don't know anything about Yugoslavia! You don't even know where it's on the map!" So, you know... "Educate yourself and then let's talk".

...when somebody says 'Bosnia', the first thing that clicks in their mind is war and people killing each other. And you can't change that no matter what you tell them. They're always gonna remember Bosnia... for bad things.

I think they even may think that the war could not happen in Canada or there is no chance. Sometimes I think they kind of look down on those countries that had war. Like, they just look as if it was their fault. They'll just make it like: we had a war because we were dumb. ... that's not true. Because, you know, it could happen anywhere. Because no one thought it would happen over there, but it did. They think we had many solutions but that's the one we chose. They don't say that directly, but indirectly you just get that idea.

Pre-Immigration Experiences

Effects of War

Almost all participants reported the primary reason for immigrating to Canada as the war in the Former Yugoslavia (see Figure 1). While a few of the youth identified that they immigrated with their families to Canada for reasons other than the conflict (e.g., business opportunity for parents, reunification with family in Canada), they too felt that with their former region's turmoil as an ever present context at the time, they "wouldn't be here if it wasn't for the war". In this way, fears for personal safety and the constant encroachment of ethnic and political issues in their communities and individual families

led to a deepened sense of no longer “fitting in” their home areas:

He [father] wanted to come here because it was so far away, just to be safe.

...we lived in Bosnia before the war and after the war broke we went back [to Serbia and Montenegro]. After the war was over we went back [to Bosnia]. So it's just a circle. But, I did feel consequences of the war regardless was I there or not... less than I would if I stayed there, but it [war] still affected me.

...it's the worst thing when you have a mixed couple in your family because they don't fit in any side. Because there is a Muslim part and then there is a Serbian part and a Croatian part. So, if you go to that part, you don't fit. If you go to another part, you don't fit. So, you don't fit at all.

For the interviewed youth, their eventual displacement from the Former Yugoslavia meant being uprooted from their extended families, friends, their educations, and established routines of daily living. Even though few youth, if any, had directly experienced armed conflict, evidence of the regional turmoil was all about them:

...we could not live in our home, so we were in [other] people's houses. We renovated, but there was a potential of the people coming back, so we would not have a house. On that basis, they told us we could come [to Canada]... because we went through hell over there...

Then it was a very difficult situation... I have attended only half year in grade one and then we moved to Germany. And then I was out of school for a year.

It [the war] affected me pretty bad because I moved away when I was three and a half. So,... I don't remember anybody... From pictures I can tell, but I really don't know anything about them. Half of them I don't even know, like their names or anything. I think it's really bad.

My memories are still intact and I know everything I did over there, but it effected now my relationship with my family where I lived. Well, I barely talk to them anymore. ...we are not in touch.

We just found outside spare bullets. They still had gun powder in [them] so we just put [them] around and made something fun. Like, fifty, sixty, I don't know, hundred and fifty bullets or something, and then we just put the gun powder down and write something...and then we light a match, put it on and it just sparkles there.

Many participants expressed that their experiences of war had strongly affected their perspectives and values about life and war itself. Being forced to change their country of residence, leaving family and friends behind and experiencing being 'different' and 'changed' by living amidst the war, had, to varying degrees, impacted each of their lives:

You kind of wonder what it would be if you still stayed there.

I find that a lot of Canadians...not just the rich people... but a lot of the kids, you know...they have money and they have objective stuff and they think that's it, that's the life, you know...having money, having car and a house. But... once you lose that, you know that's not life. Life is family, health...

...if there was no war my life would have been... I can not even imagine how different. I mean, just, I'd be like the rest of the kids that I feel so different from that are actually still living there. I'd be one of them. I wouldn't know what this place was. Honestly, I would have [thought] : "What's Canada? Who cares." But it could have turned out a number of different ways too, depending on, like, what country my dad decided to come to.

While the youth's perceptions of the war, quite understandably, were highly negative, youth also reported that experiencing war was, in some ways, a learning process providing them strengths to deal with other challenges in life. This view was often expressed when making comparison with the less trying experiences and daily comforts of their Canadian peers:

They [Canadian peers] haven't gone through, like, life challenges. They are not strong enough. It's, like, they are

not as strong as we are. Like, if you moved couple times and you left your stuff and all that. Yeah, it's hard on you but you grow stronger.

The war is bad, of course. I mean there is nothing good about war. But, just the experience of having lived through that, you know, and knowing what it's like I think is a good experience. And I wouldn't wish it on anybody else. And, of course I know for a fact that my life would have been better if there was no war.

The war has made me stronger person. Like, Canadian kids, they don't understand what it is like to be in a war... they won't ever experience anything [like that] in a lifetime.

Depending on their lived experiences in the Former Yugoslavia during and after the war, some participants expressed experiencing more profound emotional effects as a result of the war. While none of the youth spoke of particular psychological disturbance as a result of the war, some youth recalled emotional upset as a difficulty while both living in or visiting their home country, and during their first years of residing in Canada:

When I first moved here, I still had trauma from the war. And then took me a while to get over that. Then my parents wanted me to go back to visit Kosovo and I was scared... I just couldn't go back to visit.

It's really hard to leave your friends. I had to leave, I had to get new friends, like, four times during the war because we moved so many times. And just leaving all your stuff, your house... after the war stopped I went back and we just walked by our house because we could not go in. I actually saw my stuff in there. It was SO hard, because it brings a lot of memories, lot of friends, and stuff like that. I just think if I was still with those people I would be much happier.

I think if I came here as a refugee it would be even worse. I know I left my home, but I left it in peace. If I were to leave my home and just immediately come here it would be more difficult to cope with different stuff. I think there would be more issues than there are right now. But just talking to people who came as refugees I get that sense [that] they are more disturbed.

Both focus group youth, and those individually interviewed, noted that the topic of war is one that is often only initiated by others with whom they interact, such as school peers or others within the community who have newly learned of their backgrounds and cultural affiliation. These sometimes difficult questions about the war, as youth recalled, often sought dramatic information beyond the scope of their experiences and left them feeling obliged, in a resigned way, to provide gratuitous details for those who questioned them. In all, most youth felt that the queries of others were not so much initiated to extend understanding and support to the youth, but rather to solicit “inside, first-hand” stories for their own interest. Youth, therefore, openly wondered about the motivation and sincerity of others’ inquiries about the Balkan wars, and questioned the sensitivity of even such figures as school teachers and administrators in this regard:

People ask me a lot of questions about [the war], “ Oh, how was in war?” and stuff. Like, “Did people get shot?”, “Did you see any blood?”. They ask me that.

... when they talk to you, the first question they ask you [is]: “How was the war?”... then, “Did you find a gun?”, “Did you shoot anybody?”

... “Did you have a war there?” It was, like, the first question any teacher asked.

And if you told the principal, they are, like, “Well, did you have a war?”. I was, like, “ I don’t feel good about them [peers] asking me these questions”, and then the principal’s, like, “Well, it’s nothing bad, but, how was the war?”. They ask me, too.

Yeah. Like, I got in trouble last week. The teacher sent me to the office. Then he kept talking about the war in my country. It was, like, all off topic and everything. He was, like, “There was a war. Remember the stuff like not getting in fights”. And he kept on going about the war and was asking me questions.

As noted, most youth recalled unpleasant experiences related to the war and, overall, said that they prefer “to forget about it”. Notwithstanding, they often felt pestered by questions about the war itself, by assumptions that they know intimate details of the war, and by expectations of their willingness and need to talk about it:

...sometimes it gets annoying when people keep asking me stuff... and you don't remember what to say...and I don't really know what happened because I was there when I was, like, five.

I didn't see what the war was because only my dad was in the war. It started when I was, like, born.

More darkly still, some youth felt that certain of their Canadian peers used references to the war in order to taunt and make fun of them and their country. Youth expressed that their Canadian peers largely do not take the former conflict seriously and often fail to be sensitive to, or understanding of, the actual topic of war itself:

A lot of people ask you questions about the war and stuff but most of the questions are, like, trying to make fun of you. Because, like, they'll ask you “How did you feel there?” and that's, like, uncomfortable. And there are often questions, I can't really remember now, that would make fun of you. They'll make fun of your country.

...you would walk away from them and then they would start making fun of you and stuff. But, they don't even know what it's like to be in a war. They think of it as a fun thing. They think they would run around and shoot people and stuff. That's all they think of war.

Given the preceding, many of the youth disclosed that, eventually, these unpleasant experiences with peers and others around the subject of war left them feeling frustrated and wanting to avoid the topic altogether, although some admitted that they, at times, have constructed stories just to satisfy or ‘play with’ the curiosities of others:

I just don't answer. I walk away.

I couldn't do anything about it.

I don't talk about it much. I just say good stuff and I don't mention war things.

I say I was too little to remember.

I don't know anything about it, so sometimes I just kid around them and tell them stuff. I make up stories that there we found a grenade..."I found a bazooka!"... just to see what they do.

Home Country Experiences

Despite their mainly negative experiences of living in association with the war, many participants recalled pleasant memories of their home country. Although most participants were quite young while living in the Former Yugoslavia and some have only scant, or no, memories of that time,

I can't really remember, because I came here when I was five, so I can't really speak about it very well.

I was nine but I don't remember.

I don't remember much.

I don't remember anything.

many participants spoke enthusiastically about daily activities and relationships in their home country (often related to sports, games, outdoor activities, and fun experiences with families and friends):

I remember I was over there to my grandma's and there is a movie theater right across the street. And my cousin has a little band and I always took their stuff and played with it and broke it.

Every weekend I used to go to my grandparents' house, one weekend with my mom's parents and another weekend with my dad's parents. I would go to their house and sleep over there.

It was fun because every day you would go out and play.
The life there was more active. You didn't sit around and do nothing. Like, there were actually places to go and things to do.

We would play hide and seek and stuff. And I was outside, like, twenty four/seven with my friends. I was more active.

Notwithstanding these positive recollections, some youth identified negative features and disadvantages of living in the Former Yugoslavia. Those less enthusiastic perceptions of their country were primarily related to the economic advantages and social freedoms that youth enjoy living in Canada:

If I was in my country I would never be able to afford something like that [music instrument].

...there wasn't too much shopping where we used to live. Not really. There weren't really a lot of malls except little grocery stores where you can buy food, but I don't think I've ever gone to the mall.

I have lots of toys and stuff like that. That's another thing that I didn't have a lot in Bosnia and in Yugoslavia.

We didn't have even one computer in my school in Bosnia. Not one. And in this one [in Canada] there is, like, a hundred.

Newcomer Experiences

Experiencing Difference

During discussion of their newcomer experiences in Canada, most youth expressed that they perceive themselves as being 'different' from many of their peers within Canadian society. Such a sense of 'difference', according to participants, does not come from having culturally recognizable features in their physical appearance, but rather from interactions with Canadian peers in which their affiliation with the ex-Yugoslavian community in Canada is revealed in their names, through telling others of

their geographic backgrounds and their immigrant experiences, and in particular situations that draw attention to their cultural identities and adjustment needs:

...you can tell when people are from, like, Lebanon, and stuff like that. But us, it's, like, we look like we're Canadians, we look like we were born here. So, it is by our names and, like, telling people where we are from.

And it does mean you feel different... I would be pulled out of class to go learn English.

As such, feeling different for these youth is mainly a socially experienced feature of their identity as it emerges in circumstances and interactions with others in school and within the community. Even though the discussion of being different evoked many negative connotations related to newcomer challenges (see Adjustment Experiences and Challenges), for many youth 'being different' was also positively associated with 'being special' or distinct from their Canadian peers. This sense of uniqueness stemmed, in large part, from having worldly experiences well beyond the scope of many other youth, as well as being at least bilingual, if not trilingual and, therefore the source of curiosity, even envy, by their school peers:

I mean, that we're all here, and that we know another language, and we all came from different places... I think it's really special, because most people that are here are all same, and we are not.

I think it's kind of cool to be different, coming to another country, and, like, I don't want to be like everyone else. I like having a different name and just being different. You know, I was like an international student, because then you even know what goes around the world and you know other experiences, different cultures and stuff.

I feel proud because I am different from everybody else around here.

It's cool to be from somewhere else and to know the

language and culture that somebody from Canada wouldn't know.

I think it's cool because some people don't have the opportunity to have a culture and then to live in other country and other places. Also, to speak other languages.

And I'm known in my school for having, like, European fine accent. And nobody really knows where I am from, because nobody thinks it's Bosnia, or Germany. Then I ask them, "What do you think I am from?" They can't tell. They are always into that accent thing, everybody loves it.

Notwithstanding the preceding, some participant youth did not perceive themselves as currently different from the mainstream and were just as pleased to blend into the social mosaic of their peers and the larger society:

I don't really feel different from anyone else... I mean, most people don't even know that I am Bosnian. Like, some guy didn't even believe me when I told him.

I would say that I 'm just like, mostly like any other Canadian.

People don't notice me. When they see me they think I'm Canadian. Say, if you have just met me, you would have thought I was Canadian, wouldn't you?

These same participants, however, did report varying challenging adjustment experiences related to arriving and settling in Canada. Considering this, all youth experienced feelings of being different during their years of living in Canada although, for some, those feelings are less intense with each passing year and continued adjustment. For the focus group youth, hence, feeling 'different' was almost always related to the difficulty and pronounced nature of their adjustment experiences and everyday challenges living in Canadian society.

Adjustment Experiences and Challenges

As earlier noted, adapting to a new country was, to varying degrees, a challenging experience for all participating youth in the study. Some of their newcomer experiences, such as having new friends and learning a new language, were perceived by youth as welcome and integral to their adjustment, their cherished relationships, and to who they regard themselves as being now. These positive features, however, were somewhat overshadowed by examples of challenging and difficult periods and episodes they had experienced in school, with friends, and in the community. These challenges were often related to their early experiences of learning English as a second language, acquiring new friendships, adapting to Canadian schools, and socializing among new peers, all the while feeling ‘different’ from others. Most youth felt that these challenges were more profound in the first years of immigration and less intense over time, but, as one participant stated, they “still exist”:

Generally, you’d say, like, at first it was bad, because everybody was mean to me, but now it’s ok... Because now they, like, know you and know how you act, and know your personality. Before they knew you by your looks or something, because you look different.

I’ve gotten used to it. I like it now, but my parents said when I was little I hated it here. I mean, I remember the first day of school I ever went to. It was the last three months of grade one. I didn’t go to grade primary or anything. I didn’t know a word of English or anything. Like, my dad sat in the class with me and I was, like, crying. And the kids would be, like, trying to talk to me and [all] I could say was, like, ‘yes’ or ‘no’.

While youth reflected on their own experiences as newcomers in Canada, some considered that their parents had experienced difficulty adjusting, as well. Youth identified the major challenge for many of their parents as being the learning of English,

so critical to acquiring employment or to communicating generally in the community:

She [mother] had a very hard time adjusting, more than anybody else I think. She missed her family, a lot. So it was kind of mutual, we tried to help each other... She's more outgoing right now. Before, she didn't want to answer the phone, she didn't want to go to the grocery store... she was afraid someone was gonna ask her [something] and she wouldn't know what to say.

The youth, themselves, spoke of their largest challenge as being the acquiring of new friends. Youth expressed that the making of new friendships had an immediate positive impact on their adjustment experiences in both school and the community as they became socially accepted and part of much-needed supportive peer relationships:

When I came here, the two girls that I met, like, my first two, three days, are still my really good friends. And, like, they were really nice to me. That's like one of the best things I remember coming here. They were really nice to me. They actually showed me around and everything.

First, I was in the camp... and then when I moved in a town house, these girls, they were Canadian, and they just lived next to me and they took me shopping and we started to hang out and stuff.

Nonetheless, the aforementioned negative associations many youth had with being/ feeling 'different', and the challenging new social codes and rankings they encountered among their new peer group(s), operated as significant barriers for some of the youth (especially those older at the time) in terms of their early development of friendships and general adjustment to living in Canada:

...people usually accept their own culture more than they do [people] from other cultures.

When we came here, I had [mainly] newcomers friends. You know, I didn't have Canadian friends because they would just say 'hi' and be nice to me but they wouldn't actually call me after school and be, like, "Oh, do you want

to play tennis or do you want to play basketball?”.

You are always friends with the people that you have something in common. So, until you actually learn Canadian culture, language, and so on and so forth, you can't really have much in common with them. So, that's why in the beginning most people... I know for me, in the beginning I didn't have any, ANY friends. Like, no newcomers came at the time when I came. So, it took me a while before, you know, I started hanging out with Canadian friends.

If you moved here in grade primary it would be easier than moving here, like, in junior high, because you can make friends easier when you are little... it's harder to fit in when you're in junior high.

Several youth cited one approach to socializing and developing friendships as involvement in extracurricular activities at school, such as sports and music:

I have met many people through that [music band]. At school, in the first year, in high-school, you should participate in, as they call them, extracurricular activities. I mean, that way you meet people that you otherwise would never meet. I am friends with some people that I have met like that. Not with everybody, but with some.

These are my friends [photograph]. The one on the left is a new friend that I met through football. On the right is my oldest friend. I met him maybe a week after I came to Canada... This is, again, the same friend, just with my other friend. I met him last year... same, through the football, and we are together almost every day. We are good friends.

The acquisition of new friendships in Canada, however, was often paralleled by the regretted loss of contacts and friendships from the home country. Strong, yet too often fading, connections with home friends, then, served as an additional challenge of adjustment for most of these young people:

I left lots of friends back home... in Yugoslavia, ex-Yugoslavia. The first year I came, I wrote one letter. They wrote me back and then it was over...

Within their bids for early social acceptance and inclusion by their Canadian peers, however, a number of youth reported feeling lonely and isolated from others, at times, with some recalling incidences of bullying, rejection, and discrimination:

Some people discriminated [against] you. They excluded you from the group. When we first moved here we had this big project and you could pick partners... everybody got to be picked, but I had to work alone. I felt bad.

I think in schools there are way much more bullies than they were in my country. Because, there was a basketball game going on couple years ago and what happened to me is, I asked if I could play with them. And they said, "No, it's ok, next time, because we have enough players". Two seconds after me, a guy, their friend, came here and asked if he's allowed to play. They say, "Sure, come on and play!"

They don't want to show you the good side. And sometimes they don't want to include you in some of the stuff they do, because you're different from them.

Youth recalled highly trying school-site experiences where they felt they were judged, teased and ridiculed by their Canadian peers. Participants noted that some Canadian youth would make assumptions that they, as newcomers, were less intelligent or academically competent than Canadian-born students. Such attitudes left many participating youth feeling devalued and inferior:

Because you are from a different country and they think that you don't know anything and that you're stupid... but really you're probably smarter than them.

...They judge you by where you're from or something...

People try to make fun of you when you first come here. Because, like, they'll make you feel stupid and they'll give you the bad side of Canadians.

My teacher thought just because my English was bad that my knowledge, like work, was just as bad.

Sometimes, I forget how to spell easy words in English and I am afraid to ask other Canadian students because then they're, like, "Oh, you don't know how to spell that?!".

...they say 'don't judge', yet they do it themselves. They try to lecture us on, "Oh, don't judge another person, don't do that", then they do it themselves. So, don't be the hypocrites.

A key source of such teasing, as recalled by the youth was, and to a degree remains, their lack of fluency in the English language, accompanied by the distinctive accents of many who acquire English as a second language. To avoid or overcome such situations, many youth reported that they would refrain from participating in their classes or initiating conversations with peers. The very anticipation of being embarrassed in front of others would often make the youth feel inhibited and shy, especially during their first school years within Canada:

When I was younger, like, when I was in grade four, five and six, sometimes when I wanted to ask a question in class... I just wouldn't ask because I think that it was dumb and the Canadian kid would not ask this question. Anything you ask is different from what they would think, and they'd be, like, "Oh, my God, didn't you hear, didn't you know that?!"

Sometimes, I don't even talk in school because I feel stupid.

Of particular note, youth overwhelmingly reported that a, perhaps *the*, major source of personal embarrassment, whether in school or the community, has occurred when their names have been mispronounced. Although the youth laughed somewhat when conveying these experiences (researcher's note), they did express certain hurt as they recounted their names being sometimes mispronounced or negatively associated with the names of animals, vegetables, or objects, as they sounded to, or were construed by their Canadian peers:

They used to call me the 'screwdriver'. I was telling them my last name... And somebody was, like, "Screwdriver!". But, I wasn't thinking it was that funny because it was kind of pretty stupid.

Sometimes when you go to school and you have a substitute [teacher] and they start reading the attendance, they pronounce your name wrong ... and they start pronouncing it really dumb. Then, everyone laughs because it's funny. It was sort of embarrassing, but it's funny. And then they'll do an announcement and the whole school would hear it.

I think everybody got a problem with the last name... They are lazy... and to them it is difficult.

It sounds weird the way they say it. Like, if you want them to pronounce it the way you want it, it sounds weird.

While youth stated they had initially tried to teach friends, peers, teachers and others to pronounce the names correctly, most had eventually accepted nicknames or shorter versions of their names from others as alternatives. Despite this concession, some youth perceived mispronouncing of their names as teasing behaviour, and, feeling helpless to prevent such incidents, identified those occurrences as emotionally painful:

Sometimes I walked out of the classroom when I first came because they made fun of me. I just walked away.

And you, like, wish you had a different name... because it's different from others...[and] because it's embarrassing.

Well, I didn't call them names, so I didn't appreciate it. But, then I just gave up. And you can't deal with it, because if they want to call you something, they just will.

...I'm used to it now. So you just go along with what they say.

...sometimes, when I try to explain them, they are still, like, "What, what?". They still get confused and I just give up and leave it.

During the discussion of adjustment experiences and challenges, youth also

reported having difficulties with daily peer pressure and being socially accepted. In this regard, their experiences of peer pressure and peer conflict were quite similar to the youths' earlier expressed challenges of acquiring new friendships. Getting along with peers in school was particularly difficult for some youth upon arrival in Canada and, once again, youth cited that being 'different' negatively contributed to their social adjustment in schools and in the community. Interestingly, some youth additionally viewed their parents' expectations (e.g., evening curfews) as an occasional barrier to being socially accepted by peers. Finally, while some participants felt more able to assert themselves in social situations, especially when challenged by peers, others experienced difficulty withstanding peer pressure, and harassment, given their desire and need to socially adapt and be accepted by their Canadian cohorts:

You are more likely to get in fight if you are from a different country than if you are a Canadian.

Well, they'll push you around if you don't do what they do, and they'll say stuff to you.

My parents are pretty strict about some things. For everybody here... it's normal to go and stay outside, just wander around in the streets 'till eleven o'clock. And my parents don't think it's right... it's not me, it's my parents. And they [Canadian peers] are, like, "Oh, why can't you do this? You don't want to do this?"

Many of the positive adjustment experiences identified by the youth informants centered upon involvements with sports, music, and other extracurricular school activities. As earlier noted, participating in these activities was perceived as a welcome opportunity to meet new people and make friends. While there was somewhat limited discussion of such activities in the focus group interviews, youth in individual interviews (drawing from photographs they had taken) expanded on the importance and value of

these involvements for the relaxation and camaraderie they provided:

There are lots of sports in the school that I do... Music and sports are, like, the most things I get on a busy day.

I played trumpet in grade ten and I was in a band. Then in grade eleven I told myself to get into a sport a little bit. By that time I have not been playing soccer for three and a half years, I was not good in soccer any more, I was not good enough in basketball. Then I told myself, "What else?", and came up with football... so I said, "ok, I'll try it". And I went to those, as they call them, 'try-outs', I tried and succeeded.

School adjustment Participant youth, especially those who had attended school in the Former Yugoslavia, generally felt that the school curriculum in their homeland was more demanding than the curriculum they study here in Canada. Command of the English language, however, had stood as the critical barrier in their academic learning, making the acquisition of mathematics somewhat easier, overall, than other subject areas:

It's positive that we knew more. They would be surprised that we could keep up. You know, like, with math and everything, you didn't really need English. So, people were very surprised that I could keep up. That was a positive thing.

...in my country we covered far more than they are here. So, for the first two years I was at high level and advanced.

Actually, they were very behind. So, when I came I was, like, "Wait a minute, that I did a year ago!?", or something like that. So, it kind of gave me time to catch up. If they started where I left off back home, I don't think I would be able to catch up.

While some youth, owing to their ages or lack of proficiency in English, were placed at lower grade levels than in the Former Yugoslavia upon arrival in Canada,

...they were supposed to put me in grade four and they were, like, "Why don't you just go in grade three" because I was little.

And they wouldn't skip you because they don't believe you can do that. They don't believe you.

most said that they were given credit for the knowledge and education they acquired through schooling in their home country schools and were assigned grade levels appropriate to their ages and/ or academic achievement:

I started here in the beginning of the year, in September, and I was supposed to start grade seven here. And they, I don't know why, I think because of my age, they just simple said: "You'll go in grade eight". So, I started the grade eight and I haven't spent even a day in grade seven.

I started primary when I was six here but I was really supposed to start when I was five. So, when I was in grade one they moved me up to grade two...

Social As expressed by the youth, ongoing social adjustment was by far the most profound challenge of their early experiences of immigration. Once again, for many of these youth, feeling 'different' became combined with early experiences of 'not fitting in' with peers, although most cited considerable improvement in their social acceptance and inclusion over time:

When my sister came, she was worse than me. She hated it here, she couldn't stand it, and she was only nine years old. So, we were trying to make her feel better, but right now she is more Canadian than anybody else.

...when I got here in Canada, first six grades I was really, really shy...now I am, like, one of the loudest in the class.

Acquisition of English as a Second Language

Need for language acquisition As youth recalled, shortly upon arriving in Canada many began to attend either preschools or public schools in their locale, where the usefulness, if not necessity, of learning English as a second (for some third) language

(ESL) became immediately apparent. Most youth, however, recounted their acquisition of ESL (an ongoing process for all and easier when younger) in positive terms, especially with regard to the relative lack of difficulty presented by the language itself:

The language was the least of my problems out of everything. I mean, the last three months of grade one is when I started school. And I had no problems at school. Like, I went on to grade two after three months of that...after three months there I spoke fluent English. That's all it took for me.

Back in my country I used to go in some English classes for a couple of months before I moved away. And then when I came here it was pretty easy. It took me, like, couple months to be able to understand everything.

I don't even remember learning how to say 'hi', or anything. It just happened, you know. And I think English is quite easy to learn.

It depends on when you come. Like, obviously, as a little kid you pick up languages a little quicker. The older you are the harder it is to pick up languages.

Interestingly, as many as half of all participants identified English as their language of preference at present (see Figure 1). Out of four individual interviews only one was conducted in Serbo-Croatian, and three were conducted in English, as a preferred choice by the youth themselves:

...because it was easier, that's for first. And then the second is because there would be some stuff in Serbo-Croatian that I wouldn't know how to say and I would be stuck on... I am used to it [English] because I speak English most of the day with friends in school...

...because in English I can express myself better because I've really forgotten Serbo-Croatian...

Barriers to acquisition Despite having mainly positive attitudes toward ESL, particularly in terms of the challenge the language itself poses, youth did report certain

difficulties or barriers they encountered during the language acquisition process. Some youth felt overwhelmed, stressed, and frustrated when dealing with points of grammar and expression, or when they felt their teachers covered too much material at once.

The inclusion of French in the school curriculum was deemed an additional stressor for those who had no background in either of Canada's official languages:

[The] challenge was actually pronouncing the words since in our language is the way you spell it, you say it and... same like in German, they have some letters that are silent.

First, here they make you, like, try to write everything out, not actually to speak... it would be easier if you understand it first... They should make it fun.

They give you too much information at the same time. They tell you, "This is a word. Now, this could be a noun but it could also be a verb, and the way you write it..." . They give you too much information at one time. And you don't even know what the noun is.

And then they give you French! Why do you need French? Why giving French and English at the same time!?

Most challenging for the youth, however, were their experiences of ESL within social interactions with their Canadians peers. In these many involvements, the effective use of the English language was noted as a major communication barrier and impediment to developing closer relationships by most youth. Some youth felt that their lack of English was sometimes also inappropriately used by others as a source for teasing. Youth recalled experiences of being made fun of in their classrooms, mostly by peers, yet sometimes by teachers:

...they've made fun of you if you didn't pronounce the word right...even the teachers would make fun of it sometimes. Like, if you don't get something they're, like, "Ha-ha, you don't get that" and they say, "Go to your mother". And, like, my mom doesn't speak English... and when you talk back to

teachers you get in trouble... you can't say anything to them. But, like, everybody said, "The teacher is making fun of you", and you couldn't really say anything because you can get even in more trouble.

...when you're having an accent you just say one [word] little bit wrong, they, like, don't know what you're saying. They can't figure it out.

Some youth also stated that certain Canadian peers would play tricks on them by using English as a tool in order to manipulate them and or to get them in trouble in school. Youth felt that they were taken advantage of, at times, and that their naivety was exploited for the amusement of others:

When I first moved here I didn't know anything, so the kids used to teach me the bad words. And when I went up to the teacher and I said bad words, she was, like, screaming at me. I just couldn't explain anything... I was, like, "What's that?"

When I was once outside, some guys got in a fight and then they came in the school and they said it was me. I got in trouble and I didn't know how to speak English. I didn't say anything, so I had to go to the office.

For me it happened that I got in trouble because after couple of days in school, it was, like, a third day, a person, a friend... supposedly friend, told me to say something and I've said it and I got in trouble. And the principal tried to talk to me about that but I couldn't say anything... I didn't feel really good. Because I tried to say what happened but I really couldn't because I didn't know how to say anything.

Youth spoke of feeling unrecognized for their acquisition of, at least, rudimentary English and, at times, unfairly treated for their relative lack of fluency or understanding of the English language. Several youth commented that they had variously felt misunderstood, judged, and devalued by those (mainly teachers and peers) who made assumptions about their intelligence or worth on the basis of proficiency in ESL:

I was in Canada, like, five months and I already knew

English. Then I pretty much got fluent. And I went to school and everybody was treating me like I didn't know English. They were, like, "This is a desk. Can you say desk?". I looked at them, like, "Yes, I can say desk". They still do that! And I have been here five years!

The only thing I would say, my English teachers, to this day, they don't give me the mark that I deserve. I would write an essay and it's just as good as somebody else's and she won't give it to me because in her head she has the idea of me not being able to write as well as the other people.

...It was really bad. Oh, I got so mad! She wouldn't give me a higher mark than a C... Just because she's biased. And I told her I speak five languages...

Overall, English, as an additional language, was not that difficult, in technical terms, for most of the participant youth. Many needed only several months to feel comfortable communicating in English on a daily basis in their schools and communities. While some participants responded that they remain most comfortable speaking their native language, and others noted no language preference, the majority of interviewed youth cited English as their current preferred language for everyday communication. Such a preference for English would indicate that the acquisition of ESL as an additional language no longer continues as a communication barrier of any particular significance for the study youth.

Adoption of New Country

During all interviews in the study, youth perceptions of Canada, Canadians, and their English Canadian peers, spontaneously emerged, as they discussed their adjustment experiences at school and in the general community. As youth who had initially come to Canada from warring regions of ethnic and political turmoil, the most important advantage of being in Canada was (is) that there exists social and political stability, As

one youth stated, “people get along”. Several participants emphasized that Canada is a “peacekeeping country”, helpful to immigrants from all over the world, and a safe haven for refugees who come from conflict areas:

It’s a better life here because, over there, where we used to live, there were lot of wars. Not only one, but there were, like, couple wars and Canada is, like, the most peaceful country.

What I like about Canada is [that]...a lot of immigrants come here from all over the world. So, they are pretty open to immigrants... sometimes. Not all the time, but they are pretty open. So, sometimes they can help you or they know how to help you.

Youth offered that additional advantages of living in Canada included their perception that “schools are simple”, “everything is convenient”, and “the whole life is easier”. Some mentioned shopping malls and high technology as examples of welcome Canadian amenities, while others more generally cited “better opportunities” and enhanced prosperity (a “better life”) as advantages to living in Canada:

...you have better opportunities here in Canada... presents and different stuff. Here you can have a better life than you used to.

There are, like, two TVs in the house and I never had two TVs in Bosnia. It’s usually one. I have lots of toys and stuff like that. That’s another thing that I didn’t have in Bosnia and in Yugoslavia.

I love it here because you can afford more stuff. I know, like, where we used to live there is no tax or anything and that’s a good thing but here, for some reason, you can afford more. They pay you more. They pay you, like, fairly for the thing you do, for the job you do.

Schools (*Negative*) As earlier noted , when youth spoke about Canadian education, many noted that Canadian schooling, in terms of curriculum, was relatively

“easy” and “simple”. Although viewed as an advantage by newcomer youth in the first years of immigration, some youth felt less positively challenged than in the Former Yugoslavia, and found themselves increasingly bored with their public school education in Canada:

The school level [became] worse and worse as I moved from one country to another. In Yugoslavia was the best one, then in Germany was a little bit worse and then here is even more worse.

And the school over there is way more harder than here. The school here is way simple. When I was over there in school we had physics and chemistry in grade seven and then I came here and I see what they are doing. I’m just, like, “Whoa, I did that a long time ago!”

The first grade when I came over here was the grade four and I have known the stuff. Like, give me a break!

There I find that the system of learning in Europe in general, not just in Yugoslavia, is more broad. Like, you learn not just about Europe. You know a lot about Europe and where you are from, but you also know about other countries.

Some participants also felt that the process of education takes altogether too long a time in Canada, with their future plans for personal independence, employment, or family life having to be deferred by the need for ever higher education. In this context, several participants expressed that certain cultural values from their home country, reflected in the expectation to form a family before the age of thirty, are challenged and difficult to maintain in Canada, thus creating additional pressure and uncertain feelings about the future:

Well, I think here the schools are longer. You go, like, I don’t know, high school and then university. Over there it’s, like, what? You go grade eight, then you go to high school and then whatever you want to do and then you’re done.

You do get more options but it's a harder way to get to it.

Like, I'm gonna be done school when I'm thirty two years old if I want to do what I want to do. And that's why I'm questioning myself if I really want to do that because thirty two years old?! I want to have children in, like, you know, five, six years, c'mon. And I'm not goanna get the opportunity to have them if I want to finish my school, you know... it puts a lot of pressure on you...

(Positive) Comments that spoke to the more challenging and difficult features of their experiences within the Canadian education system, however, were balanced by positive assessments of Canadian schools and schooling. Youth observed that Canadian schools are well equipped with educational materials and that schools are able afford computers, which are, according to this participant, sorely lacking in the schools of the Former Yugoslavia:

There is more stuff and this school can afford way more stuff. We didn't have even one computer in my school in Bosnia. Not one. And in this one there is, like, a hundred.

Another positive feature of Canadian schools, noted by several participants, was the provision of wide-ranging extracurricular and recreational activities for students. Among these organized involvements, sports seemed most appreciated, followed by music bands and drama groups. Canadian schools were also perceived by some of the youth as being more attuned and responsive to students' individual needs with many choices available both within the academic curriculum and, as noted, the range of extra-curricular activities. As such, most youth felt they had greater personal choice, opportunity, and support in determining their future plans:

They have lot of those, as they call them, 'extracurricular activities', they have many groups... it is nice to see.

I like the way the school is run. You can take different

subjects. Like, you can take difficult courses if you want to become something. But you have a lot of time. Like, they give you a lot of time to do extracurricular activities like sports and stuff.

...they give you lots of time to decide what you want to be. And over there you decide when you're, like, in grade eight. Personally, I don't think it's a good thing. I like it the way it is here.

Gender Youth generally felt that Canadian women were more liberated than women in the Former Yugoslavia, having choices and freedoms in their lives relatively equal to those of men's. One male participant's view was comically expressed by his comment that "women have all the power here". Others noted that in Canada, as well as in their home country, family and gender roles have been changing over time and that women's position in society has been generally improving in many parts of the world, yet still challenged to strive above society's traditional norms in the Former Yugoslavia:

Here women are more career-oriented... back home if you don't get your education before you get married you're gonna stay home and raise the kids. I like the way it is here because you get more power and you have more control of your life.

Although youth generally viewed Canada as a good country to live in, they expressed certain disappointments in Canada's cultural and societal norms when compared with values, norms, customs, and traditions of their home country.

Most youth felt that physical activities and sports are not nearly as emphasized or embraced in Canada as in their former homeland(s). Youth recalled sports and outdoor activities as features of daily life in the Former Yugoslavia and expressed they found difficulty maintaining the same lifestyle in Canada. Participants felt that their Canadian peers and friends were considerably less interested in spending time outside and playing

sports, being rather given to indoor, sedentary pursuits and pastimes:

People are lazier here... because they have so much technology. No one goes outside. They are wrapped around computers and they never stop.

We are more active over there than they are here. We would play hide and seek and stuff. And I was outside, like, twenty four/seven with my friends. Over here, nobody wants to go outside and get tired and stuff. So, they would do some stuff inside, like computer, watch TV...

Even when involved in sports, the participant youth felt their Canadian peers were too often overly serious, competitive, and aggressive in their play:

I think their sports are more aggressive. Like, hockey and football. In our country, soccer is like a fun thing, but here they get in fights even in soccer, not only in hockey.

Here they are more competitive. They don't have fun here. We might be competitive, but we have fun.

Adult-child relationships Many youth also observed differences involving norms and practices between Canada and the Former Yugoslavia with regard to relationships between children and their parents (or other adults), and the general place and behaviour of children and youth in society. Some participants noted a lack of discipline in Canadian families and schools. They felt that their Canadian peers have more individual freedoms and fewer overall restrictions imposed on them by their parents and teachers:

There is no discipline in Canada. It's less discipline than over there... because kids, they do whatever they want whenever they want. They do drugs, they drink, they do whatever they want.

...kids go to jail here when they are, like, fourteen. There, you wouldn't get in trouble because you wouldn't want to. There was more discipline. I think in schools there are much more bullies than they were in my country.

There are no dropouts over there but here there is like a whole bunch. Because students there know that if they don't do well that they won't end up anywhere. I think parents also encourage them more.

Furthermore, participants observed that, in general, Canadian youth show a lack of respect for adults, including parents, their teachers, and the elderly in society. Some youth voiced that displaying respectful attitudes and conduct in relationships with adults was a societal expectation and a cultural norm in the Former Yugoslavia. As such, observing disrespectful behaviours on the part of their Canadian peers toward significant adults was, for many of the youth, a somewhat surprising and disappointing experience:

When I first came that was the first thing that I have noticed; that the respect for older people was not even close to what it is in Europe. In Yugoslavia, every day when I meet somebody I say, "You" [in Serbo-Croatian a capital Y is used in 'you' out of respect for a person], "Good day", nicely and politely.

I also noticed that they had no respect for adults, at all. And I especially mean respect for teachers and someone who gives you the knowledge in life. They have no respect for them.

I used to want to be a teacher because my dad was, and I just like school. But I changed my mind since I came to Canada because of how teachers are respected. They don't get any respect.

Laws and regulations Older youth complained that for youth between sixteen and nineteen years of age in Canada there is a notable lack of available appropriate community settings and activities for the young to gather and be active during the evening hours. Some youth saw as a contradiction the right to obtain a driver's license at age sixteen, yet to be restricted from entering pubs and bars until the age of nineteen:

...when you look at it, you can drive when you are sixteen but then you can not do anything, absolutely nothing. When you turn nineteen then you can do whatever you want... from sixteen to nineteen, there is nothing. You can go to the

cinema [but] there is nothing else.

We can't go to disco! Being seventeen and sixteen is the worst age ever. You just can't do anything. Yes, you can get your license but where're you gonna go? In mall? Mall closes at 9:30. Ok, we'll go home. Like, seriously.

Additionally, youth felt that authorities such as police are sometimes unnecessarily involved in the community. According to participants, police in Canada are often drawn into matters that, in the Former Yugoslavia, might otherwise be resolved between conflicting parties or on a local basis, within families or between neighbors:

The bad part is, like, everything that happens the police has to be involved.

Over here, the cops are too involved. If just a little thing happens, they come to deal with it. Like, if kids get in a fight, normally parents deal with it, but over here they call the cops.

Daily interactions and discourse Somewhat related to earlier discussions concerning the acquisition of ESL and schooling in Canada, participating youth also shared their opinions on the nature of their daily conversations and informal interactions with Canadians, in general. For most participants, their greatest unease would develop when fearing being misinterpreted or misunderstood by others, especially peers, friends, and teachers:

I think people are more educated over there than in Canada. I talked to teachers here and teachers over there in Germany and then with people from Bosnia. You can have more intelligent conversation with them... people here, they are so narrow-minded.

I think the people are happier... they joke and people don't get as offended as Canadians do. If you're talking to a Canadian person you have to, like, take care of what you're saying... you have to be like, "Ah, you know, I'm sorry if I offended you", or something, you know. We are more

relaxed about things.

Interestingly, by the end of discussions in the focus groups many participants expressed their concern and mixed feelings about having voiced any negative attitudes about Canada, its people, or its customs. Although the youth had spoken freely about their everyday challenges and experiences, they felt genuinely regretful for having expressed any negative opinions about living in Canada (“I hope they [Canadians] don’t hear this”). Youth felt that, overall, they had emphasized more of the “bad stuff” than the “good stuff” about living in Canada and collectively agreed that they did not wish to be seen by others as unappreciative of the advantages they and their families enjoyed as Canadian citizens. Participants did say, however, that they felt more comfortable speaking honestly about their newcomer experiences with a researcher from their own cultural group rather than with Canadians, who, according to the youth, “don’t understand” and might “say the opposite” from them on certain matters. During this later part of the focus group discussions, youth sought to balance their opinions, while allowing that they did maintain both positive and negative feelings about Canada:

Nobody says anything about good stuff. There is a lot of good stuff, but, now that we are talking about it makes you think of bad stuff, for some reason. I don’t know why.

When you come to think about it, we came here for a better life and then we are, like, talking how bad it is here. It’s kind of funny.

I think we are really ‘dis-Canadian’... They are not that bad. We really, like, put them down and we said all the bad things about them...

And it’s not ok. I have grown up with Canadians. They are my friends. Like, my best friend is a Canadian. She’s my best, best, best friend and never let me down...

Becoming and being Canadian While the majority of youth remained strongly connected and affiliated with their cultural background from the Former Yugoslavia, most also felt an ever deepening attachment to Canada and its culture. Becoming Canadian, at heart, continues as an ongoing process for most youth, although some stated that they feel primarily attached to Canada at this time in their lives:

...when I came here it was, like, I started a whole new life. I never had any friends that were from the same countries... all my friends are Canadian. Like, I know people [from the ex-Yugoslavian community] but I don't really hang out with them that much. I started the whole different life. I started whole Canadian culture thing. When I go back there I like it, but it's not my home. That's how I feel like. I know I was born there and raised there. I only lived there until I was seven. Like, I remember lots of stuff but when I go back there I just don't feel it's my home, I don't feel like I belong there...I come here and I'm, like, "This is my home". Even my parents think that. They're, like, "We don't belong there any more".

Living Between Cultures

Finally, throughout discussion about their experiences as Canadian newcomers, youth spontaneously spoke to their experience of living "two different lives". For many youth living in Canada currently means building new experiences, a new future, and new life, while their speaking of another language, and being born and raised in the Former Yugoslavia greatly contribute to their larger identity. Participants often cited their experiences within the two cultures as "totally different" and perceive Canada and the Former Yugoslavia as "two different worlds":

I went away this summer and it was so much different than here, and I really, really enjoyed it. Then I came back here and it was just like, "I'm back to my...this is my new life and I was in my old life".

Accordingly, in addition to those challenges faced living in Canada, some youth also spoke of adjustment challenges back in their home country when visiting during vacations and holidays. Some youth reported feeling similarly frustrated and now 'different' in their own home country where, at times, they currently feel misunderstood by their extended families and friends, as a result of lost or diminished contact over time:

Our families and friends from where we are from, they think that you're rich right now... and they ask you to bring stuff to them but they don't know how hard it is to work here. They think it's like you just get money from a tree.

I wish I have an accent. I do when I go back... I have an accent when I speak Bosnian. They're, like, "Oh, you're not from here" and I'm, like, "I was born here".

Younger youth participants especially felt that time and their new experiences in Canada had brought about changes in themselves, that, although they had some difficulty defining them, nonetheless became apparent during occasional visits or mail contacts with home. For some youth the very effort to stay connected with the "old life" constituted a formidable additional challenge:

I changed! Like, it's just so many things happened there and I'm like, "I missed out". Sometimes I feel sad and sometimes I'm like, "That's life". I think the important thing is just to stay in touch, to stay in touch with culture, you know...

Sometimes, I just think this place [Canada] totally changed me from what I used to be. Somehow I changed, I don't know.

Older youth, while not feeling so personally or individually 'changed' still experienced being caught between cultures. For some, short of adopting Canadian culture, per se, they felt they had "learned to accept it". As such, divided or ambivalent cultural loyalties seemed to be more apparent in the older youth who expressed experiences of confusion and struggle with identify within either culture. For those youth

who also lived in other host countries prior to immigrating to Canada (e.g., Germany) the search for a clear cultural identity seemed to be even more ambiguous:

[I] only lived in Bosnia five years... I never went back there. I never went back to Bosnia since I left. I don't really know it. It's like, I am from that country but I get lost wherever I go. It's like, "Ok, I don't belong to Canada and now I'm home sick". I'm, like, "I want to go back to Germany", but when I go back to Germany I'm, like, "Where am I from? I'm not really German either". I feel like I am one person lost without knowing who I am although I know who I am. You know, it's quite complicated. Just my parents try teaching me everything and they are doing really good job but I just feel like I don't know when I go back there. I feel like I do belong.

In summary, youth discussed a wide range of newcomer experiences stemming from their immigration to Canada. While some adjustments were reported to be pleasant and positive, youth generally focused on those more challenging and difficult encounters with peers, teachers, and others in schools and within the community. With English identified as a critical first barrier upon arrival in Canada, youth outlined that other challenges, such as making new friends and being accepted by peers and others, were far more stressful in their daily lives. Where some youth felt strong affiliation with the Former Yugoslavia and others expressed living between the cultures, there were few participants who, throughout discussions, embraced their more acquired and developing Canadian identities.

Supports and Services

Utilizing Supports and Services

A final topic of the interviews focused on the youths' knowledge of, and any involvement with, community programs, services, and supports particular to Canadian

newcomers. Interestingly, almost one third reported that they were unfamiliar with any such services (“... never heard of that”), while more than half of all participants reported not having received, at any time, nor having needed services or supports from community-based programs for newcomers (see Figure 1). Youth who were and are still involved with such services, however, were pleased to identify several particular programs which have offered help to them and their families. As a group, the youth, agreed that the responsive services to the needs of Canadian newcomers were inherently of use to those newly arrived in Canada:

I think it's important because you don't come over to Canada with very much, so it's good to get as much help as you can.

Among local programs and services (see Appendix A), the Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association (MISA) was recognized most often for its services and supports to newcomers. Other acknowledged organizations, although less familiar to most participants, were YMCA's Newcomer School Support Program, YMCA's Community Involvement Program (CIP), Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), Centre for Diverse Visible Cultures (CDVC), and the Christians for Refugees organization.

Youth who were familiar with the MISA seemed to be so by merit of its relative prominence within the greater Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM), yet have less direct knowledge of its actual services:

They helped us a little bit...

...they do something, like, they help you.

MISA is huge. I mean, they get all kinds of government money [but] they are not as personalized. You are just sort of

like a number, you know... MISA is more about launching as many numbers as possible. They get you through it, they tell you everything you need to know and you are on your own.

Youth involved with the YMCA programs, however, provided richer descriptions of their participation and experiences with the program's activities. Especially helpful to one participant were the Newcomer School Support and the Community Involvement programs that look to support each youth's social and emotional needs, and which promote newcomers' smooth transition into Canadian society. These programs, in particular, helped some youth with their most immediate challenges, such as learning English and making new friends:

This is a picture of YMCA Newcomer Support room [see Illustration 3]. It's like ESL and over there come people with language needs, like immigrants... Pretty much every school has one and they are really helpful... I think it's one of the greatest things for newcomers... They don't do just, like, academic, they kind of do some fun stuff and go on field trips. My first year they took us out to museums and stuff. It was really new to us. That kind of stuff they do.

There was a program that recently closed down and I'm really sad about it. It's called CIP... Community Involvement Program. There, people, not [only] immigrants, people from other cultures, would come together and would volunteer. We would go camping March break and summer and we would just do all sports, go see movies, and all kind of stuff. It was so nice when I just came here. It just kind of gave me another view and something else to do... and it was very fun.

One participant spoke highly about the Centre for Diverse Visible Cultures (CDVC) and its services for both Canadian newcomers and others interested in various multicultural groups. This participant emphasized the need for public awareness of such programs ("I don't think anybody knows") and for services offering practical community activities for newcomers and individuals of different ethnic backgrounds:

It is a fantastic program... they have, for example, soccer club where people come and play, or they have different activities. They have computers and people can come there. That's one of the things that is needed here I think.

One of the services that virtually each youth spoke of having already received, or was continuing to receive, is language support through an ESL program in their respective school. Most youth complained that attending ESL classes are mandatory in most schools. Even though the program was developed with the purpose to help newcomer students acquire literacy in English, youth generally thought that they should have a choice whether to learn in specialized ESL programs or in the "regular" classroom with their Canadian peers:

Well, you have to take ESL if you don't know English when you come here. You don't go to regular classes, you go to ESL.

I don't know who suggested it. Actually it was a guidance counselor... it was something standard for everybody. Anyone who is new they take to ESL.

You don't really have a choice in our school. You have to go to it unless you put up like a really big fight, like I did. I got out of it, like, the first month.

I think it's a good program but I don't think I wanted to go to it because I didn't think I needed it at all. I'm just not [the] kind of person who wants help. Well, I have to go every Wednesday afternoon and I tell the teacher I don't want to go but they make me go. I don't know why.

I think that they should have ESL, but I think that that should be optional.

You are not allowed to skip it.

Many students expressed further complaints about their experiences in ESL classes. Youth reported that teaching methods such as using coloring books or applying a

reward or a token system in the ESL program made them feel infantile and 'stupid'.

Additionally, some participants felt that the ESL teachers often mistakenly perceived the youths' overall learning aptitude as poor or insufficient, leading them to feel frustrated and unmotivated:

Yeah. I took ESL, too, and I hated it so much! Because it was so annoying. I took it in grade four and I already knew everything. And she [teacher] was like "This- is -a- biiike" and I would be like "I- knooow". And she would be, like, "What - are - you - wearing - today?" It's just a waste of time! I wish I didn't have to go.

...they made me feel stupid...they give you a candy. Every single word you say in English, they give you a candy.

The only time I would recommend it is if you don't know any English. Once you learn the basics you should go out. Because they gave me coloring books when I was in grade seven.

Youth emphasized that separation from Canadian classmates for the purpose of attending ESL classes strongly contributed to their feeling 'different' from other students. It was also challenging for some students to have additional ESL homework while attempting to follow and master the materials that taught during missed regular classes:

Then you get so much homework, you didn't catch up. You had to go back to class and you missed much.

They just teach us super words and then you would go home and do the work by ourselves.

You feel different when everyone else [is in] the class and I would be pulled out of class to go learn English.

...it would help you more [to attend regular class] because teacher would actually sit down and explain to you. She wouldn't give you a candy for a reward like the other teacher does.

Here, again, experiences did differ among participants and some youth reported

viewing positively their ESL instructions. For these students, ESL programs significantly assisted their overall development of English language skills and served to facilitate their quicker and smoother integration into the regular classroom:

I had a good time. Last time when we spoke here [in the focus group] some people said they didn't have that good experience because they [teachers] wanted to keep them there more. But some of them said it was good. And it was good for me because the teacher saw that she could not work with me more, that the next step for me was to attend the regular classes. She said that I had no reason to stay, that I knew enough and that it would be better and faster for me to learn English in class.

I had the English as a Second Language program in grade one or two, I don't really remember. They were other kids there...the kids that couldn't speak really that well. And then we did, like, little games, learn couple of new words and stuff each day. It definitely helped build my English a lot.

Personal supports Most youth cited receiving support, as needed, from their friends more so than their teachers, although some made special mention of both their ESL and other school teachers as important sources of help and support, especially in the first years of schooling in Canada. Several students developed close relationships with the teachers who, to this day, remain close and available for additional academic and emotional support:

When I was in junior high I had a really good ESL teacher and he helped me a lot, too. If I need help I would still go to him and talk to him... he understands how I feel. He's a really good teacher.

...my grade seven teacher...became a very special one when she understood that I needed more help than other people, as it was my second year in Canada then. She was really, really understanding and really nice, and that's why she became really special. I was one of her best students, and now she's actually my neighbor. So we are really close now.

You needed more help than other people and they just offered it.

Youth generally reported that their Canadian friends were better able to help them with everyday ESL acquisition and orientation to Canada and their local community,

I think that here in Canada, and in life generally, friends are a big part of the life. And especially in Canada the friends are the ones who helped me, who taught me all I know in English...I mean, from a proper English to a slang and words...I learned all from friends.

Some people were helping us out...some Canadian friends. They sent us to places to show us where everything was, helped us with our school work and stuff like English.

When I came here, the two girls that I met, like, my first two, three days are still my really good friends. And, like, they were really nice to me. That's like one of the best things I remember coming here. They were really nice to me. They actually showed me around and everything.

while their newcomer friends understood more of the emotional struggle and adjustment challenges they faced as new Canadians because of their similar backgrounds and experiences:

I have lots of friends from my country... They would show me around.. [help] adjust to the system.

...newcomers. Because they were in the same situation, they understood and they were just like "Yeah, let's hang out together".

...people who have gone through that themselves are the best people to help you because they know what you're going through, or they know someone like you ...

They know your language. Say you don't know this word and they know how to say it, they can tell you the word and tell you the meaning , 'till you understand it..

Parents and family Relatively few of the students (youth) said that they approach family for help and support during difficult times of adjustment, owing mainly to appreciation that their parents had (have) compelling adjustment challenges of their own. Most youth, as previously noted, tended to seek their parents' support and guidance in maintaining cultural features, traditions and values while in Canada, such as speaking and practicing their native language(s). Although one participant did report utilizing family support in the acquisition of English, others mostly embraced families for their overall emotional comfort and support:

Well, the language, I don't think it was very hard to learn because my parents taught me the most of it. My parents went to this place where they could learn English, like, it's a little English school.

I got lot of support from my mom. We kind of help each other... When I came here she was my best and one and only friend. So, she means a lot to me. I mean my dad tries and he tried a lot of times, you know, to help me. I mean he's good at it sometimes but, you know, there is a difference between mother and father. Mothers know what to do and she knew what to say at the right time...

Sports As earlier outlined, extracurricular school and community activities were deemed helpful by youth during their early ongoing periods of adjustment in Canada. Through such involvements, youth found they were most able to form new friendships, gain personal confidence, and feel more comfortable in their daily interactions:

Yeah, just sports thing really helped me. Like, my sister was in cheer leading and paddling. We both did paddling and stuff like that. We did everything. That's where we get to know people and you interact with people more. [You] start to know the people from other schools and stuff like that. I liked it a lot.

One participant identified, in particular, Balkan United, an ex-Yugoslavian-Canadian

soccer team, as a key source of support that provided an opportunity for newcomers to get involved in the Canadian community while maintaining and strengthening their cultural connection with ex-Yugoslavians:

It's good to have something that people can come and play together. I don't think just to play, but to be together, to speak in our language, do whatever.

Suggested Supports and Needs

At the end of the focus group interviews, participants were asked for their suggestions of activities, programs, services and supports that would be helpful to them and other newcomers in the community. Youth were also encouraged to identify any current specific needs they might have related to their ongoing adjustment to living in Canada, by way of their Canadian peers, ESL, school teachers, schools, support agencies, families, or other important relationships and features of their daily lives.

Initially, youth seemed to be uncertain what to say (“Nothing. I don’t know”) and one youth humorously commented, “The most thing I am missing from Bosnia, the most top thing is *ćevapi*’ [traditional Bosnian sausages] . However, with encouragement, youth soon offered helpful tips, suggestions, and advice for both newcomers and Canadians alike.

Some youth had a specific, direct message for newcomer youth to Canada who might face challenges similar to those they had encountered, as a result of their own immigrant experiences. Mostly, youth felt that newcomer youth should become involved in social activities within their schools and the communities as the most effective way to acquire new friendships:

To not be shy! Because I know, for me, ...when I came I

was really shy about everything, but now when I know what Canadians do, it's really weird. So, like, you shouldn't be really shy. I would tell them not to be shy and just go along with the friends.

...just things like, "Open up", because I thought some of the things I do Canadians wouldn't do. I thought that when they made fun of things I said, or did, or they made fun of me, like, "Oh my God, it's because a Canadian person wouldn't say this". But then some other time, say similar thing happens to a Canadian and then it's just not like what you thought it was.

Well, I can kind of tell them, "Go to music and sports". If they don't like, they'll just not do it ... but I can still tell them that it's really fun and there is lots of good stuff about it. You'll learn much more if you do that. That was a good thing for me.

For their Canadian peers, teachers, and others, their advice included calls to "be patient", "be honest", and "be open-minded". Participants stressed the importance of others treating them (newcomers) with respect, understanding, acceptance, and appreciation for their culture, history, traditions, and values. In all, these messages and expressed attitudes also underlined the youths' everyday emotional and psychological needs that had evolved from their accumulated social experiences:

Don't be afraid to change your idea of somebody. Most of them have the fixed idea and it's really hard to change. Like, to have an idea about the background, and whatever...

And then you're, like, "Why don't you try to say something in Yugoslavian". There is no way they can even say some words.

...when you say something they make you prove wrong. Like, you are always wrong, you are never right... some of them. But some of them, if you talk to them they listen to you and then you kind of have a conversation with them. But, some of them say like, "No, you're wrong, that's not it...". They just don't even want to listen to you.

They think everything started here... and they are just so ignorant. Like, they are going over there and bombing monasteries that are, like, six times older than their whole country.

Finally, one participant, within an individual interview, cautioned that commonly used terms for those who come to a new country, such as 'immigrants', 'refugees' and 'newcomers' (particularly 'immigrants'), may well bear discriminatory implications that promote a sense of 'other than', 'separate from', 'lacking of', or other negative connotations toward individuals, families, and groups seeking safe haven and the opportunity to seek satisfying and fulfilling lives:

I always think about it in a negative way, I don't know why. When somebody says, "immigrant", they are automatically saying, in my head, "You're not part of us, you're not one of us".

Because a lot of people have an idea, especially here, that [an] 'immigrant' is somebody who came from a country that is corrupted... people are killing each other and stuff like that. And it's a negative thing, so I don't like to be called an 'immigrant'. I mean, if somebody, except for my friends who are joking, said that ['immigrant'], I get too upset.

'Newcomer' is just a fact and a term, but 'immigrant' is too mean. Maybe not to all people. It's more an assaulting word... evokes many more emotions than a 'newcomer'. 'Newcomer' is ok, you are new here, that's not too bad. But, "You're immigrant!" ... I get offended.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this research provide a valuable addition to existing knowledge and research related to the adjustment experiences of Canadian newcomer youth, particularly those from the area of the Former Yugoslavia. The youths' voiced feelings, attitudes, and perspectives on their pre- and post-immigration experiences contain important implications for support and service sectors, set forth in later recommendations for various impacted and integral groups and helping sources (see Recommendations). Discussion of the research results is organized within the study's overall research questions.

1) What meaning does their cultural affiliation have for youth of the Former Yugoslavia now living in Canada?

In the literature about immigrant and refugee children and youth it has been well recognized that adjustment to a new country is often a difficult and challenging experience for young newcomers (Bettencourt, 2002, Kilbride et al., 2000; Kunz & Hanvey, 2000; Seat, 2000). One of the important factors that often influences the adaptation to a new society is the youth's culture of origin and personal attachment and affiliation with its features, values, customs, and traditions (Santrock, 1998). The importance, for youth, of maintaining their home culture, heritage, language, values, and family norms and practices, has been noted in several youth-oriented studies and reports on Canadian newcomers from various cultural backgrounds (Fitzgerald & Rouvalis, 1995; Kunz & Hanvey, 2000; Mac Kinnon, 2001). Such emphasis on cultural

affiliation and cultural retention was also apparent in the expressed attitudes and experiences of youth from the Former Yugoslavia who participated in this research.

In accordance with findings by Fitzgerald and Rouvalis (1995), and Tomar and Kapoor (2002), which outlined the strong cultural attachments of Greek-Canadian and Indo-Canadian youths, respectively, to their families, communities, and overall cultural identity, newcomer youth in the present research expressed a genuine pride of, and connection to, the Former Yugoslavia. Such feelings were based in the youths' positive attitudes toward key features of their cultural group, including its language, history, traditional celebrations and cultural practices, and deep values of home and community. This strong and abiding cultural pride, and its integral place within each youth's personal identity, speaks directly to their need for societal awareness and recognition of the daily significance of cultural affiliation and practice in their lives. These shared sentiments also support previous findings that report such needs as highly common to Canadian newcomers from many cultures (Anisef & Kilbride, 2000; Fitzgerald & Rouvalis, 1995; Janzen et al., 2000; Kilbride & Anisef, 2000; Kunz & Hanvey, 2000; Seat, 2000).

A further need stemming from these findings involves the urgency of preventing hurtful and inaccurate cultural stereotypes, which often result from misunderstandings, misperceptions, and misinformation on the part of Canadian born peers, teachers and others in the community. Especially painful for the youth involved in this study seemed to be those comments from non-Yugoslavians that portrayed the Former Yugoslavia as solely a war country, without knowledge or mention of its rich cultural history and numerous other attributes. Similar lack of understanding about

cultural and geographical backgrounds of Canadian newcomer youth is also well documented in other studies (Anisef & Kilbride, 2000; Bettencourt, 2002), and underlines the need for greater cultural awareness, knowledge, and sensitivity in our schools and society at large. As Hoskins (1999) and others (Anisef & Kilbride, 2000; Kuehne & Pence, 1993) point out, there is a need to develop a more culturally attuned society that provides cross-cultural education for all those who work with children and youth.

As reported in other studies (Janzen et al., 2000; Kunz and Hanvey, 2000), newcomer youth in the current research experienced their leaving of extended families and close friends when they immigrated to a new country as highly stressful, and immediately combined with the challenge of maintaining contacts and connections with these treasured people and their cultural identity, while establishing new relationships and attachments in their adopted country. Not surprising, therefore, many newcomer youth, as reflected in this research and other studies (Kunz & Hanvey, 2000; Seat, 2000), often seek friendships in Canada with peers from their country of origin in order to bring both familiarity and continuity to their experiences as ex-Yugoslavian youth. In seeking out one another, they look to maintain and build their cultural network, expressing a deep need for community and cultural identity. Such efforts, themselves, greatly benefit from family and community supports, as the Balkan United soccer team provides. Clearly, however, there is an expressed desire on the part of the study youth to have even greater contact with other youth in their cultural community and opportunities to engage in activities that, at times, have direct cultural significance or allow for informal conversation and exchange of thoughts on the topics related to being 'Yugoslavian'.

Beyond their relationships with other ex-Yugoslavian youth, the importance

placed by the study youth on retaining and practicing cultural traditions (including language) underlines the youths' need for even broader opportunities at home, in their schools, and within the general community, to preserve and further develop their cultural identities. As indicated, the retention and practice of their native language constituted a vital need for many youth (similar to findings of other studies and commentaries: Assanand, 1998; Fitzgerald & Rouvalis, 1995; Mac Kinnon, 2001).

Finally, the study youth shared their opinions and attitudes about family practices, and parental guidelines and expectations, that are often closely related to cultural values and norms. As others have noted (Abu-Laban et al., 2001; Assanand, 1998, Fitzgerald & Rouvalis, 1995; Mac Kinnon, 2001; Tomar & Kapoor, 2002), balancing cultural values, often imposed by parents, and adapting to new Canadian practices, often enforced by peers in social interactions, presents an imposing challenge to many newcomer youth. While the research youth indicated their desire to respect and value their parents' wishes and guidelines (seen, at times, as quite restrictive), they also sought increased individual freedoms consistent with their Canadian peers. The need, therefore, is indicated for greater parental understanding and continuing support for these and other youths' needs discussed above, as they (the youth) adjust to living in Canada while seeking to retain their own deepening and embraced cultural identities and meanings.

2) In what way(s), if any, do youth of the Former Yugoslavia view their lives and well-being as having been affected by their experiences of the war?

As noted, adjustment experiences in a new country tend to be more complicated for immigrant and refugee youth who come from countries and regions of political, ethnic

and religious strife (Bettencourt, 2002; Fantino & Colak, 2001; Kilbride et al., 2000; Seat, 2000). In addition to facing fairly formidable settlement challenges in new societies, newcomer children and youth who have experienced armed conflict may well be coping with emotional and physical traumas resulting from witnessing killings and bombardments, living in poor conditions, fleeing home countries, family separation, food deprivation, and other horrific experiences of war (Ajdukovic, 1998; Ajdukovic & Ajdukovic, 1993; Fantino & Colak, 2001; Kilbride et al., 2000; Papageorgiou et al., 2000; Williams & Berry, 1991) that may seriously impede their adjustment and development in new circumstances and everyday relationships (Kilbride et al., 2000).

Former-Yugoslavian youth participants in the present study, in their recounting of war and refugee experiences prior to immigrating to Canada, especially those youth who lived in areas most affected by the Balkan conflict (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Serbia and Montenegro), cited how either directly or indirectly they had been affected by the war through, among other misfortunes and tragedies, damage or loss of home and belongings, living in poor conditions, family separations, living in stressful households, missed education, fleeing for safety, leaving behind families and friends, losing contacts with relationships at home, living in multiple countries, and financial disadvantage.

Notwithstanding, participants did not speak of particular past or current personal psycho-emotional difficulties within their experience and generally credited their families as main sources of support as they responded and adjusted to the stressful atmosphere and events of regional warfare, both at the time and subsequently. While no critical or urgent need was evident in the youths' expression of these more traumatic effects of war, the youth, however, in their serious addressing of the conditions and circumstances of war

and appreciation of the security and comfort their parents had offered, underlined the importance of continued attention and vigilance to the psycho-emotional well-being of youth related to not only the immediate but residual negative effects of armed conflict and turmoil upon the young. While some research participants reported being “too young to remember” the conflict, the desire by most other youth “to forget”, or at least de-emphasize, the war in their day to day discussions with others, could be interpreted as one of the specific needs of many youth from conflict-torn areas in their newcomer adjustment process, and one that both Williams and Berry (1991), and Pepler et al., (1999), caution that those who interact and work with these youth should be particularly sensitive to. In this regard, Kilbride et al. (2000) also note, consistent with finding of this study, that many immigrant and refugee youth from regions of war will avoid the topic so as to not be negatively associated with the violence and brutality of conflict. As Garbarino (1993a) emphasizes, particular sensitivity and understanding must be extended to youth from war-torn areas so that they (youth) may feel trusting and prepared to share their experiences of conflict in an atmosphere that respects their integrity, scope of experience, and readiness to share whatever they wish to of these matters.

3) How do youth of the Former Yugoslavia view their current daily experiences of living in Canada?

The daily lived experiences of newcomer youth in Canada have been gaining considerable attention in recent literature concerning settlement and integration of new Canadians (Anisef & Kilbride, 2000; Bettencourt, 2002; Janzen et al., 2000; Kilbride et al., 2000; Kunz & Hanvey, 2000). The findings of several ‘youth-perspective’ studies have indicated that newcomer youth, regardless of their cultural backgrounds, are

regularly facing challenging adjustments in Canadian schools and communities, often related to perceptions and experiences of 'being different' from their Canadian-born peers (Anisef & Kilbride, 2000; Fitzgerald & Rouvalis, 1995; Janzen et al., 2000; Kilbride & Anisef, 2001; Kunz & Hanvey, 2000; Seat, 2000). Such issues were clearly identified by the ex-Yugoslavian youth in the present study.

While being or feeling different was often negatively associated by the youth, in terms of being unduly focused upon, or worse, taunted and stereotyped, it also provided for some a sense of uniqueness and pride when others showed interest in their culture (including language) and pre-immigration experiences. These later, considerably more welcome, points of distinction and genuine curiosity on the part of their Canadian peers, teachers, or community members seemed to foster and strengthen the youths' positive self-perceptions of being experienced, knowledgeable and resourceful. The need, again, to encourage and promote sensitive, informed cultural awareness and, in particular, understanding of both Yugoslavian culture and the Yugoslavian experience, remains critical to optimizing the positive and healthy adjustment of newcomer youth from the Balkan region.

The earliest daily adjustment experiences for all of the interviewed youth, consistent with many past studies (Anisef & Kilbride, 2000; Bettencourt, 2002; Fitzgerald & Rouvalis, 1995; Janzen et al., 2000; Kilbride et al., 2000; Kunz & Hanvey, 2000; Seat, 2000), involved the learning and honing of ESL, and the acquisition of new friendships mixed, regrettably for some, with certain loneliness and isolation, heightened peer pressure and conflict, familial stresses and tensions, and experienced attitudes/ acts of racism and discrimination.

Successful personal and social adjustment, as reported by the study youth, and identified in studies (Bettencourt, 2002; Janzen et al., 2000; Seat, 2000), seemed to involve a certain deepening and loosening of cultural connection and affiliation at one and the same time. While leaving home contacts and relationships to begin anew in Canada, the retention of cultural meaning and contact within the ex-Yugoslavian community provided then, and continues to provide now, much needed comfort and continuity for youth and their families from the Former Yugoslavia. Involvement in their respective schools, particularly extracurricular school activities, such as sports and music, was noted by many of the youth as key to meeting new people and building friendships. This desire on the part of the youth to develop new acquaintances and friendships reflects their need to feel accepted and connected to others, and the value of opportunities that place together newcomer youth with their Canadian peers in activities and settings conducive to positive social exchange.

Overall, most of the study youth indicated having negotiated and navigated the aforementioned negative features of their early and subsequent living in Canada reasonably well, and, for the most part, had come to live happy, involved, and secure lives within loving families, close friendships, both in and outside the ex-Yugoslavian community, their respective schools, and in society at large. Notwithstanding, earlier and more recent incidents of feeling/ being judged, teased, and discriminated against remained bitter occurrences for some youth and reaffirms the need for peers, parents, teachers, and others in society, as emphasized by Kilbride and Anisef (2001), Kilbride et al. (2000), Kunz and Hanvey (2000), and Seat (2000), to actively combat such heinous attitudes and practices, and offer support to youth victims of bullying and social rejection.

In this regard, the school has been noted as the most important and influential factor in the daily adaptive experiences of Canadian newcomer youth in terms of their social adjustment, language acquisition, and academic achievement (Anisef & Kilbride, 2000; Bettencourt, 2002; Bhattacharya, 2000; Seat, 2000). Given the critical significance of schools in these areas, some participating youth expressed concern over schools' inconsistent assessments of their academic grade placements and assigned course levels. While some youth appreciated their school's recognition of their pre-immigration academic achievement and agreed with their educational assessments, others felt they were inappropriately placed in lower grades according to their ages alone, or by inaccurate assessments of their competency in ESL. Accordingly, re-examination of educational assessment tools by school systems for culture-bias may well be warranted in order to arrive at more culturally sensitive and accurate appraisals of newcomer youths' literacy and academic learning skill, as they bear upon not only newcomer students' academic placements but also their school adaptation experiences. Similarly, as youth were not always pleased with the formal ESL instruction they received through the public education system, as, for some, it involved experiences and feelings of patronization, separation from others, and being the focus of negative judgments related to aptitude and ability, the need exists for less formal and more comfortable opportunities to acquire and practice language that offer youth feelings of self-respect, competency, and inclusion.

Overall, the participating youth of the Former Yugoslavia generally welcomed Canada as being multicultural, safe, and economically advantaged country with optimal conditions and opportunities for having a happy and prosperous life.

While some youth did cite somewhat less desirable or attractive features of the country (e.g., a perceived lack of discipline in families and schools, lack of respect for teachers and other significant adults, lack of globally-centred education in schools, consistent with findings from other research (Anisef & Kilbride, 2000; Bettencourt, 2002; Janzen et al., 2000; Kunz & Hanvey, 2000), and lack of physical activeness among their peers, most accepted and spoke enthusiastically about their newfound and, for some, now quite established lives in Canada. Although a number of youth find themselves continuing to adjust to perceived Canadian values and norms, most interviewed youth did not view these as particular barriers, but rather points of occasional challenge as they balance the values, norms, and expectations of their cultural community.

4) What particular needs do youth of the Former Yugoslavia identify in relation to their current socio-emotional well-being and overall development?

The findings of the research, consistent with past studies and accounts (Anisef & Kilbride, 2000; Fitzgerald & Rouvalis, 1995; Janzen et al., 2000; Kilbride & Anisef, 2001; Kilbride et al., 2000; Kunz & Hanvey, 2000; Seat, 2000; Tomar & Kapoor, 2002; YMCA, 1999), provide valuable insight into not only the past but also the emerging needs of the interviewed youth, related to their everyday experiences and ongoing challenges as young newcomers. The youth of the Former Yugoslavia in the present research expressed a prominent need to establish and maintain supportive relationships with school peers and friends from both the Former-Yugoslavian and the mainstream Canadian communities. In this regard, the provision of school and community-based, recreational, after-school and, (for older youth) evening programs and activities that stimulate and encourage comfortable socialization between newcomer and Canadian-born

youth (i.e., peer-support groups, sports, community expeditions) would greatly diminish the challenges of many newcomer youths' social adjustment. The youths' identified need to socialize with peers and others from the ex-Yugoslavian community within their cultural associations, programs, and activities, in which youth could practice speaking their native languages (Serbo-Croatian/ Bosnian, Slovenian, Albanian), share their pre-immigration experiences, celebrate cultural traditions through holidays, food, music and dance, and bond even more closely within their cultural group, would also benefit from ongoing parental, family, and community support and provision of social gathering opportunities.

One of the youths' most expressed current needs is for deepened societal awareness and cultural attunement to the diversity of cultural backgrounds and circumstances of immigrant/ newcomer, and refugee families, so as to avoid misinformation, misunderstanding, and mistreatment related to cultural stereotypes and xenophobic attitudes. Youth felt the urgent need for clarification of misconceptions and misrepresentations of their country as solely a war-torn region, and for further understanding and respect for their rich and long-standing cultural heritage. Accordingly, increased educational, culturally-sensitive programming in schools and the community would serve to inform and promote cross-cultural understanding and acceptance among school classmates, teachers and community members, particularly related to others of the Former Yugoslavia, its cultural features, people, and the pre-immigration experiences of newcomer Canadian youth from these regions. One particular irritant, and ongoing source of frustration for interviewed youth was to be constantly sought to tell stories about, or account for, the 'war' in the Balkans, when they did not feel inclined, due to the sheer

impact of the Balkan conflicts upon them, to whatever degree experienced.

5) What awareness do youth of the Former Yugoslavia have of programs, services, and supports available to newcomers within their community (Appendix A)?

Previous studies have noted that Canadian newcomer youth are not always well informed about available services, programs, and supports in their communities (Kunz & Hanvey, 2000; Seat, 2000). Similarly, many participants in the present research were not aware of existing school and community-based programs for newcomers and, accordingly, had no participation in the same. While some expressed that such services would have been helpful to them, and wished they or their families had known about them in their earlier years of immigration, they also communicated that they wouldn't really know where to look for information about programs, services, and supports.

Most youth in the present study identified that they relied on friends for practical help (e.g., rides to go shopping, information, suggestions, or advice related to school and other areas of challenge and adjustment), parents for emotional support, encouragement, and retention of cultural heritage (e.g., practicing native language, teaching home country religions), and teachers for academic and English acquisition needs (including ESL teachers). Some youth also reported that being involved in extracurricular school and community activities, such as sports (e.g., the Balkan United multicultural soccer club) and music bands, was viewed by themselves as helpful in building new friendships and other social relationships.

Among the existing formal newcomer programs and services (see Appendix A), participants had most often heard of the Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association

(MISA), although only few were actually aware or receiving the organization's available services. The YMCA's Newcomer School Support Program, with sites in many schools across the HRM, was particularly helpful to one participant, however, most youth, surprisingly, were unaware of the program. Similarly, only one participant was involved in the YMCA's former Community Involvement Program (CIP) which seemed to be of value for the newcomer youths' social experiences in the community. The Center for Diverse Visible Cultures (CDVC) was identified by one youth who actively participated in the organization's services, however, no other youth had knowledge of the existence of the program. Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) was identified on the Background Information questionnaire (see Appendix E), as known to two participants, however, during the interviews youth did not state any specific involvement with the organization, beyond having general knowledge of CIC's over-arching role and responsibility in the immigration process of all newcomers to Canada. Similarly, there was no detailed reference to the Christians for Refugees organization (identified as known to one participant), and none of the youth had any experience with the Multicultural Association of Nova Scotia (MANS). On the other hand, and as previously outlined, most youth talked about their positive and negative experiences with ESL programs within their schools, reported by the youth as mandatory for all newcomer students during their first school years in Canada.

The youths' expressed thoughts around the subject of services, programs, and supports for newcomers suggest that there is a critical need for greater advertisement, promotion, and public awareness of these programs, directed especially toward those who are most apt to use and benefit from them. While youth of the Former Yugoslavia have a

need for continuing informal supports from parents, friends, and teachers, specific newcomer programs and services in the community, especially those tailored for youth, would be highly beneficial to youth in their ongoing adjustment process. Furthermore, there is a need to establish enhanced links between these programs and services, and to facilitate their collaboration and sharing of resources with schools.

6) Are there kinds of services and supports, currently undeveloped or unavailable, that youth of the Former Yugoslavia would suggest as useful to them?

As a final query and focus of discussion, participants suggested what they considered to be useful, responsive programs, services and approaches that address particular needs of newcomer youth and youth of specific cultural affiliation. Youth felt that mentoring programs, both within the general community and in their schools, through which tutors (key contacts) might introduce them (youth) to various features of Canadian culture, as well as provide practical support, (e.g., help with homework), would have been beneficial to them in the time of more difficult early adjustment. In this regard, some participants expressed that a peer-tutor from the ex-Yugoslavian community, being bilingual and having similar cultural, pre-immigration, and immigration experiences, might best be able to assist the youths' settlement process. Others, however, thought that having a Canadian-born peer-tutor who is knowledgeable about the community, and fluent in English, would be a more appropriate support for newcomer youth needing help with ESL and orientation to the community.

Finally, several youth proposed that a creatively-designed and practical resource book could serve as a guide to introduce youth to Canadian society, the province of Nova Scotia, and the greater HRM (an existing booklet, *Newcomers' Guide to Services*, MISA,

1999, could, for example, be modified to more specifically address the needs of newcomer youth). The desire for such a resource clearly expresses a need, by the interviewed youth, for updated, welcoming sources on any and all matters that might serve to provide newcomer youth with the information and contacts they need for better awareness of resources in Canada and their specific locale, of programs and services to assist their adjustment to living in Canada. As importantly, the positive response by the youth to the invitation to generate and share their thoughts on useful, responsive services for newcomer youth also indicates a strong willingness, on the part of the youth, to become involved in discussion and planning initiatives in these areas of support.

Limitations of the Research

1. Given that the findings of the research are drawn exclusively from the thoughts, perspectives and attitudes of the study volunteers, they do not necessarily represent the issues, concerns, and opinions of all newcomer youth from the Former Yugoslavia within the Halifax Regional Municipality. Certain of those youth who did not participate in the study might well have had significantly different pre-immigration and newcomer experiences, affecting their enthusiasm or readiness to join discussions on the research topic (e.g., those having more direct and traumatic involvement in the Balkan conflicts) than youth in the study sample, who were generally pleased and eager to share in the research interviews.
2. Focus group dynamics, inherent in shared discussions between relative strangers, might have created certain pressure for some participants to conform with dominant group attitudes. The researcher, however, made every effort to facilitate a range of

perspectives from as many participants as possible. Youth volunteers were regularly encouraged to express their individual opinions and the researcher actively intervened at times to ensure active participation by youth who appeared to be somewhat more shy or whose voices seemed overshadowed by other participants

3. The sample consisted of larger number (18) of younger participants (13-15 years old) than older youth (16-18 years old) and, therefore, two focus groups were conducted with the younger youth, while one alone was held with the older youth. The uneven age range of the participating youth, with older youth being underrepresented in the study, might have bearing upon certain findings in the research (e.g., English language preference). Any significant differences between the age groups were reported and discussed in the Results section (see Chapter 4).

Recommendations

Recommendations for Future Research

1. Future research may focus even moreso on the significant issues and challenges set forth in this research by the interviewed youth, related to their early and ongoing adjustment to living in Canada as members of the ex-Yugoslavian community (e.g., leaving loved relationships and homelands under duress, transitioning to Canada, developing new social relationships and friendships, learning ESL, combating cultural stereotypes).
2. Future research could explore and examine the effects of particular contributing factors critical to the overall adjustment of newcomer youth to living in Canada, including their age at the time of immigration, gender, pre-immigration experiences,

specific cultural affiliation, and available support networks (such as parents, teachers, and peers), identified as prominent influences in the youths' daily well-being.

3. Future research may further study newcomer youth of the Former Yugoslavia within the context of their families, to examine the impact/ experiences upon youth of contributing familial and parental features as socio-economic status, employment, housing, parents' education, parental cultural practices, parents' pre-immigration experiences, and immigration and adjustment experiences. Parental views and concerns regarding their children's adjustment to living in Canadian society, would be a worthwhile dimension to this research.
4. Future research could evaluate community programs, services and supports for newcomers in the HRM and assess the need to develop specific youth-oriented programs for newcomers of the Former Yugoslavia.

Recommendations for Newcomer Youth

1. Newcomer youth, as they suggested for themselves, are encouraged to continue to participate in available extracurricular school activities, and community social and recreational programs, as these provide valuable opportunities to meet new people and develop new friendships.
2. Newcomer youth are encouraged to respectfully, yet openly and assertively, communicate with their families, friends, peers, teachers, and community members, their (youths') emerging needs (e.g., a need "to forget the war") in order to foster awareness and sensitivity in others.
3. Newcomer youth are encouraged to generate and participate in any opportunities to inform and increase awareness among peers, school officials, and community members,

of features of Yugoslavian culture, and the newcomer experiences of families and youth from the Former Yugoslavia.

Recommendations for Parents/ Families

1. Parents/ families are encouraged to continue all appreciated communication and emotional support given to youth, for the purpose of listening and understanding the youths' emerging issues and needs stemming from their challenging adjustment experiences of living in Canada.
2. Parents/ families are encouraged to continue to provide youth with culturally-related supports in order to maintain, practice, and daily live their native languages at home and celebrate the traditions, customs, and features of the Former Yugoslavia.
3. Parents/ families are encouraged to continue providing opportunities at home for open discussions and deepening understanding of challenges faced by youth to balance felt pressures and expectations from, at times, confusing and contradictory sources as home, school, and the community.
4. Parents/ families are encouraged to continue to provide and encourage the youths' long distance contacts with friends and extended family members in the Former Yugoslavia, and arrange, as feasible and appropriate, home visits in order to maintain important cultural bonds and connections.

Recommendations for Child and Youth Care (CYC) Workers/ CYC Programs

1. That child and youth care workers (cycw) continue to be provided with educational/ training programs, direct curricula, and community workshops/ resources that increase their awareness, knowledge and understanding of culture in the everyday

lives of children and youth in Canadian society.

2. That cycw in practice with children and youth of the Former Yugoslavia, be particularly sensitive and culturally attuned to the needs of these young newcomers (given the extraordinary and often compelling nature of their pre-immigration and immigration experiences) in order to provide comfortable, welcoming and supportive environments to facilitate these children's and youths' positive adjustment to living in Canada.
3. That cycw endeavor to utilize creative cross-cultural social activities and resources, to promote culturally sensitive and accepting attitudes among Canadian peers with whom they work, often constituting quite a culturally diverse group with themselves.

Recommendations for Schools (Teachers/ School Administrators)

1. That teachers and schools administrators be provided with general cross-cultural training to further develop culturally attuned understandings and competencies, and to be informed of the particular needs and adjustment challenges of children, youth, and families of the Former Yugoslavia.
2. That teachers model a culturally sensitive, respectful, and supportive attitude toward newcomer students from the Former Yugoslavia and facilitate and promote awareness, understanding, and acceptance among Canadian-born students.
3. That schools develop more culturally-related curricula and resource materials to promote enhanced understanding of cultural experience and investment in cultural retention.
4. That schools make increased use of parents and other representatives of the ex-Yugoslavian community as resources and authentic voices of their culture, to better

inform and educate students' attitudes and behaviour concerning issues of cultural affiliation.

5. That schools continue to provide extra-curriculum activities for Canadian and newcomer students that promote active socialization with one another, often leading to the development of important personal relationships. More emphasis, however, could be placed on activities, such as soccer, that reflect the experiences and interests of newcomer youth from the Former Yugoslavia.
6. That schools take the initiative to organize multicultural events for students with creative programming designed to promote Yugoslavian culture (e.g., musical plays with traditional music and costumes from the Former Yugoslavia, art exhibitions promoting painters from the Former Yugoslavia and/ or Former-Yugoslavian communities).
7. That schools establish peer-mentoring programs which promote interaction and sharing of experiences between Canadian and newcomer students, and which lend themselves to less formal, more fun and relaxed, ways of acquiring ESL, or assistance with matters concerning their academic, social, and/ or community-related information and issues.
8. That schools re-examine their ESL assessment and evaluation measures, and placement practices, for potential culture bias that may place newcomer students at educational risk or heightened challenge in their social adjustment (see Discussion).
9. That schools could further promote and enhance anti-bullying and anti-discriminatory policies and practices, especially related to newcomer youth.

Recommendation for Community Programs/ Services/ Supports

1. That community newcomer support organizations, undertake greater advertisement

of their respective programs and services, not only through already utilized forums, but additionally through accessible and everyday formats and sites (e.g., schools and the Internet).

2. That community programs, services, and support organizations cooperatively develop specific activity programs for newcomer youth, such as community forums, where ex-Yugoslavian youth could share their challenges and experiences with other newcomer youth in the community. Social activities during evening hours could be organized for older youth (e.g., playing billiards, movie-nights), and community recreational sports activities could be generated to support the athletic interests and needs of youth from the Former Yugoslavia (e.g., Balkan United juniors!).
3. That community programs, services and support organizations compile a brochure guide for newcomer youth containing practical information about Canadian society, the HRM community, and available services for newcomer youth.

Recommendations for Media

1. That public media personnel (whether in electronic or print mediums) have available, and be encouraged to join, educational training experiences addressing topics of the broader to more focused issues arising from this current study (e.g., from cultural meaning and affiliation to the specific experiences, needs, and sensitivities of members of the ex-Yugoslavian community).
2. That public media outlets more often profile successful and interesting ex-Yugoslavian individuals or groups (e.g., musicians, artists, writers, the Balkan United soccer team) to increase awareness and appreciation of Yugoslavian culture and people.
3. That media outlets provide, overall, a more accurate, positive, and bias-free

representation of the Former Yugoslavia, its people, and newcomers from this region, in order to combat cultural misunderstandings and stereotypes.

Recommendations for Government

1. That all levels of Government could, through their respective promotional advertisements, public service announcements, and other publicly-funded sources of information, continue to play a leading role in welcoming and celebrating the inclusion of diverse ethnic groups into not only Canadian society as a whole, but into all provinces and territories, and within local communities.
2. That Government provide adequate funding for the development of supportive programs, services, resources and activities for immigrant and refugee families in Canadian communities.
3. That Government continue to provide support and funding to immigration policies and settlement programs serving people from areas of international conflict and war, such as those from the regions of the Former Yugoslavia.
4. That Government enhance its immigration policies and practices for processing visitor visa and family sponsorship applications of people from the area of the Former Yugoslavia, who want to be reunited with, or visit their families now living in Canada.

REFERENCES

- Abu-Laban, B., Derwing, T., Mulder, M., & Northcott, H. (2001). *Lesson learned: An evaluation of Northern Alberta's experience with Kosovar refugees*. Vol. 3, A study prepared for Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Prairie Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Integration and Population Research Laboratory. Edmonton, AB: University of Alberta.
- Ajdukovic, M. (1998). Displaced adolescents in Croatia: Sources of stress and posttraumatic stress reaction. *Adolescence*, 33 (129), 209-217.
- Ajdukovic, M., & Ajdukovic, D. (1993). Psychological well-being of refugee children. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 17, 843-854.
- Akhavan, P., & Howse, R. (1995). *Yugoslavia- The former and future: Reflections by the scholars from the region*. Geneva, CH: The United Nations Research Institute for Social Development.
- Altheide, D. L., & Johnson, J. M. (1994). Criteria for assessing interpretive validity in qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp. 485-499). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Andrews, A. B., & Ben-Arieh, A. (1999). Measuring and monitoring children's well-being across the world. *Social Work*, 44 (2), 105-114.
- Andrzejewski, A. (2000). *Kosovo: The splintering of Yugoslavia*. Brookfield, CT: The Millbrook Press.
- Anisef, P., & Kilbride, K. M. (2000). *The needs of newcomer youth and emerging best practices to meet those needs*. Toronto, ON: Joint Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Settlement.
- Arthur, R. (Ed.). (1999). *The immigrant's handbook of Nova Scotia*. Halifax, NS: Touch BASE.
- Arthur, R. (2000). The Kosovars: Metro's new community. *Touch BASE*, 2 (3).
- Arthur, R., & Bayat, S. (2001). *Canada's Immigrants, Heroes, and Countrymen*. Halifax, NS: Touch BASE.
- Asbury, J.E. (1995). Overview of focus group research. *Qualitative Health Research*, 5 (4), 414-420.
- Assanand, A. (1998). Parenting dilemmas in a new country. *Transition*, 15-16.

- Banks, M. (1995). Visual research methods. *Social Research Update, 11*, Guildford, UK: Department of Sociology, University of Surrey. Retrieved from: <http://www.soc.surrey.ac.uk/sru/SRU11/SRU11.html>
- Bechhofer, F., & Paterson, L. (2000). *Principles of research design in the social sciences*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Becker, H. (1994). Visual sociology, documentary photography, and photojournalism: It's(almost) all a matter of context. *Visual Methodology, 10* (1-2), 5-14. Retrieved from: <http://www.soc.ucsb.edu/faculty/hbecker/visual.html>
- Beiser, M., Hou, F., Hyman, I., & Tousignant, M. (1998). *Growing up Canadian: A study of new immigrant children*. Hull, QB: Human Resources Development Canada.
- Beiser, M., Hou, F., Hyman, I., & Tousignant, M. (2002). Poverty, family process, and the mental health of immigrant children in Canada. *American Journal of Public Health, 92* (2), 220-227.
- Berg, B. L. (1998). *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences*. (3rd ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Berk, L. E. (1997). *Child development*. (4th ed.). Boston, MA: McGraw Hill.
- Berman, H. (2001). Children and war: Current understanding and future directions. *Public Health Nursing, 18* (4), 243-252.
- Bettencourt, E. (2002). Recent research on newcomer youth. *Citizenship & Immigration Canada*. Retrieved from: <http://www.teslontario.ca/research/bettencourt.doc>
- Bhattacharya, G. (2000). The school adjustment of South Asian immigrant children in the United States. *Adolescence, 35* (137), 77-85.
- Bogdan, R., & Biklen, S. (1998). *Qualitative research for education*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Carey, M. A., & Smith, M. W. (1994). Capturing the group effect in focus group: A special concern in analysis. *Qualitative Health Research, 4* (1), 123-127.
- Chamberlain, Z. (2001, April). *Refugee children and youth*. Sweden: International Conference on the Reception and Integration of Resettled Refugees.
- Citizenship & Immigration Canada. (1997). *A newcomer's introduction to Canada*. Ottawa, ON: Minister of Public Works & Government Services Canada.
- Citizenship & Immigration Canada. (1999). *Citizenship & Immigration Statistics 1996*. Ottawa, ON: Minister of Public Works & Government Services Canada.

- Citizenship & Immigration Canada (1999a). *Facts & figures: Immigration overview 1998*. Ottawa, ON: Minister of Public Works & Government Services Canada.
- Citizenship & Immigration Canada. (1999b). Appeal to Canadians to sponsor the Kosovar refugees. *News Release 1999-24*. Retrieved from: <http://cicnet.ci.gc.ca/english/press/99/9924-pre.html>
- Citizenship & Immigration Canada. (2000). *Recent Immigrants in the Halifax Metropolitan Area: A comparative portrait based on the 1996 census*. Ottawa, ON: Minister of Public Works & Government Services Canada.
- Citizenship & Immigration Canada. (2000a). *Forging our legacy: Canadian citizenship and immigration, 1900 - 1977*. Ottawa, ON: Public Works & Government Services Canada.
- Citizenship & Immigration Canada. (2000b). *Canadian community profiles: Destination matching handbook for refugee and humanitarian resettlement*. Retrieved from: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/ref-protection/english/infocentre/settlement-establishment/comm-prof/halifax.htm>
- Citizenship & Immigration Canada. (2001). *Serving Canada and the World*. Ottawa, ON: Minister of Public Works & Government Services Canada.
- Citizenship & Immigration Canada. (2002). *You asked about... immigration and citizenship*. Ottawa, ON: Minister of Public Works & Government Services Canada.
- Citizenship & Immigration Canada. (2002a). *Fact and Figures 2001: Immigrants*. Ottawa, ON: Minister of Public Works & Government Services Canada.
- Cohen, L. J. (1993). *Broken bonds: The disintegration of Yugoslavia*. Boulder, CO: Western Press.
- Corey, M. S., & Corey, G. (2002). *Groups: Process and practice*. (6th ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/ Cole.
- Denitch, B. (1996). *Ethnic nationalism: The tragic death of Yugoslavia*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). *Handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1998). *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Dybdahl, R. (2001). Children and mothers in war: An outcome study of a psychosocial intervention program. *Child Development*, 72 (4), 1214-1230.
- Eisner-Zigman, S. (1993). Cultural diversity and intervention planning. *Journal of Child & Youth Care*, 8 (4), 21-28.
- English, F. W. (1988, May). The utility of the camera in qualitative inquiry. *Educational Researcher*, 8-16.
- Fantino, A. M., & Colak, A. (2001). Refugee children in Canada: Searching for identity. *Child Welfare*, 80 (5), 587-596.
- Filipovic, Z. (1994). *Zlata's diary: A child's life in Sarajevo*. New York, NY: Scholastic.
- Fillmore, L. W. (2000). Loss of family languages: Should educators be concerned? *Theory Into Practice*, 39 (4), 203-210.
- Fitzgerald, M. (1994). Adults' anticipation of the loss of their parents. *Qualitative Health Research*, 4 (4), 463-479.
- Fitzgerald, M. D., & Rouvalis, M. (1995). Greek-Canadian youths: Cultural and familial influences. *Journal of Child and Youth Care*, 10 (3), 43-53.
- Flint, D. (1996). *Topics in the news: Bosnia*. Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn.
- Fontana, A., & Frey, J. H. (1994). Interviewing: The art of science. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp. 361-376). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Garbarino, J. (1993). Editorial. Special section on children and war. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 17, 785.
- Garbarino, J. (1993a). Challenges we face in understanding children and war: A personal essay. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 17, 787-793.
- Glesne, C. (1999). *Becoming qualitative researcher: An introduction*. (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Longman.
- Goldstein, R. D., Wampler, N. S., & Wise, P. H. (1997). War experiences and distress symptoms of Bosnian children. *Pediatrics*, 100 (5), 873-878.
- Greenberg, K., & Isaac, J. (1997). *Bosnia: Civil war in Europe*. Woodbridge, CN: Blackbirch Press.
- Greig, A., & Taylor, J. (1999). *Doing research with children*. London: Sage.

- Grimaud, A. (1993). Settling in. *Canada & the World*, 58 (7), 22-24.
- Guardian. (1999, April). Spoiled by war. *Special Reports*. (1st ed./C4). England, UK: Guardian Unlimited Network. Retrieved from:
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/Kosovo/Story/0,2763,206922,00.html>
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp. 105-117). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Harper, D. (1994). On the authority of the image: Visual methods at the crossroads. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp. 403-412). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Hoskins, M. L. (1999). Worlds apart and lives together: Developing cultural attunement. *Child & Youth Care Forum*, 28 (2), 73-85.
- Huberman, A. M., & Miles, M. B. (1998). Data management and analysis method. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials* (pp. 179-210). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Igoa, C. (1995). *The inner world of the immigrant child*. Mahwah, N.J: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Janesick, V. J. (1994). The dance of qualitative research design: Metaphor, methodolatry, and meaning. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp. 209-219). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Janzen, R., Ochocka, J., Seskar-Hencic, D., & van de Hoef, S. (2000). *Enhancing services and supports for immigrant youth in Waterloo Region*. Toronto, ON: Centre for Research and Education in Human Services.
- Jones, D. P. H. (2000). Editorial: Mental health problems among children living in war zones. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 24 (2), 289-290.
- Kaprielian-Churchill, I., & Churchill, S. (1994). *The pulse of the World: Refugees in our schools*. Toronto, ON: The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.
- Kidd, S. A., & Kral, M. J. (2002). Suicide and prostitution among street youth: A qualitative analysis. *Adolescence*, 37 (146), 411-430.
- Kilbride, K. M., & Anisef, P. (2000). *To build on hope: Overcoming the challenges facing newcomer youth at risk in Ontario*. Toronto, ON: Joint Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Settlement.

- Kilbride, K. M., Anisef, P., Baichman-Anisef, E., & Khattar, R. (2000). *Between two worlds: The experiences and concerns of immigrant youth in Ontario*. Toronto, ON: Joint Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Settlement.
- Kincheloe, J. L., & McLaren, P. L. (1994). Rethinking critical theory and qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp.138-157). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Krueger, R. A. (1995). The future of focus groups. *Qualitative Health Research*, 5 (4), 524-530.
- Kuehne, V. S., & Pence, A. R. (1993). Developing a model for cross-cultural education in child and youth care. *Child & Youth Care Forum*, 22 (4), 301-314.
- Kunz, J. L., & Hanvey, L. (2000). *Immigrant youth in Canada*. Ottawa, ON: Canadian Council on Social Development.
- Kuterovac-Jagodic, G. (2000). Is war a good or a bad thing? The attitudes of Croatian, Israeli, and Palestinian children toward war. *International Journal of Psychology*, 35 (6), 241-257.
- Ladd, G. W., & Cairns, E. (1996). Children: Ethnic and political violence. *Child Development*, 67, 14-18.
- Mac Kinnon, P. (2001, June 23). Teens from immigrant families must learn a new language, juggle traditional and societal values – and figure out who they are. *Chronicle Herald*, pp. E1-E2.
- Machel, G. (2000). *A critical analysis of progress made and obstacles encountered in increasing protection for war-affected children*. Machel Review: 1996-2000.
- Miller, D. W. (1999). Scholars of immigration focus on the children. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 45 (22), 19-20.
- Miller, W. L., & Crabtree, B. F. (1994). Clinical research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp. 340-352). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- MISA. (1999). *Newcomers' guide to services: Serbo-Croatian version*. Halifax, NS: Author.
- Moreno, I. (2000). Kosovar-Albanian children draw war. *Peace Review*, 12 (3), 361-367.
- Morgan, D. L. (1995). Why things (sometimes) go wrong in focus groups. *Qualitative Health Research*, 5 (4), 516-523.

- Morse, J. (Ed.). (1989). *Qualitative nursing research: A contemporary dialogue*. Rockville, MA: Aspen.
- Nguyen, H. H., Messe, L. A., & Stollak, G. E. (1999). Toward a more complex understanding of acculturation and adjustment. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 30 (1), 5-31.
- Nikolic-Ristanovic, V. (2001). Children as multiple victims of war. *Peace Review*, 13 (4), 577-582.
- Olsen, L. (2000). Learning English and learning America: Immigrants in the center of a storm. *Theory Into Practice*, 39 (4), 196-202.
- Ousseimi, E. M. (1995). *Cought in a crossfire: Growing up in a war zone*. New York, NY: Walker & Company.
- Papageorgiou, V., Frangou-Garunovic, A., Iordanidou, R., Yule, W., Smith, P., & Vostanis, P. (2000). War trauma and psychopathology in Bosnian refugee children. *European Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 9, 84-90.
- Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Pepler D., Connolly, J., & Craig, W. (1999). *Bullying and harassment: Experiences of minority and immigrant youth*. Research Report, 1997-98. Toronto, ON: Centre for Research and Education in Human Services.
- Richards, T. J., & Richards L. (1994). Using computers in qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp.445-462). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage
- Rose, G. (2001). *Visual methodologies: An introduction to the interpretation of visual materials*. London: Sage.
- Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. S. (1995). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Samuel, T. J., & Verma, R. B. P. (1992). Immigrant children in Canada: A demographic analysis. *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, 24 (3), 51-57.
- Seat, R. (2000). *Factors affecting the settlement and adaptation process of Canadian adolescent newcomers 16-19 years of age*. Toronto, ON: Family Service Association of Toronto.
- Seidman, I. E. (1991). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

- Shapiro, D. L. (2000). Program development for refugee youth. *Peace Review*, 12 (3), 431-433.
- Sherrow, V. (2000). *Encyclopedia of youth and war: Young people as participants and victims*. Phoenix, AZ: Oryx Press.
- Smith, P., Perrin, S., Yule, W., & Rabe-Hesketh, S. (2001). War exposure and maternal reactions in the psychological adjustment of children from Bosnia-Herzegovina. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 42 (3), 395-404.
- Spradley, J. (1980). *Participant observation*. New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- Statistics Canada. (2001, November). School performance of children from immigrant families. *The Daily*. Retrieved from: <http://www.statcan.ca/Daily/English/011114/d011114a.htm>
- Strauss, A. L. (1987). *Qualitative analysis for social scientists*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.
- Thabet, A. A. M., Abed, Y., & Vostanis, P. (2002). Emotional problems in Palestinian children living in a war zone: A cross-sectional study. *The Lancet*, 359, 1801-1804.
- Tomar, M., & Kapoor, V. S. (2002). Indo-Canadian youth in Nova Scotia. In M. Tomar (Ed.), *The quiet nation builders* (pp. 24-30). Dartmouth, NS: Association of Canadian Educators of East Indian Origin.
- Trebjesanin, Z, Hanak, N., & Kopunovic, D. (2000). Serbian children talk about war and peace. *Peace Review*, 12 (3), 369-373.
- UNICEF. (1994). *I dream of peace: Images of war by children of former Yugoslavia*. New York, NY: Harper Collins Publisher.
- UNICEF. (2001). *Official summary: The state of the World's children 2001*. New York, NY: Author.
- UNICEF. (2002, Summer). Afghanistan: Profile of a special emergency. *UNICEF Works!: An Action Report for Donors*, 1(1), 4. Toronto, ON: Author.
- UNICEF. (2002, Winter). Peace building in Somalia. *Communique: News from UNICEF Canada for Volunteers, Donors and Friends*, 4. Toronto, ON: Author.
- Vaughn S., Schumm, J. S., & Sinagub, J. (1996). *Focus group interviews in education and psychology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Viadero, D. (1998). Immigrant children succeed despite barriers, report says. *Education*

Week, 17 (29), 19.

Weber, S. (2002). About image-based research. In *Image & Identity Research Collective (IIRC)*. Montreal, QB: Concordia University. Retrieved from:
<http://www.irrc.mcgill.ca/about.html>

Williams, C. L., & Berry, J. W. (1991). Primary prevention of acculturative stress among refugees: Application of psychological theory and practice. *American Psychologist, 46* (6), 632-641.

YMCA. (1995). *New Canadian youth needs assessment report*. Halifax, NS: Author.

YMCA. (1999). *School stories*. Halifax, NS: YMCA Newcomer School Support Program.

YMCA. (2002). *Newcomer school support program: Celebrating school and community partnership*. Halifax, NS: The YMCA of Greater Halifax/ Dartmouth.

APPENDIXES

(With selected accompanying translations*)

Appendix A
List of Newcomer Programs, Services and Supports in the
Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM)

Appendix A
List of Newcomer Programs, Services and Supports in the
Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM)

Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association (MISA) – offering a range of services introducing newcomers to a Canadian society and facilitating their full participation in the community. The services include a Settlement and orientation program, Community participation programs, Language assessment, Employment services, an Immigrant entrepreneur orientation program, Family violence awareness program, and Outreach/crisis services.

YMCA of Greater Halifax/ Dartmouth – offering programs and services to help in the adjustment process of newcomer individuals and families in Canada. The Newcomer School Support Program services for youth include orientation, extra help, awareness raising, conflict resolution, advocacy, home liaison, cultural resources, and staff support. The former Community Involvement Program (CIP) services for youth included social activities, leadership development, and education workshops in conflict mediation, skill development, social issues and discrimination. The HOST Program services include individual tutoring, conversation groups, field trips, recreational activities, education workshops, and family resources.

Multicultural Association of Nova Scotia (MANS) – offering services to promote and celebrate diversity within Canadian society. The services include providing multicultural awareness workshops to schools and the community, facilitating

development of multicultural programs and ethnic communities, and hosting an annual multicultural festival that celebrates lives, customs, food, and music of diverse cultures around the World.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) – offering admission and resettlement services for new Canadians and assistance to newcomers in becoming Canadian citizens. The services include resettlement, protection and provision of safety for refugees, providing help to all newcomers in adjustment process in Canada, and managing and regulating access to Canada.

Centre for Diverse Visible Cultures (CDVC) – offering supports and services for individuals and groups from diverse visible cultures and members of other ethnic communities. The organization promotes and encourages public awareness and understanding of cross-cultural issues in schools and communities, provides supportive programs and services to Canadian newcomers, and serves as an advocate body for ethnic minority groups, especially those (as note) of diverse visible cultures. The services include, but are not limited to, literacy programs, computer-assisted ESL learning, services for immigrants and refugees, legal advisory and information services, respite and hospice care, counseling, Canadian citizenship preparation, translation/interpretation services, family supports, foster grandparent programming, and sports (soccer club).

Appendix B
Sample Interview Questions

Appendix B
Sample Interview Questions

1. Tell me, if you would, what it means to each of you, personally, to be a member of your cultural group from the Former Yugoslavia?
2. Are there particular features of your culture (e.g., values, traditions, or customs) that you still keep and practice here in Canada?
3. Tell me about your life before you came to Canada (e.g., family, friends, activities).
4. In what way(s) do you feel that the war and conflict in your former country has affected your life?
5. What thoughts and feelings do you have about being a 'newcomer' here in Canada?
6. Tell me about your 'fitting in' (adaptation/ adjustment) experiences in Canada (e.g., friends, school, community, language)?
7. What experiences of being a 'newcomer' have you found to be more positive or more challenging?
8. What have you found to be more helpful to you during times (or situations) of adjustment?
9. Are there things that you wish other people had known about the challenges you have faced, are now facing, or think that you might face in your future, here in Canada?
10. What are your experiences with newcomer programs, services, and supports here in the greater Halifax Regional Municipality (Halifax/ Bedford/ Dartmouth)?
11. Do you have any suggestions or ideas about what services, activities, programs and supports would be helpful to you and other young newcomers?

Thank You!

Appendix C

Letter of Introduction/ Focus Group*

Appendix D
Informed Consent/ Focus Group*

Appendix D

Informed Consent/ Focus Group

INFORMED CONSENT

I have read the enclosed letter explaining the nature and the purpose of the research entitled “**Living in Canada: Experiences of Newcomer Youth from the Former Yugoslavia**” by Valerija Karlović.

I understand that my/ my child’s participation in the **focus group discussion** is completely **voluntary** and that I/ he/she can freely **withdraw** from the research at any time or **refuse to answer** any questions.

I understand that my / my child’s identity (including name) will be **anonymous** and will NOT be used in any reports.

I understand that any information I/ my child share(s) will be kept **confidential** and only the researcher (Valerija Karlović) and her thesis supervisor will have access to audiotapes and transcripts from the group discussion. I also understand that all audiotapes and transcripts will eventually be destroyed at the end of the research.

I understand that there is **no anticipated risk or harm** to me/ my child by participating in this research.

I understand that the **final report** of this research will be **available** for me to view upon my request.

I, _____ give permission for my child, _____
(Parent’s name; please print) *(Child’s name; please print)*

to participate in this research.

I, _____ agree to participate in this research.
(Youth’s name; please print)

Date: _____

Parent’s signature: _____ Youth’s signature: _____

If you have any questions about the conduct of this research, you may contact the Chair of the University Research Ethics Board, **Dr. Stephen Perrott**, by phone at 457-6337, or by e-mail at stephen.perrott@msvu.ca.

Appendix D
Informed Consent/ Focus Group
(Serbo-Croatian/ Bosnian translation)

INFORMISANI PRISTANAK

Pročitao/la sam priloženo pismo u kojem je objašnjena priroda i svrha istraživanja pod nazivom “**Život u Kanadi: Iskustva Mladih Doseljenika iz Bivše Jugoslavije**”, Valerije Karlović.

Shvatam da je moje/ mog djeteta učešće u **fokusnoj grupnoj diskusiji** potpuno **vlontersko** i da se ja/ on/ona bilo kada mogu/ može slobodno **povući** iz istraživanja ili **odbiti da odgovorim/ odgovori** na bilo koja pitanja.

Shvatam da će moj/ mog djeteta identitet (uključujući ime) biti **anoniman** i da **neće** biti korišten ni u jednom izvještaju.

Shvatam da će informacije koje ja/ moje dijete iznesem/ iznese biti **povjerljivo** čuvane i da će samo istraživač (Valerija Karlović) i njen nadzornik teze imati pristup audio-kasetama i skriptama sa grupne diskusije. Također shvatam da će sve audio-kasete i skripte biti uništene u dogledno vrijeme nakon završetka istraživanja.

Shvatam da učešćem u ovom istraživanju za mene/ moje dijete **nema nikakvog predviđenog rizika niti štete**.

Shvatam da će **konačan izvještaj** ovog istraživanja biti dostupan za pogledati na moj zahtjev.

Ja, _____, dajem odobrenje da moje dijete, _____
(Ime roditelja; štampanim) *(Ime djeteta; štampanim)*

učestvuje u ovom istraživanju.

Ja, _____, pristajem da učestvujem u ovom istraživanju.
(Ime tinejdžera; štampanim)

Datum: _____

Potpis roditelja: _____ Potpis tinejdžera: _____

Ako imate bilo koja pitanja u vezi sprovođenja ovog istraživanja, možete kontaktirati Predsjednika Univerzitetskog Istraživačkog Etičkog Odbora (The Chair of the University Research Ethics Board), **Dr. Stephen Perrott**, telefonom na **457-6227**, ili e-mailom na **stephen.perrott@msvu.ca**

Appendix E
Background Information Form

Appendix E
Background Information Form

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Age: _____ years _____ months

2. Gender: Male _____ Female _____

3. When did you come to Canada? Year: 19_____
20_____

4. How old were you when you came to Canada? _____ years

5. Why did you come to Canada? (*Check more than one, if applicable*)

_____ Because of war in my country

_____ To reunite with family already here

_____ Political and/or ethnic reasons

_____ Business opportunity for my parents

_____ Other reason (*please specify*) _____

6. What is your country of origin?

_____ Bosnia-Herzegovina

_____ Slovenia

_____ Serbia-Montenegro

_____ Croatia

_____ Macedonia

_____ Other (*please specify*) _____

7. Where (in what country) did you live prior to coming to Canada?

_____ Bosnia-Herzegovina

_____ Slovenia

_____ Serbia-Montenegro

_____ Croatia

_____ Macedonia

_____ Other (*please specify*) _____

8. What is your mother tongue?

_____ Serbo-Croatian/Bosnian _____ Slovenian _____ Other (*please specify*)
 _____ Macedonian _____ Albanian

9. What language are you most comfortable speaking?

_____ Mother tongue _____ English _____ Other (*please specify*)

10. Who do you live with here in Canada? (*check all applicable*)

_____ Mother _____ Brother/s (how many) _____ Grandmother
 _____ Father _____ Sister/s (how many) _____ Grandfather
 _____ Other/s (*please specify*) _____

11. What grade level are you in school now?

Grade _____
Other (please specify) _____

12. Are you now or were you receiving services/ supports from any of the following programs for newcomers/ immigrants?

YES: ☐ Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association (MISA)
☐ YMCA of Greater Halifax/ Dartmouth
☐ Multicultural Association of Nova Scotia (MANS)
☐ Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC)
☐ Other (*please specify*) _____

NO: _____ Unfamiliar with services
 _____ No particular need
 _____ Other (*please specify*)

Thank-You!

Appendix F

Letter of Introduction/ Individual Interview*

Appendix G
Informed Consent/ Individual Interview*

Appendix G

Informed Consent/ Individual Interview

INFORMED CONSENT

I have read the enclosed letter explaining the research entitled “**Living in Canada: Experiences of Newcomer Youth from the Former Yugoslavia**” by Valerija Karlović and I understand the procedure of youth participation in the individual interview.

I understand that my (youth)/ my child’s participation in this research is completely **voluntary** and that I/ he/she can **withdraw** from the interview at any time or **refuse to answer** any questions.

I understand that my/ my child’s identity (including name) will be **anonymous** and will NOT be used in any reports or photographs.

I understand that any information I/ my child share(s) will be kept **confidential** and only researcher and her thesis supervisor will have access to audiotapes and transcripts from the interview. I also understand that all audiotapes and transcripts will eventually be destroyed at the end of the research.

I understand that the photographs I/ my child take(s) for the purpose of this research will be first viewed by me/ my child and that any pictures I/ my child share(s) during the individual interview will afterwards be accessed only by the researcher and her thesis advisor. I also understand that I/ my child will be asked for comments about the pictures during the individual interview. The photographs will be used only for research purpose and will be **returned** to me/ my child after the end of the research. I understand that some photographs might be included in the final report of the research, however, this will happen only with my/ my child’s permission.

I understand that I/ my child may participate in the individual interview without being involved in the photo-project.

I understand that I/ my child will have a choice to communicate in **either English or Serbo-Croatian/ Bosnian language** during the interview.

I understand that there is **no anticipated risk or harm** to me/ my child by participating in this research.

I understand that the **final report** of this research will be **available** for me to view upon my request.

I, _____ *give permission for my child,* _____
(Parent's name; please print) (Child's name; please print)

to participate in the individual interview.

I, _____ agree to participate in the individual interview.
(Youth's name; please print)

Parent's signature: _____ Youth's signature: _____

Date: _____

If you have any questions about the conduct of this research, you may contact the Chair of the University Research Ethics Board, **Dr. Stephen Perrott**, by phone at 457-6337, or by e-mail at stephen.perrott@msvu.ca.

Appendix G
Informed Consent/ Individual Interview
(Serbo-Croatian/ Bosnian translation)

INFORMISANI PRISTANAK

Pročitao/la sam priloženo pismo u kojem je objašnjeno istraživanje pod nazivom **“Život u Kanadi: Iskustva Mladih Doseljenika iz Bivše Jugoslavije”**, Valerije Karlović i shvatam proceduru o učešću tinejdžera u individualnom u intervjuu.

Shvatam da je moje/ mog djeteta učešće u ovom istraživanju potpuno **volontersko** i da se ja/ on/ona bilo kada mogu/ može slobodno **povući** iz intervjuja ili **odbiti da odgovorim/ odgovori** na bilo koja pitanja.

Shvatam da će moj/ mog djeteta identitet (uključujući ime) biti **anoniman** i da **neće** biti korišten ni u jednom izvještaju niti na fotografijama.

Shvatam da će bilo koje informacije koje ja/ moje dijete iznesem/ iznese biti **povjerljivo** čuvane i da će samo istraživač (Valerija Karlović) i njen nadzornik teze imati pristup audio-kasetama i skriptama sa intervjuja. Također shvatam da će sve audio-kasete i skripte biti u dogledno vrijeme uništene nakon završetka istraživanja.

Shvatam da će fotografije koje ja/ moje dijete napravim/ napravi u svrhu ovog istraživanja biti prvo dostupne meni/ mom djetetu i da će slike koje pokažem/ pokaže u toku idividualnog intervjuja poslije biti dostupne samo istraživaču i njenom nadzorniku teze. Shvatam da će, u toku intervjuja, istraživač pitati za komentare u vezi slika. Fotografije će biti korištene samo u svrhe istraživanja i biće **vraćene** meni/ mom djetetu nakon završetka istraživanja. Shvatam da će neke fotografije možda biti priložene u konačnom izvještaju ovog istraživanja, međutim to će se ostvariti samo uz prethodnu moju/ mog djeteta saglasnost.

Shvatam da ću **ja/** moje dijete moći učestvovati u individualnom intervjuu i bez sudjelovanja u foto-projektu.

Shvatam da ću **ja/** moje dijete imati izbor da razgovaram/ razgovara **ili na engleskom ili na srpsko-hrvatskom / bosanskom jeziku** u toku individualnog intervjuja.

Shvatam da učešćem u ovom istraživanju za mene/ moje dijete **nema nikakvog predviđenog rizika niti štete**.

Shvatam da će **konačan izvještaj** ovog istraživanja biti dostupan za pogledati na moj zahtjev.

Ja, _____, dajem odobrenje da moje dijete, _____
(*Ime roditelja; štampanim*) (*Ime djeteta; štampanim*)

učestvuje u individualnom intervjuu.

Ja, _____, pristajem da učestvujem u individualnom intervjuu.
(*Ime tinejdžera; štampanim*)

Datum: _____

Potpis roditelja: _____ Potpis tinejdžera: _____

Ako imate bilo koja pitanja u vezi sprovođenja ovog istraživanja, možete kontaktirati Predsjednika Univerzitetskog Istraživačkog Etičkog Odbora (The Chair of the University Research Ethics Board), **Dr. Stephen Perrott**, telefonom na **457-6227**, ili e-mailom na **stephen.perrott@msvu.ca**.

Appendix H
Picture-Taking Process Instructions

or the Chair of the University Research Ethics Board,

Dr. Stephen Perrott
Chair, University Research Ethics Board
Mount Saint Vincent University
Phone: 457-6337
E-mail: stephen.perrott@msvu.ca

I look forward to meeting with you in few weeks. Have fun with the camera!

Respectfully,

Valerija Karlović,
M.A. Student
Department of Child and Youth Study
Mount Saint Vincent University

Dr. Michael Fitzgerald,
Thesis Supervisor
Department of Child and Youth Study
Mount Saint Vincent University

Appendix I

Selected Sample of Independent Transcript Translations

Appendix I

Selected Sample of Independent Transcript Translations

Translation by the researcher:

“It’s interesting. I mean it’s always good to have experiences in life in different things. And that’s good. It’s interesting that in the beginning, when I came to Germany I did not speak German at all. But here... When you live in Germany or in Europe generally, you hear English every day in songs, you pick up a few words... I knew how to say “My name is” and all these basic, simple things. Nothing much. And English was a little bit easier. But German, it was interesting that I did not know at all. Nothing. And then when I came there was a girl who’s mom was from Yugoslavia and she spoke and understood our language a little bit. Not much. And she was the only one in my class who could help me. So I needed her to help me and she was telling me all the time what a teacher was saying by translating to me. But I guess I had asked her too much and she got angry at me. Because I was asking her all the time “What was that? What did the teacher say?” and she could not answer me that fast. And I also know that she was not translating half of the stuff because the teacher was talking a lot and she would just tell me something short. So she got angry at me one day

Translation by independent translator:

“It is interesting. I mean, it is always good to have different experiences in life. And that is good. It was interesting that, when I came to Germany, I didn’t speak German at all. But here....When you live in Germany or Europe in general, you can hear English daily, everywhere, so you remember a few words. I knew how to say “My name is” and such basic simple words. Not much. English was a little easier. But German...it was interesting that I didn’t speak it at all. Not a word. So when I came there, there was a girl whose mother was from Yugoslavia so the girl understood and spoke a bit my language. Not a lot. And she was the only one in my class who could help me. So I needed her help and she interpreted to me all the time what the teacher was speaking. But I assume that I asked her too much and she got angry with me. That was because I asked her all the time: “What was that? What did the teacher say?” She couldn’t interpret that fast. I also know that she didn’t interpret half of what was said because the teacher talked a lot and she [the girl] would tell me something very short. So that is how she got angry with me one day”.

FIGURES

Figure 1
Sample Profile

Figure 1
Sample Profile

Total number: 26

*Multiple responses

<i>Gender</i>	<i>No.</i>
Male	14
Female	12

<i>Household family members</i>	<i>No.</i>
Both parents and sibling(s)	22
Parents, sibling(s) and grandparent(s)	2
Parents, sibling(s), grandparents and others	2

<i>Age when immigrated</i>	<i>No.</i>
3 – 5 years	5
6 – 8 years	5
9 – 11 years	9
12 – 14 years	7

<i>Language preference at present</i>	<i>No.</i>
Mother tongue	7
English	13
No preference	6

<i>Year of Immigration</i>	<i>No.</i>
1993 - 1995	8
1996 - 1998	4
1999 - 2001	14

<i>Country/ area of origin *</i>	<i>No.</i>
Bosnia and Herzegovina	15
Croatia	5
Serbia and Montenegro	3
Slovenia	2
Macedonia	0
Other:	
Kosovo	2

<i>Age</i>	<i>No.</i>
13 years	12
14 years	4
15 years	2
16 years	3
17 years	3
18 years	2

<i>Mother tongue *</i>	<i>No.</i>
Serbo-Croatian / Bosnian	21
Slovenian	2
Macedonian	0
Albanian	2
Other:	
German	2

<i>Reason for immigration *</i>	<i>No.</i>
War in country of origin	14
Political and/or ethnic pressure	7
Reunite with family in Canada	1
Business opportunity for parents	5
Other:	
Better life	2
Better education	1
School / Parents' work	1
Had to leave Germany	1
Do not know	2

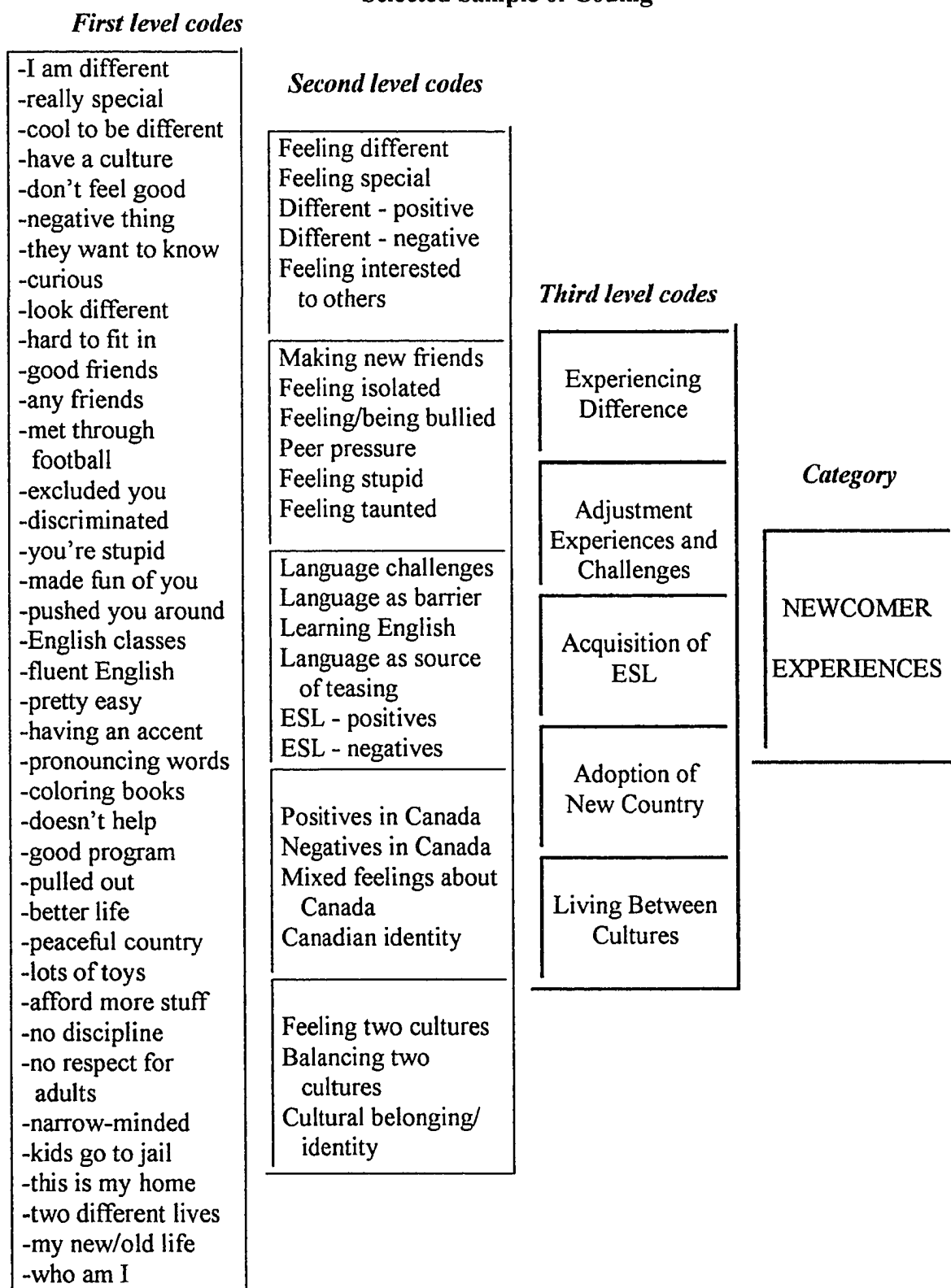
<i>Grade in school</i>	<i>No.</i>
6	3
7	10
8	1
9	4
10	1
11	4
12	2
Other:	
University	1

<i>Country/ area of residence prior to immigration *</i>	<i>No.</i>
Bosnia and Herzegovina	8
Croatia	8
Serbia and Montenegro	3
Slovenia	2
Macedonia	0
Other:	
Kosovo	2
Germany	4
Not specified	1

<i>Past/ Current involvement with community services/ supports *</i>			
<i>YES</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>NO</i>	<i>No.</i>
Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association (MISA)	10	Unfamiliar with services	8
YMCA of Greater Halifax/ Dartmouth	2	No particular need	5
Multicultural Association of Nova Scotia (MANS)	0	Not specified	3
Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC)	2		
Other:			
Christians for Refugees	1		
Centre for Diverse Visible Cultures (CDVC)	1		

Figure 2
Selected Sample of Coding

Figure 2
Selected Sample of Coding



ILLUSTRATIONS

Illustration 1
Traditionally Decorated Easter Eggs

Illustration 1
Traditionally Decorated Easter Eggs

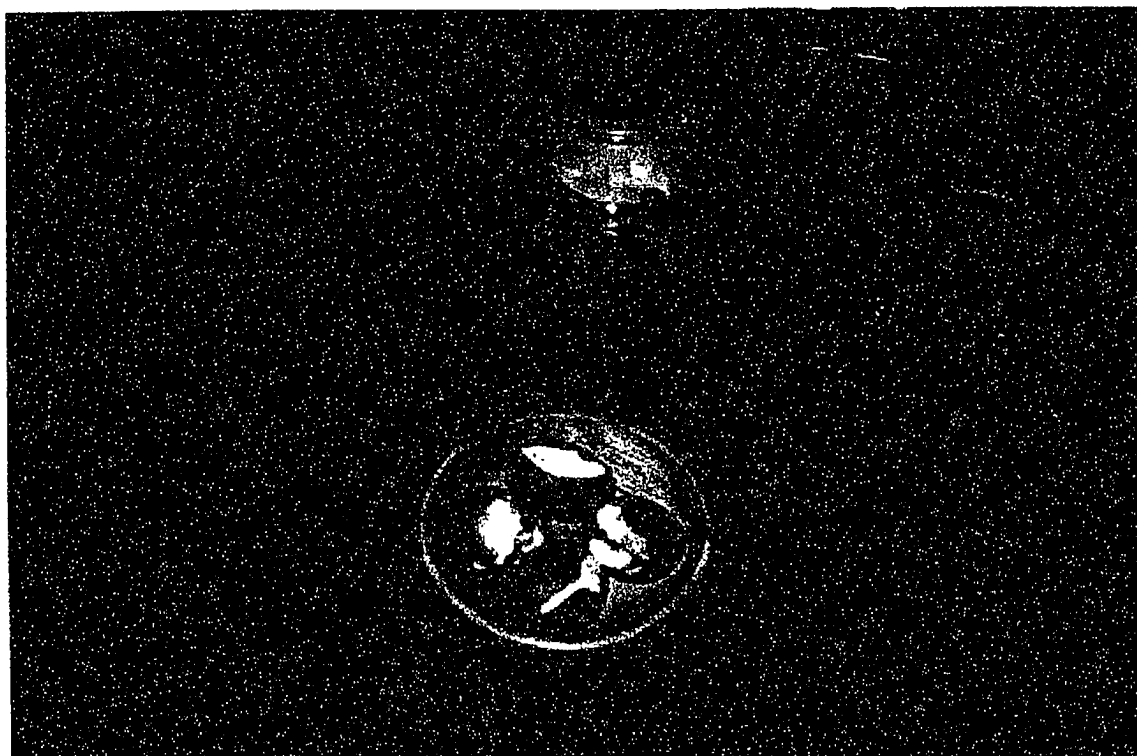


Illustration 2

***Šape* - Traditional Cookies From the Former Yugoslavia**

Illustration 2
***Šape* – Traditional Cookies From the Former Yugoslavia**



Illustration 3**YMCA Newcomer School Support Program Site**

Illustration 3
YMCA Newcomer School Support Program

