



Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services

This document is provided by the BRYCS Clearinghouse.

Refugee Communities: Social and Practical Implications for Service Providers

By Public Child Welfare Training Academy (PCWTA)

Reproduced with permission of Public Child Welfare Training Academy (PCWTA),
Academy for Professional Excellence

© 2007



BRYCS is a project of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops/Migration and Refugee Services (USCCB/MRS)

1-888-572-6500/ info@brycs.org/ www.brycs.org

REFUGEE COMMUNITIES: SOCIAL AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS

Level: Advanced Practice – Lineworker

Credits: 6

Class#:

Intended Audience:

- New and current child welfare personnel and community partners who come into contact with refugee families and want to understand the plight of the refugees and learn culturally competent practices to effectively work with them

Intended Objectives:

- To provide a definition and historical overview of internally displaced people (IDPs) and refugees
- To learn about the refugee experience and the challenges refugees face in the U.S.
- To learn about the various ethnic groups of refugees represented in the U.S.
- To learn practices of African and Middle Eastern cultures
- To gain knowledge of culturally competent practices to serve refugee families and communities

Topics Include:

- An overview of the historical background of the refugee
- The role of culture in society
- Experiencing the refugee experience
- Cultural competency in working with refugees
- An overview of African and Middle Eastern culture including gender roles, extended family practices, child rearing practices and changing roles and culture while in the U.S.

CalSWEC Competencies Addressed:

- 1.1 Student demonstrates sensitivity to clients' differences in culture, ethnicity and sexual orientation
- 1.2 Student demonstrates the ability to conduct an ethnically and culturally sensitive assessment of a child and family and to develop an appropriate intervention plan
- 1.3 Student understands the importance of a client's primary language and supports its use in providing child welfare assessments and intervention services
- 1.4 Student understands the influence and values of traditional, culturally based child rearing practices and uses this knowledge in working with families
- 1.5 Student demonstrates ability to collaborate with individuals, groups, community based organizations, and government agencies to advocate for equitable access to culturally sensitive resources and services
- 5.1 Student demonstrates knowledge of legal, socioeconomic, and psychosocial issues facing immigrants and refugees and is able to devise sensitive and appropriate interventions

Refugee Communities Social and Practical Implications for Service Providers

Intended Audience:

- Workers that come into contact with refugee families and want to understand the plight of the refugees and learn culturally competent practices to effectively work with them.

Learning Objectives:

- During the training the trainees will learn the definition of internally displaced people (IDPS) and refugees. An historical overview of the refugee process will be presented.
- During the training the trainees will learn about the refugee experience and the challenges refugees face in the United States
- During the training the trainees will learn about the various ethnic groups of refugees represented in the united States
- During the training, trainees will learn practices of the African and Middle Eastern cultures
- At completion of this instruction, the trainees will have knowledge of culturally competent practices to serve refugee families and communities.

CalsWEC Competencies to be addressed:

- 1.1 Student demonstrates sensitivity to clients' differences in culture, ethnicity and sexual orientation
- 1.2 Student demonstrates the ability to conduct an ethnically and culturally sensitive assessment of a child and family and to develop an appropriate intervention plan
- 1.3 Student understands the importance of a client's primary language and supports its use in providing child welfare assessments and intervention services
- 1.4 Student understands the influence and values of traditional, culturally based child rearing practices and uses this knowledge in working with families
- 1.5 Student demonstrates ability to collaborate with individuals, groups, community based organizations, and government agencies to advocate doe the equitable access to culturally sensitive resources and service
- 5.1 Student demonstrates knowledge of legal, socioeconomic, and psychosocial issues facing immigrants and refugees and is able to devise sensitive and appropriate interventions

Content:

9.00 am – 10.00 am

- A. Through discussion and PowerPoint presentation the trainer will provide an overview of the historical background of refugees
 - Definition of internally displaced people (IDPs) includes statistics of the countries they originate and countries that receive them **(EBased)**
 - Definition of refugee, asylees and immigrants

- Demographics of refugees in the United States spanning WWII to the present. Includes statistics of the different ethnic groups **(EBased)**
- The journey of a refugee family from the refugee camp to San Diego
- Social baggage refugees, asylees, and immigrants may be carrying and how it affects their acculturation process **(F&E)**
- The different social services refugees, asylees and immigrants have access to on arrival in the United States. Includes the services from social service agencies and also faith and community based organizations. **(F&E)**

10.00 am - 10.15 am

- B. Through discussion and PowerPoint presentation the trainer will discuss the role of culture in society
- Definition of culture
 - Overview of the various aspects of culture – language, food, dress, etc.
 - How an individual's culture impacts their assimilation into the mainstream culture **(F&E)**

10.15 am – 10.25 am

Break

10.25 am – 11.15 am

Exercise: 45 minutes: Refugee Experience **(TOL)**

Have the participants list the items they would take during an impending disaster (firestorm 2003). Have participants design a refugee camp and describe their perceptions of life in the cap. The instructor will then provide a list of items that refugees are allowed to take with them and have the participants compare their own list and discuss.

11.15 am – 12.00 noon

- C. Through discussion the trainer will discuss cultural competency and the importance for service providers as it relates to working with refugees
- Definition of cultural competency
 - Culturally competent practices while working with refugees
 - Overview of the role culture plays in the perception of refugees seeking services, includes their perception of government agencies and service providers
 - Barriers refugees may face in seeking out social services

12 noon – 1.00 pm

Lunch

1.00 pm - 1.30 pm

Video: 30 minutes: Refugee experience – UNHCR video

1.30 pm – 2.00 pm

D. Through discussion the trainer will discuss general overview of African culture (F&E)

- Gender roles
- Extended family practices
- Child rearing practices
- Changing roles while in the U.S.

2.00 pm – 2.30 pm

Exercise 30 minutes: Life in a typical African Village (TOL)

Divide class into small groups and have the participants simulate life in a typical African village and discuss the cultural norms that could live with and the norms they can live without. The discussion after the exercise will focus on the various cultural norms the worker needs to be aware of and how they can tailor their services to better serve the client

2.30 pm – 2.45 pm

Break

2.45 pm – 3.15 pm

E. Through discussion the trainer will discuss general overview of Middle Eastern culture (F&E)

- Gender roles
- Extended family practices
- Child rearing practice
- Changing roles and culture within in the U.S.

3.15 pm to 4.00 pm

F. Wrap up: questions, evaluation and closure

AFSA Outcome Objectives to be addressed:

- Child safety
- Child well-being

Activities:

- Two (2) experiential exercises that simulate
 - The journey of the refugee from their home to the refugee camp
 - Life in an African village

- Video on the refugee experience.

The above activities offer the trainees a hands on experience of what it is like to flee your country due to war and live in a culture that is very different from your own. It will also have them examine their own cultural biases towards people from different cultures and address how they can be more empathetic to the refugee experience.

Audio/Visual Aids:

- Computer and LCD for PowerPoint slides
- VCR and Monitor
- Easel Board and paper, markers, masking tape

Bibliography

- Abusharaf, R., (2002) *Wanderings: Sudanese Migrants and Exiles in North America*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press
- Azima, F.J., Grizenko, N. (2002) *Immigrant and Refugee Children and their families: Clinical, Research, and Training Issues*. International University Press, Inc.
- Chan, S., Ed. (1994) *Hmong means free: life in Laos and America*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Griffith., J.L., (2002) Living with Threat and Uncertainty: What the Kosavars Tell us. *Family Process*. 41:24-27
- Lackland, D.L., Virta, E. (2003). Intergenerational value discrepancies in immigrant and host-national families and their impact on psychological adaptation. *Journal of Adolescence*, Volume 26, Issue 2, pages 213-231
- Leonard, K. (1997) *The New Americans: The South East Asian Americans*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press. ISBN: 1-884444-49-0
- Lewis, O., et al (2004) Progress report on the development of child abuse prevention, identification, and treatment systems in Eastern Europe. *Child Abuse & Neglect* 28, 93-111
- Orozco-Suarez, C., Todorova, I.L., Louie, J. (2002) Making Up for Lost Time: The Experience of Separation and Reunification among Immigrant Families. *Family Process*, Vol. 41, No. 4
- Orozco-Suarez, C. (2001) *Children of Immigration*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Poyocky-Tripodi, M. (2002). *Best Practices for Social Work with Refugees and immigrants*. Columbia University Press.
- Sariola, H., Uutela, A. (1992). The Prevalence and Context of Family Violence against Children in Finland. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, Vol. 16, pages 823-832
- Tung, M. (2000) *Chinese American and their immigrant parents*. Birmingham, NY: Haworth Clinical Practice Press