

From survival to belonging: Strengthening newcomer wellness and pride

Presented by: Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia
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ABOUT THE PROJECT

The Wellbeing for All (WBFA) project, part of ISANS’ Newcomer Wellness Program, strengthens newcomer mental wellness and belonging through inclusive, client-centred, and trauma-informed practices.

WBFA helps newcomers move from survival to belonging, fostering resilience, inclusion, and full participation in Canadian life while celebrating diversity and pride in each person’s identity and lived experience.

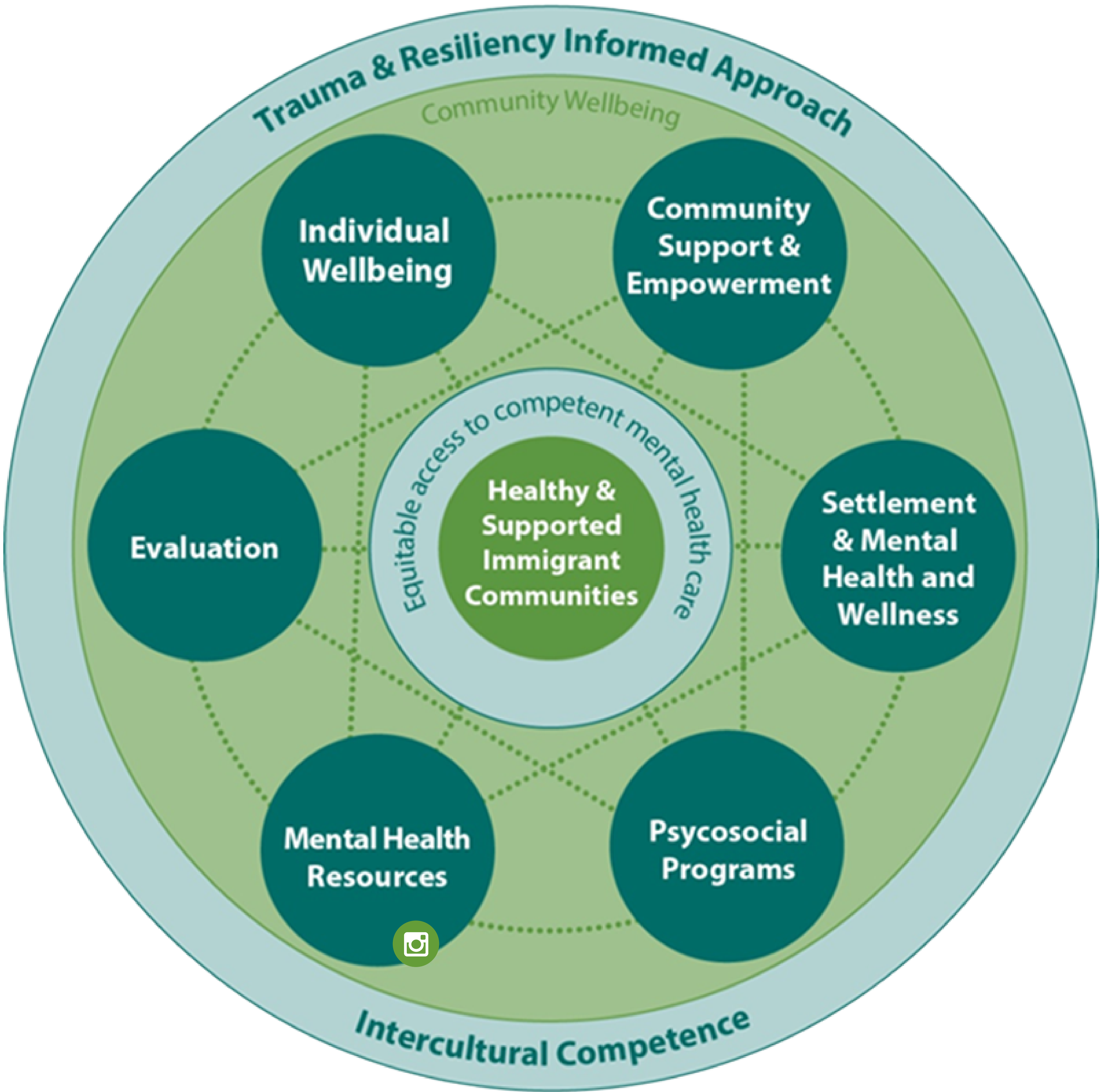
WHAT WE DO

- Facilitate wellness groups and individual sessions for newcomers
- Co-develop wellness guidelines with community partners
- Deliver staff and interpreter training on trauma-informed, inclusive practices
- Engage Advisory Committee members from diverse cultural and mental-health sectors
- Conduct community consultations exploring experiences and recommendations
- Create a Wellness Toolkit and deliver Lunch & Learn sessions for ISANS staff

GROUPS OFFERED

- Women’s Group
- Men’s Group
- Mixed Group
- 2SLGBTQIA+ Group
- Trauma Stabilization Group

Community Collaborative Model of Supporting Immigrants' Mental Health & Well-being



OUR APPROACH

- We grounded our approach in:
- Cultural safety and inclusivity
 - Intersectional, trauma-informed practice
 - Collaboration and co-design
 - Evaluation and continuous learning

OUTCOMES:

- **Inclusive access** to mental wellness support for all newcomers, including 2SLGBTQIA+ communities
- **Stronger resilience** and better mental health understanding
- **Early, affirming support** that meets each person where they are
- **Compassionate care** for those experiencing settlement stress, mild trauma, or adjustment challenges

EVALUATION GOALS:

- Identify effective wellness interventions and promising practices
- Strengthen ISANS’ organizational capacity for inclusive mental wellness
- Enhance collaboration across settlement, health, and community sectors
- Amplify what works best to support newcomer resilience, inclusion, and belonging

(Adapted to reflect the Newcomer Wellness and WBFA projects, ISANS 2025).



We came to Nova Scotia with one dream to live openly, safely, and authentically as a two-mom family. Leaving behind our home, careers, and loved ones wasn't easy, but we wanted our children to grow up where love isn't a secret and identity isn't a risk. ISANS became our landing place a community that saw us, heard us, and welcomed us with dignity. Today, we both work at ISANS, helping other newcomers find the same safety and belonging we once searched for. As we celebrate 25 years together, we look back with gratitude and forward with pride, hope, and love" - Nadia and Aya



Our Funders:



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