



# November 2023 Newsletter

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A promotional poster for the 2023 Annual General Meeting. The background is a red-tinted photograph of a meeting room with several people seated around a table, some with laptops open. The text is overlaid in white and red. The CASSA logo is in the top right corner.

**CASSA** AGENCIES SERVING SOUTH ASIANS

# 2023 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday, November 28  
5:30pm - 8:30pm

705 Progress Avenue, Unit 101  
Toronto, ON M1H 2X1

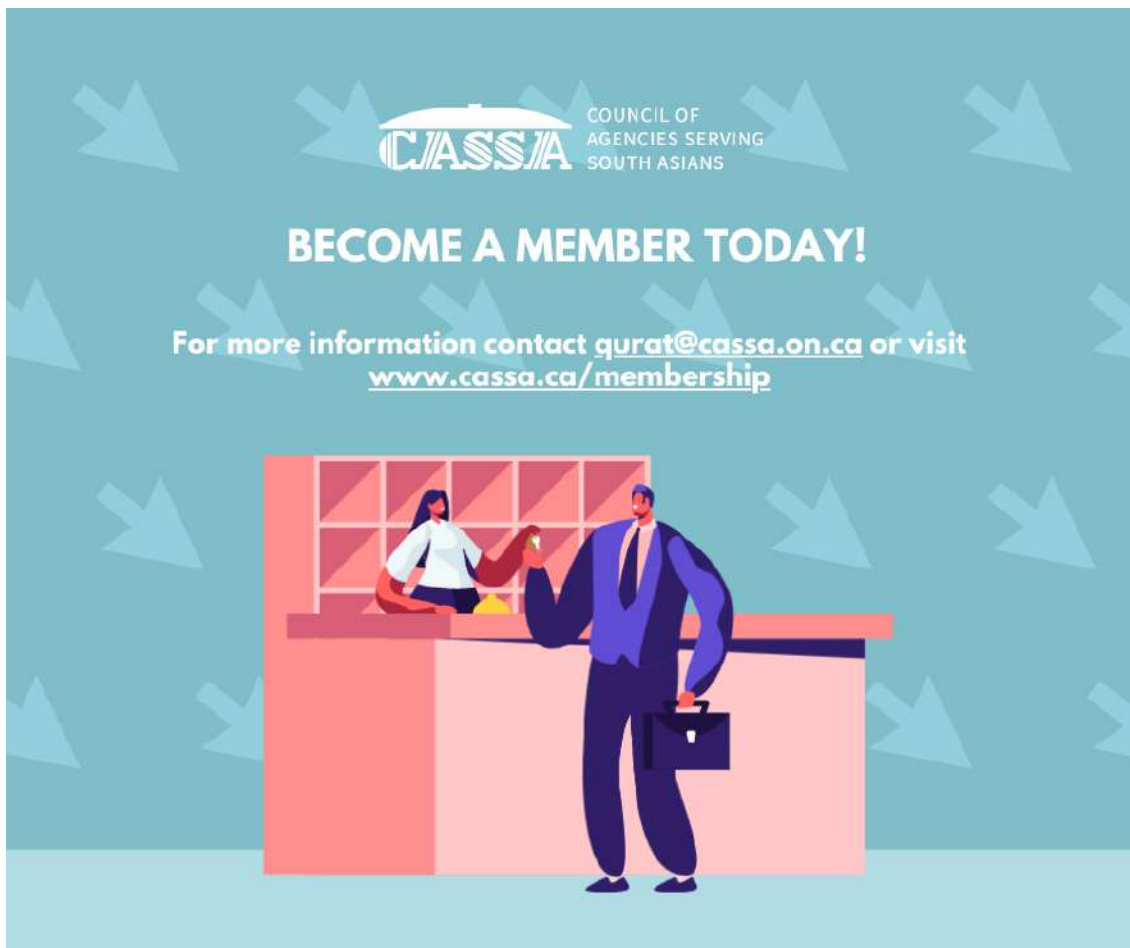
**REGISTER NOW**

[CASSA-2023AGM.eventbrite.com](https://CASSA-2023AGM.eventbrite.com)

For more information, contact Qurat Al Ain ([qurat@cassa.on.ca](mailto:qurat@cassa.on.ca))

Register [here](#) for CASSA 2023 Annual General Meeting!

## CASSA's Membership!





# GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE RESEARCH IN THE GTA

## **Toxic Masculinity and Its Impact on Gender-Based Violence**

For CASSA's toxic masculinity study, CASSA will be joined by six partners for data collection support. CASSA has also dedicated many months working on receiving an ethics approval from the Community Research Ethics Office (CREO) and is happy to announce that we have received the approval. Since receiving this from CREO, CASSA has designed and conducted training sessions for all partners to understand their obligations and the materials that have been distributed. At the moment, partners have begun participant recruitment within the South Asian community in Canada. CASSA will be there with partners every step of the way in order to ensure focus groups and surveys are conducted in an ethical and transparent manner. We look forward to receiving all the data and the analysis phase that will ensue in the coming year. The last year of





# WE ARE LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS!

**The Coalition of Racial Equity in Education is recruiting Muslim high school students and parents/guardians with children attending schools in York and Durham Region.**

Join us in promoting equity and inclusivity for Muslim students and staff! Combat racism and Islamophobia to create a welcoming and just future together.

**APPLY NOW:** [www.cassa.ca/apply-to-join-the-coalition-for-racial-equity-in-education-project/](http://www.cassa.ca/apply-to-join-the-coalition-for-racial-equity-in-education-project/)



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The Coalition for Racial Equity in Education is currently inviting parents and youth volunteers from the YRDSB and DDSB regions to join their dedicated efforts. These volunteers will undergo comprehensive training regarding Islamophobia in schools.

If you are a high school student or a parent residing in the York or Durham region and are interested in contributing to this important project, we invite you to sign up [here](#). Should you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out to [samaha@cassa.on.ca](mailto:samaha@cassa.on.ca).

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## **Policies that Perpetuate Systemic Racism**

Policies that Perpetuate Systemic Racism project continued its social media advocacy campaign on Canada Child Benefit and 'Zero Tolerance for Barbaric Cultural Practices Act'. The project further finalized its other content including animations, illustrations and podcasts that will be disseminated in the coming months.

# Canada Child Benefit Contingency on Immigration Status



**CCB and Immigration Status** Policies that Perpetuate Systemic Racism

Limiting Canada Child Benefit from those who have precarious status is a form of differential inclusion, and in essence discriminatory.

Canadian Race Relations Foundation / Fondation canadienne des relations raciales CASSA COUNCIL OF AGENCIES SERVING SOUTH ASIANS PHOTO VIA SPRINGMAGAZINE

**CCB and Immigration Status** Policies that Perpetuate Systemic Racism

Those with precarious status such as refugee claimants, work permit or study permit, are most at risk for living in poverty because of systemic barriers.

Canadian Race Relations Foundation / Fondation canadienne des relations raciales CASSA COUNCIL OF AGENCIES SERVING SOUTH ASIANS PHOTO VIA CBC



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"My husband was abusive towards not just me but my son as well. My son had a lot of trauma to process when we flee to Canada. He is still very quite... "

-single mother, refugee claimant, living in a shelter.

**Children of refugee claimants face multiple stressors. Restricting their benefits perpetuates harmful stereotypes.**

These quotations are based on primary research consisting on interviews. Identity of the interview participants is kept confidential to maintain privacy.

**Policies that Perpetuate Systemic Racism**



Canadian Race Relations Foundation

Fondation canadienne des relations raciales



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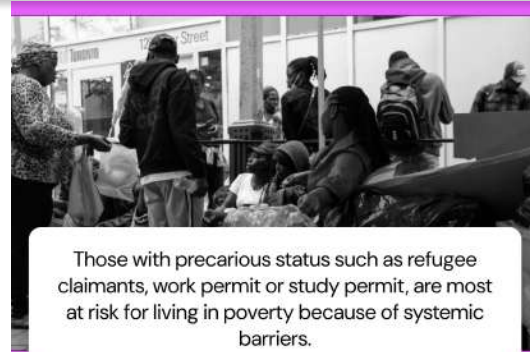
not be able to go to birthday parties because we had no money. This meant my children were essentially only at home, not socializing in their new country"

- single mother, refugee claimant, living in a shelter

Single mothers face various barriers seeking financial and social security, these issues are doubly compounded if they have precarious status.

These quotations are based on primary research consisting on interviews. Identity of the interview participants is kept confidential to maintain privacy.

Policies that Perpetuate Systemic Racism



Those with precarious status such as refugee claimants, work permit or study permit, are most at risk for living in poverty because of systemic barriers.



PHOTO VIA CBC

"My kids grades dropped when I picked the second job because I could not help them with homework"

-single mother, refugee claimant, living in a shelter

Limiting Canada child benefit to those with precarious status perpetuates intergenerational cycle of poverty

These quotations are based on primary research consisting on interviews. Identity of the interview participants is kept confidential to maintain privacy.

Policies that Perpetuate Systemic Racism



"We rely on food from the food bank which is mostly canned food. I save up money so that I can get one fresh fruit for my children in a week."

-Single mother, refugee claimant living in a shelter.

Food insecurity remains a pressing issue for those with precarious status. Studies suggest that just an additional \$60 per month for families with young children can reduce food insecurity by nearly 3 percentage.

These quotations are based on primary research consisting on interviews. Identity of the interview participants is kept confidential to maintain privacy.

Policies that Perpetuate Systemic Racism



# Opportunities

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# Community- Leader, with a Go-Getter Mindset!

## Brainstorming Meeting (Outreach)



December 4, 2023



11:00 am - 12:00 pm



Zoom



Only for CASSA Members. If you want to know more about CASSA membership benefits please contact [gurat@cassa.on.ca](mailto:gurat@cassa.on.ca) or visit [www.cassa.ca/membership](http://www.cassa.ca/membership)

[JOIN NOW](#)

## Special Guest



### Marco Campana

Communications & Digital Strategy Consulting for Immigrant and Refugee-Serving Organizations

Over the past almost 30 years he has worked in some form of newcomer-serving sector communications and digital services, from front-line client service to the first Settlement.Org Content Coordinator. He created and managed the Settlement AtWork site, launching OCASI's Learn AtWork online learning site for sector workers, and has participated in a number of efforts to enhance sector knowledge mobilization. He led digital/social media strategy work at Maytree, and currently works as a freelance consultant helping agencies harness technology in client service delivery. His current focus is on digital transformation, digital inclusion/equity, demystifying technology in social services/social change, immigration, diversity & inclusion in Toronto.

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# SEEKING HEALTHY PARTICIPANTS FOR RESEARCH ON AGING

## Help us learn about risk and protective factors for dementia

- **Target population:** Individuals who identify as **East Asian, South Asian, or White**
- Compensation will be provided



### TIME

- 5-year study
- Visit Sunnybrook every other year



### WHAT IS INVOLVED?

- Memory tests
- Questionnaires
- Brain scan (MRI)
- Blood draw



### ELIGIBILITY

- 55 - 85 years old
- No diagnosis of a cognitive disorder
- Can speak English

## Contact our study team:

 [cbhlab@sunnybrook.ca](mailto:cbhlab@sunnybrook.ca)

 416-480-6100 ext. 85405

Version 1.0, April 27, 2023

Principal Investigator: Dr. Jennifer Rabin

This study has been approved by Sunnybrook's Research Ethics Board.

Study title: Investigating Risk and Protective Factors for Dementia in a Multi-Ethnic Cohort



## Seeking Healthy Participants For Research on Aging:

\$50 Honorarium

\$10 Food Voucher

FREE Parking!!



# DID YOU EXPERIENCE LOSS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC?

We want to examine how experiences and unconventional conceptualizations of loss (eg. loss of employment, isolation, immobility created by lockdowns, discrimination, etc) resulting from the pandemic are shaped by race, ethnicity, gender, age, health, and religion/faitth/spirituality.



## WHO CAN PARTICPATE?

If you are 18 years or older, and self-identify as a **South Asian** individual, and live in the **Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area**.

## WHAT YOU WILL DO

Participate in an in-person or virtual interview, approximately 1 and 30 mins long. You will be rewarded **\$50 dollars cash** in appreciation of your time.

### Investigators:

**Dr. Chandrima Chakraborty & Dr. Ingrid Waldron**

If you are interested in participating, contact our Research Assistant, Tasnia at ***tnoshin@mcmaster.ca***



This study has been reviewed by and received ethics clearance from the McMaster Research Ethics Board.

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**Ashima Kochar Khanna**  
BRCA2, ER+ Breast Cancer Survivor

## ASHIMA IS BREAKING THE SILENCE by normalizing discussions about breast cancer.

*"Talking about it may be uncomfortable, but it's essential to share information, better understand personal risk, maintain routine screenings and speak up when something doesn't feel right."*

Growing up, Ashima witnessed her grandmother and aunt manage their breast cancer in silence. Ashima remained vigilant and conducted regular self-exams. This awareness led her to discover a lump in her breast.

Ashima is determined to break the silence, normalizing vital discussions in her family and the South Asian community. It's essential to acknowledge the importance of breast cancer awareness and family history — empowering every individual with the knowledge to address concerns proactively.

The research funded by Breast Cancer Canada focuses on improving techniques for breast cancer screening and detection. With your help, we can learn more about breast cancer. And that helps us detect it earlier and treat it better for patients like Ashima.

**Progress through research. Donate today.**

**Breast Cancer Canada**  
**BreastCancerProgress.ca**

Toll Free: 1-800-567-8767 | Charitable #: 137969861 RR0001





**Christmas Market & Walking Parade**  
 Saturday, November 25th 2-9pm  
 Walking Parade 5:30pm  
 Tree Lighting 6:30pm  
 Mel Lastman Square

**FESTIVE EATS & DRINKS** **60+ LOCAL ARTISANS** **ENTERTAINMENT, PHOTOS & CRAFTS**

Learn more & RSVP at [neighbourlink.org/christmas](https://neighbourlink.org/christmas)

**Pay What You Can**  
 Suggested donation \$5 per person  
 Funds raised support local families!

Hosted By **NeighbourLink NORTH YORK**  
 Lead Sponsor **GWL REALTY ADVISORS**  
 Tree Presenter **Yonge North York Business Improvement Area**

**NeighbourLink North York's 3rd We Love Willowdale Christmas Market!**

Join the festive fun on Saturday, November 25th at Mel Lastman Square!

Artisan Holiday Market 2-9 pm

Sidewalk Walking Parade on Yonge St. 5:30 pm

Festive Tree Lighting Presented by Yonge North York BIA 6:30 pm


At the market, you'll find

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- Food Trucks (including Tiny Tom's Donuts!)
- Hot Chocolate
- Family Photo Booth
- Kids Activities
- Santa Claus!!!

You're encouraged to RSVP to each attendee from your group for the market and parade. **General RSVP (13+) is a suggested \$5 donation!** You can also donate in person at the event! Funds raised go directly to supporting our neighbors this holiday season through NeighbourLink's food, senior, youth, and newcomer programs!

You can learn more about the event and RSVP at [www.neighbourlink.org/christmas](http://www.neighbourlink.org/christmas)




## Epilepsy & Seizure First Aid Public Education Workshop

Via Zoom

Please email [leah@epilepsytoronto.org](mailto:leah@epilepsytoronto.org)  
for further information.

Presented By



EPILEPSY  
Toronto  
See the Person

Session will cover:

- ✓ Myths and Misconceptions about Epilepsy
- ✓ Difference Types of Seizures
- ✓ Epilepsy Toronto's Services
- ✓ Treatment
- ✓ Seizure first aid
- ✓ Client stories

[www.epilepsytoronto.org](http://www.epilepsytoronto.org)

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# GOODNESS

## WHAT IS GOODNESS GIFT?

Goodness Gift is a social enterprise established in 2018 to provide training and paid employment opportunities for individuals on the autism spectrum and related developmental conditions. We are a socially conscious gifting company, offering everything from curated baskets to individual items.



## OUR MISSION

Beyond commerce, we celebrate diversity, elevate marginalized talents, and take a stand against the unemployment crisis that often shadows our gifted neurodiverse workforce. Together, we turn challenges into strengths, ensuring every unique individual stands tall.

Buy Today. Make a Difference.

With each purchase, you champion a cause and light a beacon for hope. Dive into our treasure trove:

[GOODNESSGIFT.COM](http://GOODNESSGIFT.COM)

Embrace the change.

[GOODNESSGIFT@SAAAC.ORG](mailto:GOODNESSGIFT@SAAAC.ORG)  
416 289 2394

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Serving Newcomers and Immigrants in York and Durham regions.



**Markham North**  
 8400 Woodbine Ave.  
 Suite 102-103  
 (289) 846-3645

**Richmond Hill**  
 9325 Yonge Street  
 Unit 31A  
 (289) 842-3124

**Vaughan**  
 9100 Jane Street,  
 Building H,  
 Units 56-67  
 (416) 238-1033

**Markham South**  
 7220 Kennedy Road  
 Unit 8  
 (905) 479-7926

**Newmarket**  
 16655 Yonge Street,  
 Unit 26  
 (289) 841-3032



**Ajax**  
 458 Fairall Street,  
 Unit 5  
 (289) 482-1037

**Pickering**  
 1400 Bayly Street,  
 Unit 16b  
 (905) 420-3008

1-877-761-1155 | [www.welcomecentre.ca](http://www.welcomecentre.ca)







# Addictions Awareness Week

OVERCOMING ADDICTIONS,  
REBUILDING LIVES TOGETHER EVENT

Thursday November 23, 2023

Time: 10 am - 3 pm

Riverstone Community Centre

195 Don Minaker Dr, Brampton, ON L6P 2V7

Register: <https://bit.ly/45RaVky>

 for further information contact 437-243-8479



(905) 677-0889



[www.pchs4u.com](http://www.pchs4u.com)

## Project Khushi Donations

We kindly request that donated products are **new**, with the exception of toys. If you choose to donate used toys, please make sure they can be properly sanitized or wiped down. Please note that we are unable to accept used stuffed toys.

**We enthusiastically welcome all new items, and we appreciate your generosity.**

**Brampton Donation Location**  
50 Sunny Meadow Boulevard  
Brampton, Ontario  
Unit 207

&

**Malton Donation Location**  
2980 Drew Road  
Mississauga, Ontario  
Unit 241

Please feel free to contribute any of the following items as a donation:

- Female Products:** Sanitary Pads, Tampons, etc.
- Hygiene Products:** Body wash, Shampoo, Conditioner, Toothpaste, Toothbrushes, Deodorant, Mouthwash, etc.
- Clothing:** Hats, Gloves, Socks (Male, Female, and Kids), Jackets, etc.
- Food:** Canned Goods (Beans, Lentils, Soups), Dry Goods (Pasta, Flour, Rice), Oil, Spices (Black Pepper and Salt), etc.
- Baby Items:** Baby Food, Diapers, Baby Wipes, Formula, etc.
- Toys:** New toys of any kind are welcome for all ages: cars, Barbies, etc. Used toys must be properly sanitized/ wiped

[www.pchs4u.com](http://www.pchs4u.com)
[437-243-3735](tel:437-243-3735)
[hpcs@pchs4u.com](mailto:hpcs@pchs4u.com)

## Project Khushi

...by PCHS

**Project Khushi returns to PCHS for Year Two!**

**Dec 12, 2023; 5:00PM-7:00PM**  
at Malton Community Centre  
Multipurpose Room 1  
(3540 Morning Star Drive)

&

**Dec 14, 2023; 5:00PM - 7:00PM**  
at PCHS Brampton Office  
Unit 109  
(50 Sunny Meadow Blvd)

Our HPCS team has relaunched this initiative to support our community members by distributing a variety of essential items, including hygiene kits, blankets, warm gloves, socks, toys, and much **more!**



Clients must pre-register or can be assessed on a walk-in basis for the event.



**Scan this QR code to register!**

OR

[437-243-3735](tel:437-243-3735)

[www.pchs4u.com](http://www.pchs4u.com)
[437-243-3735](tel:437-243-3735)
[hpcs@pchs4u.com](mailto:hpcs@pchs4u.com)



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## Sister2Sister Advanced Leadership Program

# CALL FOR EMPLOYERS!

If you are an employer who wants to **expand** their **organizational capacity** AND **contribute** to **innovative social impact** in their community...

### Join Newcomer Women's Services Toronto Sister2Sister community as an employer partner!

Connect with Manager, Workforce Development Yasmin Ali via email at [yasmin@newcomerwomen.org](mailto:yasmin@newcomerwomen.org) to learn more.

Tap into a talent pool of skilled interns at zero cost to you!

Position your organization at the forefront of social impact.

Receive recognition alongside our other prestigious partners.



### Sister2Siter Advanced Leadership Program

Join our Advanced Leadership Program as an employer partner and be part of a growing network of distinguished employers committed to advancing immigrant and refugee women's economic status in Canada. As our partner, you'll:

- Position your organization at the forefront of the cause
- Access skilled talent at zero cost to you
- Receive subsidies for internships lasting 120+ hours

For internships lasting 120 hours, we'll subsidize 100% of wages paid, up to \$2000 per placement. For longer projects, we'll subsidize 50% of wages paid, up to \$5000 per placement.

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# CASSA's Blogs/Podcasts

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## Blog Posts:

### [Empowering South Asians: A Spotlight on ASAAP](#)

In a world that is increasingly recognizing the importance of inclusivity and diversity, organizations like the Alliance for South Asian AIDS Prevention (ASAAP) play a crucial role in ensuring that marginalized communities receive the support, resources, and advocacy they deserve. ASAAP, based in Toronto, Canada, is a dynamic organization dedicated to addressing the unique needs of South Asian LGBTQ+ individuals and communities.

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## In the News

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### [Toronto considering asking feds to use armouries to shelter unhoused people this winter](#)

Toronto could soon ask the federal government to turn its armouries into makeshift shelters as it struggles to deal with the refugee housing crisis.

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### [New "Toronto For All" public education campaign challenges residents to speak out against and shut down anti-East Asian hate](#)

Today, the City of Toronto, in partnership with the Chinese Canadian National Council for Social Justice, unveiled a new "Toronto For All" public education campaign that challenges residents to speak out against and shut down anti-East Asian hate and prejudice.

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### [Senate report on Islamophobia says urgent action needed to reverse rising tide of hate](#)

Islamophobia remains a persistent problem in Canada and concrete action is required to reverse the growing tide of hate, says a new Senate report released Thursday.

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carrying Afghans to arrive here from Islamabad in the next few weeks, Immigration Minister Marc Miller told journalists on Thursday.

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### [Canada needs to nearly double immigration rate in the long run: RBC](#)

While holding immigration targets is warranted for now, Canada will need to ramp up the number of newcomers it welcomes in the long run, a new RBC report says.

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### [Thunder Bay man went to Gaza to help wife make journey to Canada. Now they're trapped there](#)

A Thunder Bay, Ont., resident who's among the hundreds of Canadians stuck in Gaza as the Israel-Hamas war continues is trying to make the trek across the Rafah border into Egypt with his spouse.

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### [New Refugee Crisis Exhibit Is Vivid, Haunting and Myth-Busting](#)

Refuge Canada, an interactive exhibition that uses images, soundscapes, first-person accounts and artifacts, recently opened at the Museum of Vancouver. As Canadians become increasingly aware of the current global refugee crisis, the exhibition is an opportunity to gain historical context as it moves through waves of refugees arriving in Canada from the Second World War era up to present day. It portrays the darker chapters of history and the accounts of shattered lives alongside hopeful stories of optimism and success.

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### [Discussions on housing, mental health as northern Ontario mayors meet](#)

Mayors from Sudbury, Timmins, North Bay and Sault Ste. Marie got together Monday for their second meeting this year.

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