Every year, new immigrant families settle in Quebec. These people come from various countries and intend to settle here permanently or for a certain period. They have a cultural or language background that can sometimes pose challenges in a group setting.

**Cultural diversity is enriching in a group. It helps broaden the importance of the parental role in many areas of daily life. Whether born in South Asia or in a Quebec City neighbourhood such as Limoilou, every parent wants the best for their child and wants to be a good parent. Regardless of origin, every family has its own characteristics and its own “culture” based on its history, context and affiliations. This diversity must be handled respectfully, and sometimes with finesse.**

The Nobody’s Perfect program promotes health and well-being based on an approach and philosophy that addresses this type of situation very well. Acceptance, coaching, support and promoting positive actions for every parent are a winning approach.

Integrating a parent from another background requires specific preparation, especially during the first contact, but also over the course of the program.

- Ensure that the parent has at least a minimum ability to communicate and converse (language proficiency level).
- Ensure that the parent has at least a minimum degree of comfort with being in a group and interacting with other parents.
- Fully identify the parent’s need, especially in connection with his/her integration in Quebec (desire to adapt to the culture and its ways of raising children, meeting other parents, etc.).

Positive participation will invariably occur if the immigrant parent has some openness to sharing and adjusting to the new culture.
• Identify sensitive topics, those that may or may not be discussed, or how to discuss them in order to prevent conflicts from arising and people from dropping out of the group. Here are a few examples of cultural differences regarding the parent role:
  – Some cultures have distinct roles for fathers and mothers.
  – Rules of politeness and respect for authority, including parental authority (authoritarian parenting practices, democratic parenting practices)
  – Perceptions about children, their needs and their value should be identified

Here are some strategies to help ensure that the program’s principles are adopted by recently immigrated parents:
• Broaden individual needs into group needs (e.g., “Do other parents, like Yasmine, need to feel like a good parent?”).
• Regularly reword, clarify and confirm understanding of what has been said.
• Allow immigrant parents to draw connections between their culture and the new culture (e.g., “How is the parental role perceived in your culture?” “What do you think about our perception of the parental role here?” “How do you reward a child who behaves well?”).
• Use plenty of images. When possible, avoid writing.
• Invite the group to pool their thoughts.
  – “Can someone summarize …”
  – “How would you (addressing the group) like to be greeted when joining a group of parents who are Mexican, Japanese, Russian, etc.?”

If the parent first needs to break out of isolation, a parent group like NP may not be the best option at this particular time in his/her integration into a new country (language, culture shock, priority of getting settled and surviving, emotional and intellectual availability, etc.).

You must be alert to that possibility and be prepared to direct the parent to more informal activities, such as collective kitchens or activities with the children. That will enable him/her to experience success in a group setting.
You can also refer the person to the organization in your community whose mission is to support recent immigrants with their integration.