



Saturday, September 23rd

Ride for Refuge

Please mark the morning of Saturday, September 23rd in your calendar for a fun, healthy event in support of Project Abraham. We'll meet at the Lawrence Park Community Church at 2180 Bayview Avenue, just south of Lawrence Avenue. From there, we'll walk 5K or bike 10K and raise \$20,000 for Project Abraham.



You can play an essential part in this fundraiser by becoming a team captain. What does a team captain do? They invite six or more of their friends, family, reading club, golf buddies, co-workers, or neighbours to join a walk or bike ride. Team members invite their network to sponsor them and voila! Project Abraham reaches its goal of raising \$20,000. It's that simple (and fun!) and all it takes is your participation.

You can access our Ride for Refuge page here:

[Toronto Midtown \(Project Abraham\) - Ride for Refuge 2023.](#)

Mark September 23rd in your calendar, think about who you want to invite to be on your team, and let's make this event a huge success!

Our vision is to become the leading resettlement organization supporting victims of persecution, empowering them to create a future for themselves and their children as fully integrated Canadian citizens.

Donations are gratefully accepted: [projectabraham/donate](https://projectabraham.org/donate)

New Advocacy Committee to Lobby for Family Reunification

While more than two years since the Government of Canada promised it was redoubling efforts to reunite Yazidi families and other survivors of Daesh, no significant action has been taken, according to Project Abraham board member, Nour Hassan. The 1,200 Yezidis who were initially welcomed to Canada were promised before they arrived that their family members would also be admitted. But in the past six years, only about 300 additional Yazidis (mostly women and girls) have been allowed to resettle here, either through government or private sponsorship.



The arrival of one of Project Abraham's sponsored families back in 2017.

Mental health experts consider family reunification essential to the recovery of genocide survivors. In the Yezidi community, the concept of “family” goes beyond the nuclear family. The Government seemed to recognize this when in March 2021, Marco Mendicino, then Minister of Immigration, raised hopes by announcing a new policy to help more Yazidis reunite with their families in Canada: “This policy will reunite extended family members, including siblings, grandparents, aunts, and uncles, along with those who may have been unable to previously apply for resettlement.” In September 2022, Project Abraham sent a letter and petition to the House of Commons in Parliament, urging the Government to follow through on its promise. The Government’s response, tabled in November 2022, was that it was not prepared to change the existing process.

Our new Advocacy Committee, chaired by Nour, will gather a coalition of settlement agencies and other stakeholders to lobby the Government to keep its promise to the Yezidi community. Nour says that the Committee will use social media to raise awareness, engage the community, and refocus attention on the plight of the Yezidis left behind:

“It’s the least we can do.”



Meet the Team at Project Abraham

Revital ("Revi") Biran



Revi Biran has been an English teacher for more than 25 years. She fell in love with teaching adults when she taught for a private language school in Japan. She joined Project Abraham as a YES Program teacher in 2021. She teaches the majority of her Yezidi, Hazara, and Ukrainian students online but also holds a few classes in person. Revi was born in Israel and learned English when she came to Canada with her family at the age of seven. She is also fluent in Hebrew, Romanian, and Spanish. She empathizes with her students and believes that English is “the bridge that connects us all.”

For Revi, the rewards of teaching in the YES Program far outweigh the challenges. Her Yezidi students lack prior education and their post-traumatic stress can impede learning. Revi tells them that she is not a counsellor but she is there for them and if they need help, she will get them the help they need: “I let them know how they’ve affected me. When I look at them, all I see are strong women who have overcome so much. I see past their trauma to their courage and determination not to let that stop them.”

In her spare time, Revi enjoys karaoke and hiking with her husband, son, and Husky, Reina. She is grateful to have had the opportunity to meet and work with Yezidi women: “I can’t imagine my life without them. Even if I couldn’t teach my students, I would visit them. They give back more than they know. They have so much love in their hearts. I aspire to have that much love for the world in my life.”