



## Background

- Population of province of Saskatchewan was declining and so was the economy.
- Created by the government, Saskatchewan Immigrant Nominee Program (SINP) 2004, signals revitalized economy and population growth.
- The sudden change in demographics and the associated resettlement process brought new challenges that affect newcomer families as well as host community including First Nations and Métis.
- The CB program focuses on facilitating the transfer and sharing of knowledge and experiences among diverse communities.

## Abstract

Social Inclusion has been identified as a crucial component of successful settlement. Success here is defined through indicators such as feelings of belonging, integration, understanding, acceptance, and cultural accommodation. Saskatoon Open Door Society's Cultural Bridging programs play a key role in actuating an increase of these indicators through facilitating a deeper understanding between newcomer immigrants and refugees, the broader Saskatoon community, and service providers (both in the public and private sectors). Enhanced cultural responsiveness and intelligence for all community stakeholders, and a vision of a healthy community for all is the foundational mandate in the delivery of CB programming.

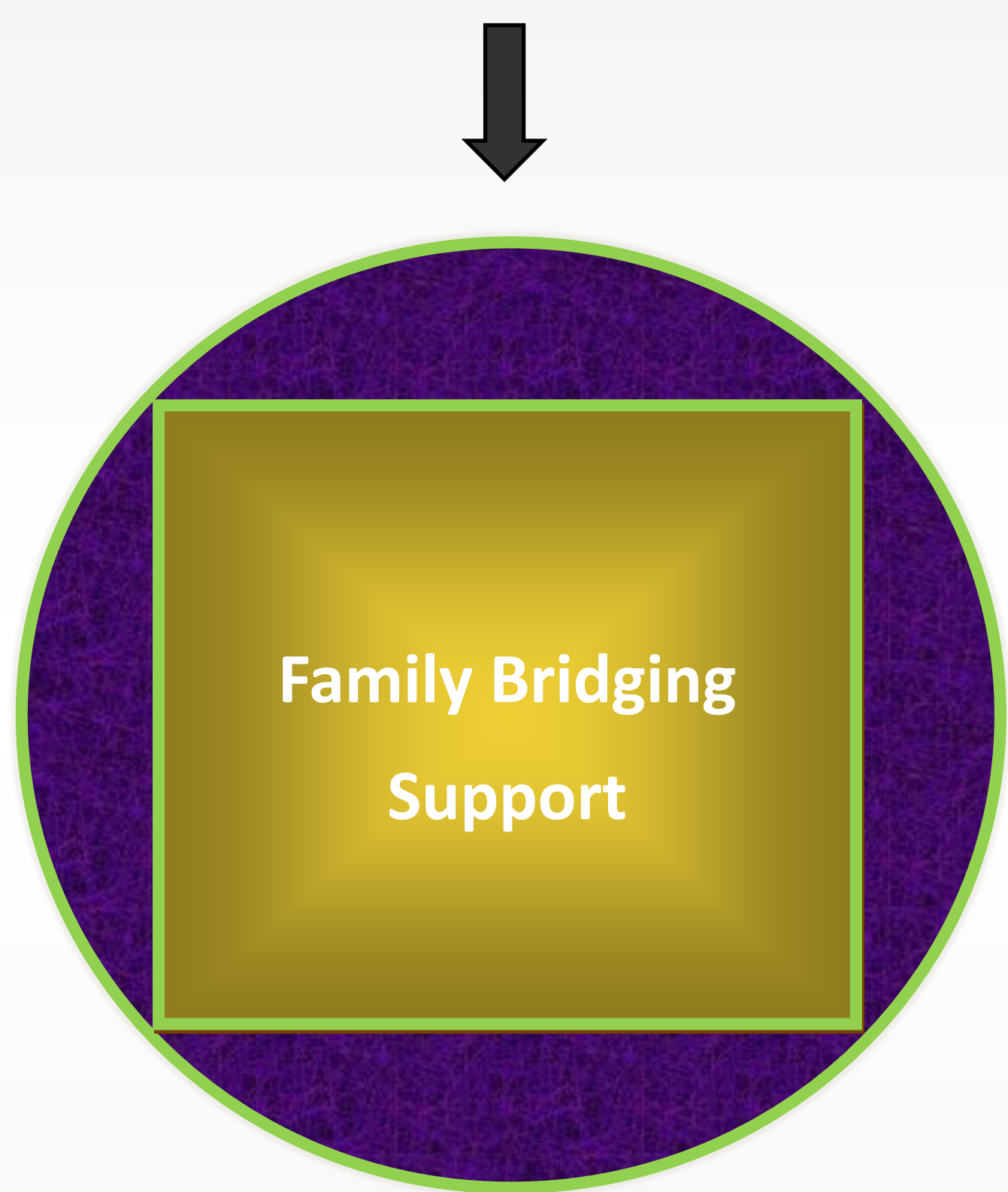
## Saskatoon Open Door Society (SODS)

- Saskatoon Open Door Society has been a non-profit settlement service provider in Saskatoon since 1981.
- SODS provides support for the settlement and integration of Newcomers in the community through a wide range of programming in the area of: Settlement and Family Support (SFS), Language Training (LT), Childcare Services (CS), Employment Training (ET), and Settlement and Community Support Services (SCSS).
- To enhance and support the sense of community, SODS develops and facilitates connections between the Newcomer and the Host communities through series of programs and activities such as *Cultural Bridging Program*.

## Program Objectives

- Increasing access to services and community involvement by Newcomers
- Facilitating integration of newcomers and service providers in community
- Reducing stigma and misinformation within Newcomer communities
- Building cultural competency in mainstream service providers
- Increasing trust, safety, familiarity, within the social environment, people and processes.
- Increasing Newcomer social capital

## Three main area of the activities with Cultural Bridging Programs



### Family Bridging Support

provides short term, cross-cultural family supports to families in order to ensure immediate accessibility in times of crisis or immediate family need and to assist in the bridging process to mainstream community support systems such as family support services and mental health and wellness. The programming includes:

- **Family Bridging workshops:** *Cross Cultural Parenting, Cross Cultural Mediation* for parents and teens, *Healthy Relationships* for teens, *Roles and Responsibilities in Canadian families*.
- **Cultural Mediation:** Culturally responsive supports to newcomers and community partners in the time of need.
- **Cross-Cultural Case Consultation:** provides short term supports for individuals, couples or families who are dealing with acute cultural/migration stress and shock, identity, role and responsibility within family members, and distress related to chronic cultural and social isolation.
- **Referral supports:** to essential services in the community such as family support services, and mental health etc.



### Creating Youth Culture

is a youth empowerment initiative where youth gain many life skills through interaction and engagement with diverse communities in Saskatoon.

The specific activities include:

- **Creating Youth Culture: Teen-led workshops** which are day-long sessions for elementary school students facilitated by high school newcomer students.
- **Sharing Stories Program:** to connect First Nations and Metis youth with newcomer youth in group sessions, designed to promote understanding and respect for cultural diversity.
- **Youth Empowerment through Civic Engagement:** is an interactive training session where youth are introduced to the three levels of government and the concepts of lobbying, advocacy and civic engagement.



### Enhanced Cultural Responsiveness

promotes and facilitates awareness to community agencies and institutions.

The activities include:

- **Presentations, information sessions and workshops for the public and the private sector:** tailored to individual requests and institutional needs, topics include: *Cross-cultural communication, Immigration and citizenship, Migration and family dynamics and Schools around the world.*
- **The Windows of the World:** a program that displays cultural artifacts in schools, other community organizations and during special events.
- **Learning Together and Lunch Lean:** a program which connects service agencies and community organizations with staff of Saskatoon Open Door Society.