

## CHILD-FRIENDLY IMMIGRATION RESOURCES: For Children in DCS Foster Care<sup>1</sup>

*Frequently Asked Questions [FAQ] for SIJS Applicants, and “Video Clips”* of youth who have applied for SIJS in New York City; from Columbia University Law School Child Advocacy and Immigration Clinic (New York, New York). Go to: <http://www.law.columbia.edu/focusareas/clinics/childadvocacy>

- **Contents:** This secure Web site houses SIJS resources for youth in New York City foster care, including an “FAQ” document for youth answering common questions about SIJS in relation to getting a work permit and Social Security number, college financial aid, past arrests, illnesses, etc. There are also brief SIJS Web pages in Chinese and Spanish, as well as very compelling videos of New York City youth who were in foster care and have received SIJS.
- **DCS Relevance:** These resources are New York City specific, and the FAQ document answers some questions that other documents do not address. The video clips (see left column on home page) may be the most helpful element. Although they are in English, SIJS-applicant youth may be encouraged by seeing and hearing other youth like themselves who have overcome similarly difficult circumstances and who have persevered through the SIJS process.
- *Immigration Options for Undocumented Children*, from Immigrant Legal Resource Center (San Francisco, CA) <http://www.ilrc.org/resources/fact-sheets-immigration-options-for-undocumented-children-updated-for-2010>
  - **Contents:** A free downloadable collection of fact sheets on SIJS, VAWA, Family Visas, U Visas, US Citizenship, Asylum and TPS, with a few Web resources listed at the end; geared towards an adult audience.
  - **DCS Relevance:** Although this is geared towards an adult audience, it provides a useful, succinct summary of relevant legal routes for children. Some of this information (such as on SIJS and asylum) could be useful with more savvy teens, or as an aid to caseworkers answering basic questions about SIJS.
- *Immigration: What Teens Need to Know*, from Public Counsel Law Center (Los Angeles, CA) <http://www.publiccounsel.org/publications/immigration.pdf?id=0035>
  - **Contents:** A free downloadable brochure that includes definitions of immigration terms and ways to obtain a green card, including SIJS and asylum; uses a “FAQ” format to answer common questions in a youth-friendly format; includes a few drawings. The resources listed are Los Angeles specific. Available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

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<sup>1</sup> “DCS” refers to the Office of Refugee Resettlement’s (ORR) Division of Children’s Services.

- **DCS Relevance:** This booklet is geared towards undocumented youth in the Los Angeles area. However, certain sections have general applicability, such as the definitions section and the descriptions of SIJS and asylum.
  
- *Living in the United States: A Guide for Immigrant Youth*, from Immigrant Legal Resource Center (San Francisco, CA) <http://www.ilrc.org/for-immigrants-para-inmigrantes/living-in-the-us-guide>
  - **Contents:** This free downloadable document is youth-friendly and written for English-speaking adolescents. It provides straightforward advice to both undocumented and permanent resident youth, and answers questions about what undocumented, permanent resident, and U.S. citizen youth can and cannot do. There are specific sections on: obtaining permanent residency and citizenship; deportation; know your rights; adoption; helping family members; military service; voting; social security numbers; working and paying taxes; public benefits; getting ID and a driver's license; college and credit cards.
  
  - **DCS Relevance:** This resource includes very brief descriptions of SIJS, VAWA, T visas, adoption, and family immigration, as routes to permanent residency, and focuses more on the impact of one's immigration status on practical issues of daily life. It answers teen-centered questions and may be useful as part of independent living preparation.
  
- *What Happens When I Go To Immigration Court?* from the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children (New York, New York) and Holland and Knight <http://www.hklaw.com/content/CST/ImmigrationCourt/English/index.htm>
  - **Contents:** This 15-minute video uses child and adult actors to convey basic information about the immigration court process, including: the roles of the judge, lawyer, interpreter, and government attorney; different types of legal relief (including SIJS); and what happens in immigration court. The video is well done and could be very helpful to children in immigration court proceedings. Available in [Creole](#), [English](#), [French](#), [Fuchow](#) and [Spanish](#).
  
- *You Are Not Alone: Immigration*, from Lawyers for Children (NY, NY) <http://www.lawyersforchildren.org/sitecontent.cfm?page=handr-immigration>
  - **Contents:** A free downloadable brochure; addresses basic immigration questions; focuses primarily on SIJS but includes information on other types of status (including asylum, T & U visas); includes information on the SIJS bar to parental immigration and discusses how long the SIJS application can take; includes a glossary at the back; resources and description of the family court process are NYC specific.
  
  - **DCS Relevance:** This booklet could be very useful to SIJS-applicant youth. However, it will require a strong command of English, or a translator.