

## Humanitarian Crisis: How to help

In light of the current refugee crisis, many teachers are wondering what they and their students can do to help. A number of different options are available.

1. Donate to a variety of organisations involved in providing relief for refugees in their country of origin or host country to which they have fled.

Donations can be made to the following organizations:

- [The United Nations High Commission on Refugees \(UNHCR\)](#) oversees support for refugees in host countries.
  - [Canadian Red Cross](#) supports its international partners (Red Cross and Red Crescent) in providing food, household items, and health services to refugees.
  - [Doctors Without Borders](#) provides medical support in war-torn countries, including Syria.
  - [Oxfam](#) provides drinking water inside Syria and relief to refugees in host countries.
2. To find out how you can help sponsor a refugee family, visit the [Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada Sponsor a Refugee page](#).
  3. Settlement Agencies are government-funded organizations that provide settlement support for government and privately sponsored refugees. Contact [Immigrant Services Society of BC](#) for information on how to support a settlement agency in your community.
  4. Immigration policies that will allow larger numbers of refugees to immigrate to Canada in a timelier manner are an essential component of the solution to the current refugee crisis. Consider writing to your MP, the Prime Minister, and your local candidates to express your concerns. The Canadian Council for Refugees, a non-profit organization which advocates for the rights of refugees, has posted some questions you can ask your federal candidates regarding their parties' immigration policies [here](#). Developed by the advocacy group *No One is Illegal*, [www.neverhome.ca](http://www.neverhome.ca) provides useful information about Canada's current immigration policies.
  5. Help your local school district pass a sanctuary school policy to make sure that all students are guaranteed their right to an education. Sanctuary school policies ensure that all students can attend public school regardless of their or their parent's immigration status. As a matter of fact, there are many children who have been born in Canada who cannot attend school due to this issue. A PowerPoint presentation and speaking notes, frequently asked questions, and a video can be found at the BCTF Member Portal under Services and Resources: *Getting a local policy passed*. You can get more information from [The Tye](#) and the BCTF *Social Justice Newsletter*: [A sanctuary school policy proposal and sanctuary schools](#).
  6. Get your students involve by discussing the refugee crisis with them. The following website provides ideas for teaching about refugees: [UNHCR Educational Resources for Teachers](#).