

Tips for showing welcome to people who may have little English

1. Acknowledge people; verbally and non-verbally, smile and say 'Hello'.
2. Ask and learn people's names, including the correct pronunciation and their name preference.
3. Speak slowly, clearly and calmly. Be aware of background noise.
4. Use plain English, avoid jargon and colloquialisms.
5. Don't be afraid to ask if you have been understood and to repeat what you have said, perhaps in different words.
6. It may be appropriate to speak more than ask questions. People who are learning a language always understand more than they can say.
7. Include a friend; a 3-way conversation can be easier to keep flowing.
8. Be prepared to provide information and advice, if asked, on local services and facilities (e.g. schools, GPs, language classes etc), but do not give specialist advice on topics such as benefits or immigration status.
9. Take an interest in the first language of newcomers and learn some greetings.
10. Be patient, be sensitive and remember that communication includes body language and gestures.



Hello!

A brief story...

Monika came to Northern Ireland with her husband and two children. Her first months were difficult and she remembers not feeling welcomed. She did not receive so much as a "Hello," not even from her neighbours or from the other mothers at her children's school.

After several months of feeling isolated and alone, her situation began to change. People started to greet her with a "Hello" and her neighbours began to ask "How are you?"

The simple gesture of saying "Hello" made an impact on Monika's life in Northern Ireland and made her feel welcome.

How might you welcome?

Start by taking the first step and say "Hello."
An ordinary "Hello" can make a big difference in someone's life and in making someone feel welcome.
If they do not speak English well, saying "Hello" might mean even more.

The tips listed above are available on our 'Hello' card resource. For copies contact our office.

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I was a stranger and you made me welcome. Matthew 25:35

