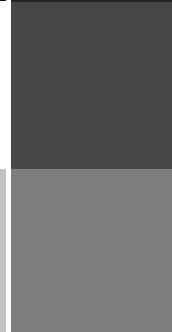
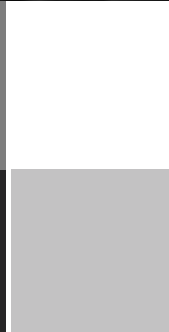
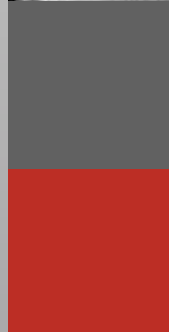
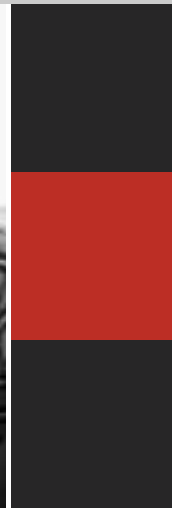
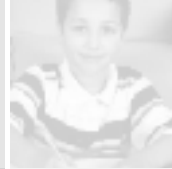
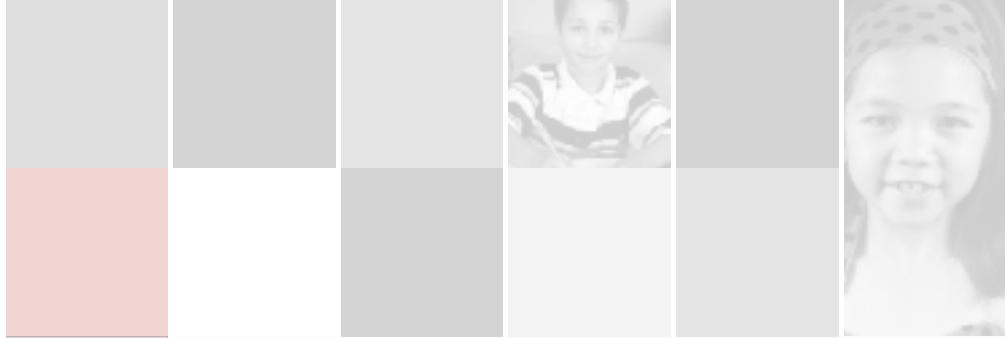


# MENTORING

## IMMIGRANT & REFUGEE YOUTH

A Toolkit for Program Coordinators

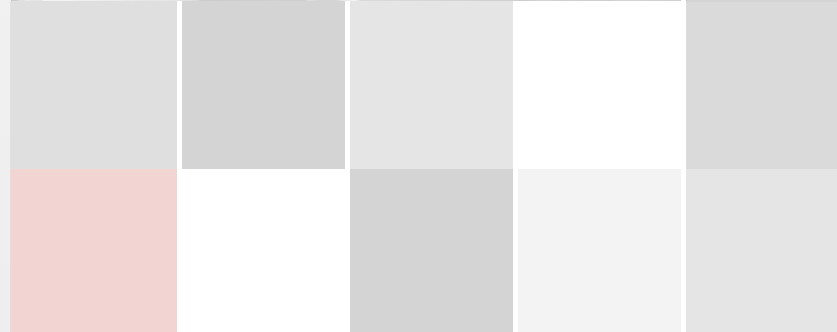




# MENTORING

## **IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE YOUTH**

**A Toolkit for Program Coordinators**



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# Foreword

*Mentoring Immigrant Youth: A Toolkit for Program Coordinators* is a comprehensive resource that is designed to offer program staff important background information, promising program practices and strategies to build and sustain high-quality mentoring relationships for different categories of immigrant youth. *Mentoring Immigrant Youth: A Toolkit for Program Coordinators* acts as a supplemental guide to MENTOR's *How to Build a Successful Mentoring Program Using the Elements of Effective Practice*—a step-by-step toolkit that provides tips and strategies for developing and strengthening youth mentoring programs.

Included in this resource, you will find five chapters that focus on skills needed to design, plan, manage, operate and evaluate programming specifically for immigrant youth in your area. Each chapter has a series of “ready-to-use” tools, templates and training exercises that will take you through the different steps necessary to build or strengthen mentoring relationships that hold the potential to make a difference in the lives of new Americans. In addition, highlighted case studies are included throughout this resource to showcase practices that might be useful to replicate in your own program.

This toolkit was made possible by a generous grant from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and is the latest offering from MENTOR. For nearly two decades, MENTOR has worked to expand the world of quality youth mentoring. In collaboration with a strong network of state *Mentoring Partnerships* and with more than 4,300 mentoring programs nationwide, MENTOR helps connect young Americans who want and need caring adults in their lives with the power of mentoring.

We hope that you will use the toolkit with great success. For further assistance, we encourage you to visit [www.mentoring.org](http://www.mentoring.org) to find even more resources.

In Partnership,



Tonya Wiley  
Executive Vice President



Kate Schineller  
Vice President

# Acknowledgements

MENTOR gratefully acknowledges the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation for its generous support for the toolkit. We thank An-Me Chung, program officer of the foundation, for her leadership and vision in the development of this resource for the mentoring community.

## **MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership**

### **Lead Staff**

Kate Schineller

### **Project Staff**

Christian Rummell

We also gratefully acknowledge the guidance and feedback of Susan K. Patrick

# Key Definitions

**Immigrant youth** is used in this toolkit as an umbrella term that refers to many different categories of young people that have “roots” in foreign countries. Types of immigrants covered in this term are:

- **FIRST GENERATION IMMIGRANT** a young person that has directly come to live in the United States from a foreign country.
- **SECOND GENERATION IMMIGRANT** a young person whose parents came to live in the United States from a foreign country.
- **REFUGEE YOUTH** a young person that has come to live the United States due to a wellfounded fear of persecution in their homeland.<sup>2</sup>

**Culture** the shared patterns of a society that are transmitted over time through generations.<sup>3</sup>

**Ethnicity** groups of individuals who have a common culture, nationality, history or religion.<sup>4</sup>

**Race** refers to the biological, genetic heritage of a group.<sup>5</sup>

**ESL** English as a Second Language

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<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Homeland Security

<sup>3</sup> Robinson & Howard-Hamilton, 2000; found in the *Handbook of Youth Mentoring*, Sanchez & Colon, 2005

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.







# **CHAPTER 1**

## **Mentoring is Important for Immigrant Youth**





# CHAPTER 1

## Mentoring is Important for Immigrant Youth

### I. Overcoming Concerns

A great deal of discussion is happening across the United States about immigration. Fear, misperceptions, and lack of information have created a climate of uncertainty about offering support, services or a helping hand to many groups of “new” Americans. However, by taking the time to gain awareness and reconfirm your support to help young people—all young people—you will take an important step toward making mentoring relationships, programs and your community more responsive to a growing need that cannot and should not be overlooked.

**Concern:** I am not serving any immigrant or refugee youth in my program so this issue is not important.

**Response:** In the U.S., there are more than 15 million immigrant youth that live in every region and state of the country. Immigrant youth are present in cities, in rural areas and in suburbs. They are found in “border” states and in the heartland. And their numbers are growing—if current trends continue, more than 1 in 4 young people under age 18 will be a first or second generation immigrant by the year 2010<sup>6</sup>.

Mentoring programs often have a defined mission of connecting all deserving young people in their communities with caring and empathetic adults. As demographics, communities, and the face of young people change, there is a growing likelihood that your program will soon see a need to provide relationships to this population.

**Concern:** Most immigrant youth are illegal and I shouldn't be providing mentoring services to them anyway.

**Response:** 80% of today's immigrant youth were born in the United States.<sup>7</sup> This means that they have all the same rights and opportunities as other young Americans. They have similar dreams, hopes and aspirations for happiness and success. They can also benefit from mentoring much the same as other young people. In fact, mentoring relationships may even hold the potential to help immigrant youth in a variety of unique ways—with language, learning a new culture and feeling connected to school.

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<sup>6</sup> The Urban Institute, 2006

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

**Concern:** I can't serve immigrant youth because they do not speak English.

**Response:** While many immigrant youth may be learning English—others speak the language quite well. In fact, many immigrant youth are faced with parent/child role reversals because they speak and understand English much better than their parents. When this happens, a young person might be placed in the position of translating basic needs for their parents—to teachers, doctors or family advocates. This responsibility has the potential of changing parent/child dynamics. Mentors can be an enormous asset for such young people, offering support, guidance and advocacy, while assisting them with the stress associated with this phenomenon.

Another important thing to remember—mentoring relationships do not have to occur in English. Bicultural/bilingual mentors offer unique and promising opportunities for non-English speaking immigrant youth—easing the transition into a new culture, helping to learn English and gaining a role model that can help create a bicultural/bilingual identity.

**Concern:** My program does not have the capacity to serve immigrant and refugee youth.

**Response:** Mentoring is not a “one-size-fits-all” endeavor. In order for each relationship to be successful, programs must find ways to address the unique needs and circumstances of every young person they serve. While creating content that addresses the needs of every mentee in a program may appear burdensome, it is important to remember that more harm than good could occur for poorly constructed or supported relationships. Because of this, programs have an enormous responsibility to ensure that they are prepared to address the needs of all youth they serve—including immigrant youth.

## TOOL 1

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND STATISTICS ON IMMIGRANT YOUTH

- There are over 15 million immigrant youth comprising over 20% of children in the United States today. If current immigration trends continue, they will comprise 25% of all U.S. children by 2010.
- 80% of these children were born in the United States, thus they are U.S. citizens. 61% of these youth live in families where one or more parents are noncitizens. This has significant implications for access to basic services due to parents' lack of legal status.
- 5 million children have “undocumented” parents (also referred to as unauthorized or illegal immigrants). Even in these families, 2/3 of the children are U.S. citizens.
- In 2000, 68% of young children of immigrants lived in California, Florida, Illinois, New Jersey, New York and Texas. However, the number of immigrant families is growing most rapidly in Colorado, Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Nebraska, Nevada, North Carolina, Oregon, and Tennessee.

Source: The Urban Institute, 2006.

## II. Characteristics of Immigrant and Refugee Youth

### Country of Origin

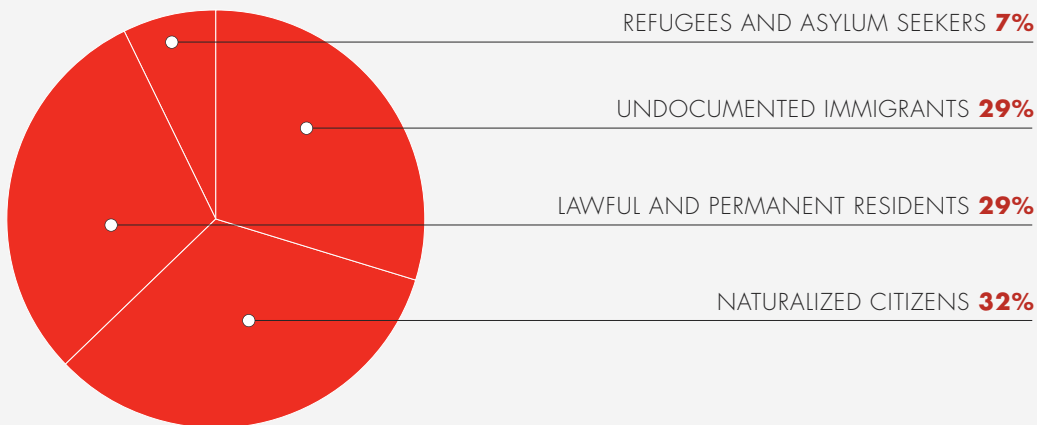
The country of origin of an immigrant often provides important clues as to the social, cultural, political and familial values that a young person may possess. However, it is important to remember that each country has enormous diversity—in terms of language, faith, mores, values and political conflicts among and within groups. Therefore, as a program coordinator working with immigrant youth, learning as much as possible from listening, doing your own research, and following the tips and suggestions found in this resource will help you more closely align your services to meet the needs of each individual young person.

#### TOOL 2

#### CLASSIFICATION OF IMMIGRANTS IN THE UNITED STATES

- **Naturalized Citizens** are born outside of the U.S. and are granted citizenship through the naturalization process.
- **Lawful Permanent Residents** are non-citizens who are granted permission to permanently live and work in the U.S.
- **Refugees and Asylum Seekers** are non-citizens who are granted permission to live in the U.S. because of a well-founded fear of persecution in their country of origin. Refugees are granted such permission before coming to the U.S. whereas asylum seekers request asylum status after coming to this country.
- **Undocumented Immigrants** have either:
  - a) entered the U.S. illegally;
  - b) stayed past a visa expiration date; or
  - c) engaged in activities outside their visa status.

#### CLASSIFICATION OF IMMIGRANTS IN THE U.S.



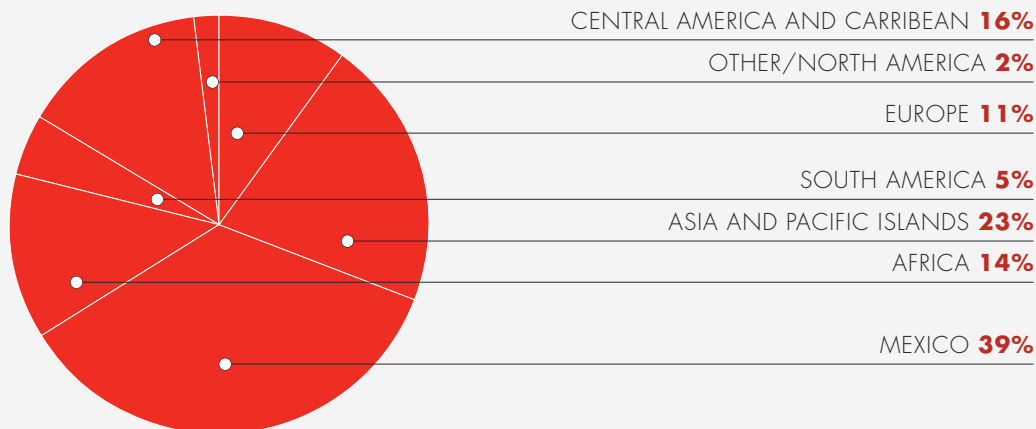
## Challenges Faced by Immigrant Youth

In an article for MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership’s Research Corner, Dr. Jean Rhodes<sup>8</sup> highlighted several common struggles faced by immigrant youth and their families. These struggles include: 1) Stress related to exclusion; 2) Stress related to poverty; and 3) Stress related to separation.

- 1. Stress Related to Exclusion.** Due to growing and widescale anti-immigrant sentiment in many communities, immigrant youth and families are often forced to live lives that are excluded from other segments of society. Rhodes (2005) states that many recent immigrant families settle in communities with low-performing schools, limited social services, and reduced access to high paying jobs and resources—each of which contribute to increased stress in the lives of many immigrant youth.
- 2. Stress Related to Poverty.** Due to limited financial resources, many new immigrants often live in areas of intense poverty. Faced with violence, overcrowded schools, drugs and gang activity (Luther, 1999; Rhodes, 2005), immigrant youth may experience increased levels of anxiety, depression and juvenile delinquency (Luther, 1999; Rhodes, 2005).
- 3. Stress Related to Separation.** Many immigrant youth have experienced prolonged periods of separation from their parents (Rhodes, 2005; Suarez-Orozco, 2001). Children of immigrants may more likely have parents that leave home to earn money and may often live with relatives that act as caregivers.

### TOOL 3

#### CHILDREN OF IMMIGRANTS BY REGION OF ORIGIN



Source: Capps, Randy, et al. *The Health and Well-Being of Young Children of Immigrants*. 2005.

<sup>8</sup> From Research Corner, MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership

## TOOL 4

### CHALLENGES AND RISKS FACING IMMIGRANT YOUTH

**Separation** Separation from parents or other family members is common for short or long periods during the immigration and resettlement process. These separations may create feelings of cultural dislocation and instability and increase stress levels, making the child's adjustment more difficult. Even when the family is able to stay together, the parents may be "absent" due to the demands of working one or more jobs.

**Adjustment** A child's adjustment is influenced by the ease or difficulty of their parents' adjustment; they may feel responsible for helping their parents cope with employment, language and other challenges.

**Traumatic Experiences** Refugee children, in particular, may have had traumatic experiences related to situations such as genocide, war, torture and death of family members or friends. While many of these children never exhibit symptoms of mental health problems, others may develop such symptoms. Response to these symptoms may be strongly influenced by cultural beliefs and norms.

**Living in Poverty** Although children of immigrants are more likely to live with both parents, and at least one of their parents works full time, they are more likely to live in low-income families (54% compared to 36% of all U.S. children) because of the lower wages their parents earn. The results of living in poverty may include higher rates of homelessness or living in overcrowded housing, living in higher crime neighborhoods with increased exposure to gangs, hunger and attendance at lower performing schools. In addition, older children may leave school to earn extra income to help support their families.

**Student Disconnect from Education** Children may be disadvantaged in their schooling for a variety of reasons including limited English proficiency (both in parents and children), less well-educated parents, inadequate or interrupted schooling in their country of origin, and attendance at lower-performing schools. They may also have attendance problems due to their role as interpreters or child care providers for the family. Older children in particular may face greater difficulty in school due to a shorter time frame in which to assimilate and to learn English. Older children may also feel responsible to help support their families financially.

**Parent Disconnect from Education** Parents may feel and be disconnected from their child's education for a variety of reasons including cultural norms regarding the school's role, their limited language skills, and lack of knowledge and understanding about the U.S. educational system and what their children are learning in school.

**Discrimination** Children of immigrants may be the target of negative stereotyping, race or culture-based discrimination, and bullying by other children. This may negatively impact school attendance and performance as well as lead to stress, depression and conflicting feelings about their cultural background.

**Intergenerational Conflict** Intergenerational conflict and role-reversals may occur when children acculturate more quickly and acquire English language skills before their parents. Parents are often particularly disturbed at their children's adoption of American social/cultural norms and values. Children may feel torn between two worlds and be embarrassed regarding their country of origin.

**Immigration Policies** U.S. immigration policies have increasingly restricted immigrants from receiving benefits or social services. Although immigrant children may qualify for many social programs as U.S. citizens themselves, their families are less likely to access them, especially if they are undocumented immigrants.

## Assets and Strengths of Immigrant Youth

While immigrant youth face significant challenges and barriers, many also possess enormous strengths and resilience. Act for Youth Upstate Center of Excellence (2004) in New York cited four common immigrant youth assets that offer key insight into openings for mentoring programs and mentors to make a difference:

1. A layer of protection created by support and guidance of extended families, community needs valued over individual needs, and an emphasis on collective decision-making;
2. Bilingualism—which reflects increased skills and leadership in a quickly growing multicultural society;
3. Increased opportunities for healthy development when an immigrant youth overcomes negative circumstances and risks; and
4. Learned ability to navigate through competing cultural demands—which fosters resilience, flexibility and skills related to interpersonal relationships.

### TOOL 5

#### ASSETS AND STRENGTHS OF IMMIGRANT YOUTH

##### Assets

**Cultural and family values** provide a powerful protective system that emphasizes:

- the involvement of extended family and community members in caring for and supporting children;
- collective decision making; and
- the value of community needs over individual needs (which can buffer children from materialistic pressures, foster feelings of responsibility, and provide a sense of community pride in the child's achievements).

**Bilingualism** is a valuable asset in an increasingly globalized and multilingual U.S. and world society.

Youth may **develop leadership, problem solving, and negotiating skills** in the process of helping their family face relocation-related challenges.

Youth who must balance the culture of their country of origin with that of the U.S. inherently develop a **sense of resiliency and flexibility** and acquire skills that prepare them to adapt to rapid change and “negotiate” the demands of multicultural settings. Children who can assimilate both cultures appear to adapt most successfully.

##### Strengths

**Two-parent families** Children of immigrants are more likely to have two-parent families and an extended network in which there is a strong work ethic and a strong commitment to the well-being of the child and family.

**Community bonds** Immigrant families often settle in the same area, creating a strong ethnic community that reinforces cultural, religious and family values. These families also tend to respect parental authority and work with their community to create a social support network to meet the challenges of relocation.

**Health** Children in immigrant families tend to be healthier overall than children born in America (although they are less likely to be covered by health insurance) and to have better levels of mental health and avoidance of high-risk behaviors such as drug use.

**Value of education** Refugee children and their families place a strong value on education as the key to success in the U.S. Although parents often cannot actively participate in their child's education due to language barriers and their own lack of education, they support and appreciate what the schools are doing to help their children.



### III. Recommendations for Working with Children from Immigrant and Refugee Families

*“I believe in helping people in difficult times, in trying to understand people, and in trying to study because education is power. I see people who have a lot of material possessions, but I do not feel jealous because what is really important is love and relationships. I know how quickly you can lose what you have. In America, we don’t have money. But we have peace.”*

– HELENE BOUNSANA, REFUGEE YOUTH FROM CONGO, BRAZZAVILLE

Working with children from immigrant and refugee families requires a great deal of empathy and care. As a program coordinator, it is essential for you to take the time to listen—to really hear the experiences, hopes and challenges that each young immigrant or refugee mentee faces. Also, remember that many young people transitioning to this country may be dealing with loss—of their homeland, family, or friends. Young immigrants may also be brushing up against the loss of an ideal—realizing that life in the United States is far different from what they expected. Because of these important needs, programs are strongly recommended to explore ways to create program climates that are welcoming, responsive and inclusive.

#### TOOL 6

#### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WORKING WITH CHILDREN FROM IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE FAMILIES

1. Recognize and build programming around the strengths of these children, their families and ethnic groups. Also, promote programming that addresses the challenges faced by immigrant youth.
2. Encourage and support children in maintaining the cultural, religious, and family values of their country of origin while simultaneously helping them adapt to American culture.
3. Provide opportunities for the youth to serve as leaders, resources and teachers of their culture and language.
4. Create close adult and peer relationships with children to foster feelings of safety, inclusion and belonging.
5. Provide caring adult role models as mentors or tutors to help children succeed at school and negotiate the process of acculturation.
6. Support the child’s academic success and educational process, encouraging them to stay in school and seek help when needed.
7. Involve and support the child’s family or caretaker, drawing on them as resources to facilitate the child’s positive development and providing them with support and referrals to services that will help them successfully adapt to the United States.
8. Be flexible and creative in meeting the child and family’s needs.

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## TOOL 6, CONTINUED

- 9.** Recognize and respond when children exhibit behaviors of concern that might be indicative of depression, drug use, inability to manage anger and aggression, involvement with anti-social groups such as gangs, or breaking the law.
- 10.** Become knowledgeable about and create linkages with “cultural intermediaries” and organizations that serve immigrant and refugee families.
- 11.** Engage refugee and immigrant youth, family, and community leaders in designing, running, and/or guiding programs.
- 12.** To the extent possible, recruit multicultural and multilingual staff and volunteers. When not possible, provide relevant cultural diversity training and create linkages with organizations that are multicultural and multilingual which can serve as “cultural intermediaries.”
- 13.** Create an organizational and staff culture that embraces and values diversity and different cultural norms.

Source: BRYCS and Mentor/National Mentoring Partnership

## TRAINING EXERCISE 1

### CHALLENGES AND ASSETS OF IMMIGRANT YOUTH

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**Goal** To learn more about the specific challenges and strengths of immigrant youth

**Audience** Program staff

**Materials** Post-it notes, flip chart, markers, overhead or LCD projector

**Length of exercise** 50 minutes

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#### A. CHALLENGES FACING IMMIGRANT YOUTH (10 MINUTES)

1. Explain to participants that the first step in determining the design and parameters of their services to immigrant youth consist of conducting a needs assessment to learn more about the population(s) they plan to serve. This needs assessment should explore challenges and barriers that face many immigrant youth as well as potential resources and assets.
2. Give each participant 10 Post-it notes. Have participants write 5 challenges (one on each Post-it note) that they believe immigrant youth face during their assimilation process. If needed, offer prompts such as speaking a different language, learning expectations of a new culture and attending a new school.
3. Tell participants to place their postit notes anywhere on a section of the wall that has a sign "Immigrant Youth Challenges." (Trainer's note: Before the session begins, you should prepare signs for "Immigrant Youth Challenges" and "Immigrant Youth Assets" and place these signs strategically on two opposite facing walls.)

#### B. ASSETS OF IMMIGRANT YOUTH (25 MINUTES)

1. After participants have placed their postit notes on the wall, tell them to take a few minutes to write out 5 resources, strengths, and/or assets of immigrant youth (one on each Post-it). If needed, offer prompts such as "bicultural," "adaptable," and "family."
2. Tell participants to place their Post-it notes on a section of the wall with the sign "Immigrant Youth Assets."
3. After all Post-it notes are on the wall, divide participants into two groups. One group will be "Challenges" and the other group will be "Assets." Ask participants to move to the appropriate section of the room under the sign for their group.
4. Ask each group to read all of the Post-it notes in their section. Then, ask them to work together to move Post-it notes into categories with similar ideas (for example, "doesn't speak English" and "limited ability to speak English" could be lumped together in a category called "Language"). Encourage participants to talk through each of the "notes" and ask them to give each grouping of Post-its a category name.
5. After both groups have combined similar ideas and decided upon category names, ask a volunteer representative from "Challenges" to 1) describe all the category names, and 2) highlight ideas that were most common. After the volunteer has called out this information, ask if anyone needs clarification or if there are any questions.

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## TRAINING EXERCISE 1, CONTINUED

6. Using an overhead or LCD projector, discuss **Tool 4: Challenges and Risks Facing Immigrant Youth**, acknowledging any challenges that were highlighted during the group activity. Allow time to clarify any questions, concerns or ideas that were generated.
7. Follow the same format for highlighting immigrant youth "Assets." Use a volunteer representative to describe the categories and give other participants the opportunity to share ideas and ask questions. Using an overhead or LCD projector, discuss **Tool 5: Assets and Strengths of Immigrant Youth**. Again, offer time for questions and clarification.

### C. DEBRIEF (15 MINUTES)

1. Ask participants to individually identify one asset, strength, challenge, or risk they learned during this exercise. Then ask them to describe how a mentoring relationship may be able to assist an immigrant youth with this asset, strength, challenge, or risk. Inform participants that this awareness is the first step in providing high-quality mentoring relationships to this population. The next training activity will help them start designing a program with these new insights in mind.



## **CHAPTER 2**

### **Designing and Planning Inclusive Mentoring Programs and Relationships**





## CHAPTER 2

# Designing and Planning Inclusive Mentoring Programs and Relationships

One of the most important pieces of designing and planning inclusive mentoring programs and relationships involves understanding the specific needs of youth that your program will serve. Chapter 1 offered important insights into common struggles, assets and strengths of many immigrant youth. In addition, key general recommendations for working with children and families from this population were provided. The next step in planning and designing highquality mentoring services for immigrant youth is to conduct a thorough needs assessment in your local area.

### I. Conducting a Needs Assessment

In order to learn more about immigrant youth populations in your community, there are a variety of agencies that you can collect information from. School districts, state refugee coordinators, mutual assistance agencies, churches/synagogues/mosques, and local volunteer agencies are all great “gateway” resources that can provide detailed information, insight, and partnership opportunities.

#### TOOL 7A

#### LOCATING IMMIGRANT POPULATIONS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

The following are potential resources to learn more about the various immigrant populations in your local community:

**School Districts** School districts with significant levels of immigrant students receive additional funding under Title III of the No Child Left Behind Act. The State Department of Education will have a list of qualifying schools in your state. School-aged children may show up in English Language Learner (ELL) programs in local schools. Schools may also have parent groups that provide information and resources to immigrant and refugee families.

**State Refugee Coordinators** Every state that receives federal refugee resettlement funds has a state coordinator. A list of such coordinators can be found at: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/partners/index.htm>. Other state agencies that are typically involved with immigrant and refugee populations are departments of education, social services, children and families, and homeland security. You can often find these links on your state government homepage.

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## TOOL 7A, CONTINUED

**Mutual Assistance Agencies (MAAs)** These are grassroots, community-based organizations managed primarily by and for members of specific resettlement refugee/immigrant populations. MAAs usually focus on relatively small-scale geographical areas such as cities and counties. Your state refugee coordinator may be able to recommend various MAAs in your local community.

**Churches, Synagogues, Mosques** Many immigrant refugees are sponsored by the faith community whose members volunteer to help in the resettlement process.

**Local Volunteer Agencies** The United Way, Red Cross, and other volunteer matching centers are often involved in or knowledgeable about efforts to help immigrants and refugees in your local community.

### Asking the Right Question

Locating agencies is only part of the process of conducting a needs assessment. You must also know how to ask the right questions—which will ensure that you gain all the information necessary to help you best understand and serve immigrant youth in your area. Tool 7B offers recommendations for questions that you may want to ask.

## TOOL 7B

### CONDUCTING A NEEDS ASSESSMENT—POTENTIAL QUESTIONS

The following are potential questions you can use when you conduct your local needs assessment:

1. What refugee or immigrant communities are represented in your geographical area?
2. Are there specific tribal or ethnic subgroups within this population? Are there any issues with how they get along with each other?
3. How long have they been here? Is there an ongoing flow of newcomers or is this a more settled newcomer community?
4. What do we know about these particular ethnic groups and the circumstances that brought them to America? To the extent known about the newcomer populations, have these children been subjected to any forms of torture, rape, loss of family members or other traumatic experiences? Are these being addressed by other programs or agencies?
5. Is it known whether a portion of this immigrant community is here illegally? If so, how is this issue being dealt with by the schools and community agencies that work with them?
6. What are the challenges facing these children and their families?
7. What language barriers exist and what are our resources for addressing them?

continued on next page



## TOOL 7B, CONTINUED

8. What do we know about the cultural norms of these newcomers?
  - What are the childrearing practices? What are the social norms for the involvement of other nonfamilial adults in the children's lives?
  - What are their expectations and aspirations for their children?
  - What differences are there in family/children roles and responsibilities as compared to other American families?
9. Are any of these children in foster care as unaccompanied youth?
10. Is there a mentor currently working with the family to assist with resettlement?
11. What other agencies are involved with these children?
12. Would these children benefit from a mentor? In what ways?
13. What other needs does the child have that could be filled by a volunteer?
  - \_\_\_ Tutoring
  - \_\_\_ Language Acquisition
  - \_\_\_ Reading
  - \_\_\_ College Applications
  - \_\_\_ Work Readiness Skills

### Examining Capacity—Looking Inside Your Agency

When conducting a needs assessment, it is also important to look inside of your agency. What strengths and resources does your mentoring program currently have in place to provide services to immigrant youth? What challenges might you face? Will you have additional staffing, funding or partnership needs if you decide to expand your services? The following tool overviews key strengths, capabilities, and challenges different types of agencies must consider when conducting an internal needs assessment.

## TOOL 7C

### CONDUCTING A NEEDS ASSESSMENT—EXAMPLES OF AGENCY CAPACITY

Type of Agency	Capabilities	Challenges Agencies May Need
Mutual Assistance Agencies currently working with immigrant or refugee populations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expertise in working with the target population</li> <li>• Knowledge of their cultural norms</li> <li>• Ability to identify children</li> <li>• Established relationships with families</li> <li>• Existing network of volunteers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge about positive youth development principles</li> <li>• Knowledge and support to set up and run a mentoring program</li> <li>• Linkages with other youth development and mentoring programs</li> <li>• Funding for programming</li> </ul>
Existing Mentoring Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Established infrastructure and knowledge base to run a mentoring program</li> <li>• Skills in recruiting, training and supporting mentors</li> <li>• Program management experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Linkages with partners to help identify youth and potential mentors</li> <li>• Expertise in population to be served</li> <li>• Cultural awareness and language skills</li> <li>• Funding to expand programming</li> </ul>
Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Established relationship with children</li> <li>• Language acquisition knowledge and skills</li> <li>• Knowledge of family and community</li> <li>• Access to federal funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge and support to set up and run a mentoring program</li> <li>• Linkages with State Mentoring Partnerships and with other youth development and mentoring programs</li> <li>• Allocation of funding for program</li> </ul>
After School Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Established infrastructure to serve youth</li> <li>• Knowledge of youth development issues</li> <li>• Ability to recruit adult volunteers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partners to help identify youth/potential mentors</li> <li>• Cultural awareness and language skills</li> <li>• Funding to expand programming</li> <li>• Linkages with State Mentoring Partnerships</li> </ul>

## TOOL 7D

### WORKSHEET: EXPLORING MY ORGANIZATION CAPACITY TO SERVE IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE YOUTH

<b>Type of Agency</b>	<b>Capabilities</b>	<b>Challenges Agencies May Need</b>
Name and description of my agency:	The strengths of my agency are:	Things my agency may need to serve this population include:

## II. Defining Program Parameters

Once your program has conducted an internal and external needs assessment, the second step in the process of designing and planning programming for this population is to define your program's parameters. First, your program should address two key questions: What specific population of young people do you plan to serve? What types of mentors will you recruit?

### TOOL 8

#### DEFINING PROGRAM PARAMETERS

**1. Determine the Specific Youth Population You Plan to Serve** There are several important considerations in determining the population of youth you plan to serve in your mentoring efforts. These include:

- **Age and Gender** This will be determined in part by your program type and setting, cultural norms of your target population, pool of potential mentors and their interests, language issues, other partners and agencies involved with these children, and funding sources.
- **Children's Needs and Characteristics** Some questions to consider include: Are there subgroups within the population of immigrant or refugee children whose needs are more aligned with your program's capabilities? Do you want to serve a special population such as "unaccompanied" foster children or the most recent newcomers? Are their needs beyond the capabilities of your potential pool of mentors (e.g. trauma the children may have experienced)? How would you address these needs?
- **Mentoring Goals** What do you want to accomplish in helping this population of youth? Some possible goals include English language acquisition, general assimilation to American culture, social networks and skills, school success and career exploration.
- **Location and Geographic Area** Is there an easily accessible group of children you could serve? Is there a concentration of children in one specific area? Is transportation an issue? Is there a program already serving these children?

**2. Determine the Population of Mentors You Plan to Recruit**

- **Shared Ethnic Identity** Mentees that have a mentor with the same ethnic identity may have the following benefits and challenges:

**Benefits** Shared language, role model with similar experience, ability to empathize, may work best in peer mentoring relationships.

**Challenges** Mentor may be too close to family, parents may prefer someone who doesn't know them which may limit mentor recruitment pool.

- **Different Ethnic Identity** Mentees that have a mentor with a different ethnic identity may have the following benefits and challenges:

**Benefits** Research has shown young people do not need same-race mentors in order to benefit from mentoring.

**Challenges** Must find mentors that feel comfortable with and are willing to learn about other cultures to overcome potential language barriers, and must be empathetic to others.

### III. Suggestions for Possible Goals and Outcomes of Mentoring Sessions

After you have determined the types of young people and mentors that will participate in your program's mentoring relationships, your program should examine the possible goals and outcomes of these relationships.

#### TOOL 9

#### SUGGESTIONS FOR POSSIBLE GOALS AND DESIRED OUTCOMES OF MENTORING SESSIONS INVOLVING IMMIGRANT YOUTH

Typical activities for mentoring sessions may be designed around goals such as:

- Developing social and life skills, with a particular focus on adapting to American culture while maintaining the mentee's own culture
- Developing English language and reading skills
- Providing other academic support such as homework help and preparation for transition to junior high or high school
- Providing emotional support
- Serving as an advocate and guide basic activities such as using public transportation, using a library, looking for a job, etc.
- Developing workforce preparedness skills
- Providing opportunities to just relax and have fun
- Providing opportunities for peer interaction and support
- Developing a young person's creative talents
- Providing opportunities to do service projects that help others

## **IV. Determine Where, When, and How Often Mentoring will take Place**

The third step in designing and planning a mentoring program is to determine where, when and how often mentoring will take place. Tool 10 offers important questions that can help you figure out what mentoring relationships for immigrant youth in your program will look like.

### **TOOL 10**

#### **DETERMINE WHERE, WHEN AND HOW OFTEN MENTORING WILL TAKE PLACE**

Questions that will help determine where, when and how often mentoring will take place are:

- 1.** What are the family needs and expectations?
- 2.** What is the extent to which the child is able to reliably show up for mentoring sessions?
- 3.** What other services is the child or family receiving? If so, when does the child or family receive these services?
- 4.** What transportation is available for the child to participate in mentoring activities?
- 5.** What is the amount of time and frequency of meetings needed to develop a positive relationship that addresses the specific needs of the young person?
- 6.** What is the availability of interpreters, if needed?
- 7.** What are the religious holidays and events that your target population(s) celebrate?

## **V. Identify Program Stakeholders and Determine How you will Promote Your Program**

The fourth step in designing and planning a mentoring program for immigrant youth is to identify community partners, program stakeholders and strategies to “get the word out” about your new services. The following case study highlights best practices from three programs—offering you ideas that you can replicate in your own program.

## Case Study

### Identifying Program Stakeholders

- 1. The Portland (ME) Mentoring Alliance at Portland High School**, was created as a partnership with local businesses that wanted to assure a well-prepared future workforce, especially among immigrants new to the area. Mentors are recruited from these businesses and from the community at-large. Mentees are recruited through English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers, current and former program participants and word of mouth.
- 2. Cambridge (MA) Community Services (CCS)** has created an extensive network of partnerships, including the city of Cambridge, schools, after-school programs, agencies that serve immigrants and refugees, and universities. Together they have created a widerange of initiatives linking hundreds of adult mentors in one-to-one relationships with vulnerable youth. For example, the *City Links Program* provides new immigrant youth with one-to-one mentors and internships in municipal government agencies. The *Creative Action Project* leadership development program recruits women from the community and local universities to provide individual guidance and support disadvantaged 9th and 10th grade girls. Volunteers are recruited from community, corporate and higher education settings, and receive a dynamic fivesession training that gives them essential tools for guiding, challenging and supporting young people. CCS' *Mentor Marketplace Initiative* also employs a unique process to achieve a broader impact.
- 3. Mobius, The Mentoring Movement**, a state mentoring partnership in Vermont held a series of four forums on “Embracing Harmony, Understanding Our Increasingly Diverse Community.” The purpose was to inform, inspire and engage community members to volunteer to mentor new American youth. They partnered with a local college to hold the workshops on their campus and to help with the marketing. They contacted local papers and received good coverage of the forums, thereby getting more people interested. Mobius also engaged the Vermont Refugee Resettlement Project and the Association of Africans Living in Vermont as partners in the presentation of workshops.

Each workshop brought together local refugees and immigrants, community members, mentors, and service providers assisting immigrant populations. They were facilitated by Andrea Torello, Executive Director of Mobius, The Mentoring Movement. Each workshop was structured around a different topic and offered participants the opportunity to share their own experiences and to speak about current resettlement issues from their perspective. At the end of each workshop, the audience was encouraged to participate and ask questions. In total, twelve immigrants representing seven different countries spoke about their experiences, their struggles and their triumphs. The final workshop focused solely on mentoring immigrant youth. Peter Clavelle, former mayor of Burlington and current mentor, spoke alongside his mentee—a 15-year old Somali Bantu.

Between 80 and 120 people attended each workshop. By the conclusion of the “Embracing Harmony” workshop series, approximately 37 new volunteers had signed up and, to date, 18 new mentors have been placed in existing mentoring programs. An unexpected benefit of the series was that two of the refugee speakers were encouraged to apply for scholarships at the college where the workshops were being held.

## TRAINING EXERCISE 2

### PLANNING AND DESIGNING AN INCLUSIVE MENTORING PROGRAM

**Goal** To gain skills needed to conduct an immigrant youth needs assessment in your community and program

**Audience** Program coordinators

**Materials** Envelopes, flip chart, handouts, paper, overhead or LCD projector

**Length of exercise** 85 minutes

#### A. CONDUCTING A COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT (15 MINUTES)

1. Explain to participants that understanding the needs and resources of immigrant youth is an essential first step in designing and planning their mentoring services for this population.

The training activity in Chapter One gave participants a solid overview of the general characteristics of immigrant youth. However, because the needs of immigrant youth may vary widely from community to community, participants must gather additional information about the specific immigrant youth population(s) in their local area. This training exercise highlights examples of community resources and provides suggestions to collect such information.

2. Ask participants to brainstorm a list of agencies, resources and organizations their program can contact to learn more about immigrant youth populations in their area. Write responses on flip chart. Feel free to make suggestions such as ESL classes in local schools or faith-based resettlement organizations. Remind participants that these organizations are important for a variety of reasons—including potential partnerships and shared resources in the future.
3. Using overhead or LCD projector, review [Tool 7A: Locating Immigrant Populations in Your Community](#).

#### B. POTENTIAL COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (30 MINUTES)

1. Explain to participants that they have just learned about local resources that have important information about the needs of immigrant youth in their area. The next step is to collect information and maximize the use of these resources by asking the “right” questions.
2. Divide participants into five groups—“School Districts,” “State Refugee Coordinators,” “Mutual Assistance Agencies,” “Faith-Based Organizations,” and “Local Volunteer Agencies.” Ask each group to brainstorm a list of questions they can ask their assigned organization to learn more about the needs and resources of immigrant youth in their area. Have each group write these suggested questions on flip chart paper. Walk around the room and assist each group as they formulate questions.
3. After each group has finished making their list, ask the group to select a volunteer representative to present their list of questions to the larger group.
4. Pass out and discuss [Tool 7B: Conducting a Needs Assessment—Potential Questions](#).

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## TRAINING EXERCISE 2, CONTINUED

### C. CONDUCTING AN ORGANIZATIONAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT (30 MINUTES)

1. Explain to participants that initial planning and design activities should occur both externally and internally. In addition to learning about characteristics of immigrant youth, locating community resources, and asking the “right” questions, programs must also look at their own capacity to provide mentoring services to immigrant youth.
2. Pass out and discuss [Tool 7C: Conducting a Needs Assessment—Examples of Agency Capacity](#).
3. Starting with Mutual Assistance Agencies, review the capabilities and challenges that are described on the handout. Ask participants to contribute any additional strengths or challenges that this type of agency may possess when providing services to immigrant youth.
4. Next, review capabilities and challenges for existing mentoring programs. Ask participants to contribute any additional strengths or challenges. Do the same for Schools and After School Programs.
5. After the entire handout has been described, pass out [Tool 7D: Worksheet: Exploring My Organizational Capacity to Serve Immigrant and Refugee Youth](#). Have participants work in pairs to describe their own programs and discuss specific challenges and resources that are available to them.
6. After the pairs have had enough time to talk through their programs, ask for volunteers to share their conversations. Record potential challenges and resources on flip chart paper.
7. Let participants know that this needs assessment is only the beginning of better understanding how their agency can provide effective mentoring services to immigrant youth. Additional training, resources and skill development will be needed. However, this training has provided an important starting point to better serve immigrant youth within their agencies.

### D. DEBRIEF (10 MINUTES)

1. Hand each participant an envelope and paper. Ask them to write down three ways they plan to conduct a needs assessment and one thing they learned about their organization’s capacity to work with immigrant youth. Tell participants to self-address the envelope and place their paper inside. Collect each envelope and let participants know that they will receive the contents in the next couple of weeks. Ask participants if they have any final questions or thoughts and thank them for the work they are about to embark upon.





## **CHAPTER 3**

### **Managing Mentoring Programs for Immigrant Youth**





## CHAPTER 3

# Managing Mentoring Programs for Immigrant Youth

Congratulations! You are well on your way to developing targeted mentoring relationships that can benefit immigrant youth. At this point in the process, you have gained a better understanding of the unique needs and circumstances of immigrant youth in your area. You have also learned promising practices around program planning and design that can take mentoring relationships for this population to the next level. Now, your challenge is to start putting these practices in place.

Included in this chapter, you will find tools that can help you develop a culturally competent program, select a management team, establish policies and procedures, provide staff development opportunities, and strengthen your financial capacity—each of which are essential elements of effective mentoring program practice.

### I. Culturally Competent Mentoring Programs

Creating an inclusive climate for your program is essential. As a program coordinator, you will have to think strategically and thoughtfully in order to ensure that immigrant youth in your program feel welcome and safe. Issues of language, personnel, media and representation are all key pieces of developing a culturally competent program. Tool 11 provides important tips that your program can use to further enhance your agency's cultural competence.

## TOOL 11

### CULTURAL COMPETENCE TIPS FOR MENTORING PROGRAMS

- When possible, staff and/or volunteers should share the same culture(s) and language(s) as the target population.
- Make sure organizational policies and written materials (e.g. forms, educational materials, outreach materials) are regularly reviewed to assure cultural relevance and absence of bias.
- Cultural responsiveness is a requirement for both staff and volunteers. You should include appropriate training, support and opportunities for staff and volunteer self-assessment and feedback about the degree to which your agency is responsive.
- Culturally relevant topics should be included for discussion in staff meetings. For example, discuss ways to respond to major news events in the country of origin of the target population.
- Linkages should be created with other organizations (such as faith-based institutions) that could complement and enhance the cultural competence of your mentoring program.
- Members of the target population should be involved in advisory structures and program activities as appropriate.
- Customize outreach activities for under-represented subgroups. For example, use immigrant boys to talk to other immigrant boys about your program.

## II. Program Management

In general, mentoring programs that are most successful have solid management structures in place. If you are new to mentoring, an important resource that can take you through each step of developing highquality management structures is: *How to Build a Successful Mentoring Program Using the Elements of Effective Practice: A Step by Step Toolkit for Program Managers* (MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership, 2003). This resource contains information, tips, and suggestions that can help you form an advisory board, develop a comprehensive system for managing program information, manage financial resources, create professional staff development plans, advocate for mentoring in your community and establish public relations strategies.

Mentoring programs that work with or specifically serve immigrant youth will want to refine and target many of these suggested management practices to reflect the needs, challenges and assets of this population. Specifically, you will want to select a management team that is representative of young people in your program, develop written policies and procedures that include issues with confidentiality and working with immigrant families, create and facilitate staff training/professional development opportunities, and explore additional financial planning strategies to assist with funding for any new services that are provided.

## Select a Management Team

### TOOL 12

#### SELECT A MANAGEMENT TEAM

##### MANAGEMENT TEAM

Depending on the size of your mentoring program, you will need anything from a parttime program coordinator to several coordinators. The larger your staff, the greater the opportunity you have to build in cultural diversity. A “best practice” is to find qualified staff from the same cultural/ethnic group you will be serving. If you are not able to hire representative staff, it is even more important to gain program partners, advisory committee members and volunteers to bring this knowledge and insight to your program.

##### TIPS FOR DEVELOPING AN INCLUSIVE ADVISORY GROUP

Advisory groups can be used to help you with many different facets of managing a program for immigrant youth. When selecting members for this group, you may want to include representatives from:

- **Local Schools** including teachers, counselors and principals that may be familiar with young people in your program.
- **Community Leaders** business, political and civic leaders who have a stake in promoting young immigrant populations.
- **Parents/Caregivers** involve parents or caregivers of young people in your program. Developing closer relationships and capitalizing on their perspectives can help strengthen services for their children.
- **Refugee Resettlement Agencies** having representation from experts on working with this population can help strengthen your partnerships and further collaboration on meeting the needs of these young people.
- **Mentors** if you have bilingual or bicultural mentors, mentors that have experienced immigration themselves, or mentors that have extensive experience working with immigrant youth, having their perspective can strengthen your support and development to other mentors.
- **Immigrant Youth** hear from the voices, stories, and perspectives of the young people themselves. Giving immigrant youth a leadership role in your program can only strengthen how you keep them, and others like them, involved.

## Establish Policies and Procedures

A thorough and well-written policy and procedures manual should be in place to help you manage your mentoring program. This manual should include general programming materials as well as specific descriptions of how to address issues related to immigrant youth. Tool 13 contains questions that can help you better define the right policies and procedures related to serving immigrant youth in your program.

### TOOL 13

#### ESTABLISH POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Questions your program should consider when developing an inclusive policy and procedures manual are:

- **Staffing** what knowledge, skills and abilities must hired staff have to be successful to work with immigrant youth? Should program staff be bilingual? What education or work experience should staff have? Will your program actively recruit staff from immigrant communities in your area? What type of training will be available for staff working with this population?
- **Mentor Screening** what are the safety and suitability requirements that mentors working with immigrant youth in your program must possess? Does your program have a written mentor job description? Is your job description in the language of potential mentors you want to recruit? How will you manage issues related to immigration status of potential mentors?
- **Mentor Recruitment** does your agency have a written mentor recruitment plan? What characteristics and traits should potential mentors have?
- **Legal Issues** how will your program address issues related to legal status of potential mentors and mentees? What referral agencies might your program partner with?
- **Confidentiality** what is your program's policy regarding confidentiality? How will your program protect the interests of young people—especially if you work with young people and mentors that are part of a tight-knit community?
- **Family Involvement** what policies will your program have regarding family involvement in your program? Does your program have policies around assisting other family members? What procedures are in place to refer family members to other agencies for assistance?
- **Community Partnerships** what policies exist around partnering with other agencies in your community? Does your program require written agreements? What procedures are in place if an agency wants to partner with you? What is your agency's policy about working with school districts?
- **Early Termination** what are the protocols for handling a mentoring relationship involving immigrant youth that terminates early? Will the mentee be rematched? Will the family be contacted?
- **Evaluation** how does your program conduct process and outcomes-based evaluations of mentoring relationships involving immigrant youth? What criteria do you have for determining success?



### III. Staff Training and Professional Development

Program staff working with immigrant and refugee youth will require additional training, resources and professional development. If your program does not have the resources to further the efficacy of staff working with this population, it is essential to reach out to other agencies and resources for help. Tool 14 highlights materials available from a national refugee resource agency—Bridging Refugee Youth and Children’s Services (BRYCS). This organization has a wealth of knowledge and offers comprehensive materials related to all aspects of working with diverse populations of immigrants and refugees.

#### TOOL 14

#### IMPLEMENT ONGOING STAFF TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

BRYCS (Bridging Refugee Youth and Children’s Services) has a wide assortment of online materials that can help program coordinators gain skills related to cultural competence and refugee resettlement. Some of the topics and materials available on their Web site ([www.brycs.org](http://www.brycs.org)) include:

- **Resources** for educators and parents, practitioners, program managers and researchers/policymakers regarding issues related to refugee resettlement in the United States
- **Information** about resources related to different cultural and ethnic groups: Afghans, Albanians, Bosnians, Burmese, Cambodians, Eritians, Ethiopians, Haitians, Hmong, Iranians, Iraqis, Kosovars, Laotians, Liberians, Meskhetian Turks, Somali, Somali Bantu, Southeast Asians, Sudanese, Vietnamese. This information can be accessed at: [http://www.brycs.org/brycs\\_topics.htm#practitioners](http://www.brycs.org/brycs_topics.htm#practitioners)
- **Links** to conferences and special events related to immigrant and refugee youth
- A clearinghouse of **publications** that can strengthen knowledge, promote effective practices and places to access funding
- **Outreach strategies** to engage parents of refugee youth

## IV. Develop a Financial Plan

In order to expand or target your mentoring services to include immigrant youth, there is a strong likelihood that you will require additional funding to support these efforts. Tool 15 offers insight into different strategies that your program can use to secure new sources of funding for this important work.

### TOOL 15

#### DEVELOP A FINANCIAL PLAN

Some potential funding sources to investigate:

- School districts with high numbers or high percentages of poor children receive Title I funding to ensure that all children meet state academic standards. Within specified school districts, Title III under No Child Left Behind funds activities that will lead to the effective integration and education of refugee children. Mentoring is one of the eligible services.
- Immigrant and refugee resettlement programs sometimes have matching grant programs. Conduct an Internet search in your area to learn more about these types of programs.
- Local businesses frequently provide financial and other support to mentoring initiatives, especially if the program has relevance to their future workforce. You can find a list of businesses in your area through your local chamber of commerce.
- Local and national foundations often focus on youth development programming such as mentoring. A directory of funders supporting immigrant and refugee issues may be found at: [http://www.gcir.org/resources/funding\\_directory/list\\_local\\_regional\\_foundations.htm](http://www.gcir.org/resources/funding_directory/list_local_regional_foundations.htm)
- United Way agencies have been frequent supporters of mentoring programs. The national United Way webpage has links to local chapters across the country: [www.unitedway.com](http://www.unitedway.com)

## TRAINING EXERCISE 3

### MANAGING AN INCLUSIVE MENTORING PROGRAM

**Goal** To learn more about the steps required to develop a culturally competent mentoring program

**Audience** Mentoring program coordinators

**Materials** Markers, crayons, art supplies, flip chart paper, MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership's *Elements of Effective Practice*

**Length of exercise** 75 minutes

#### A. EXAMINING A CULTURALLY COMPETENT PROGRAM (25 MINUTES)

1. Explain to participants that in order to provide effective services to immigrant youth they will need to more closely examine how to develop and create a culturally competent mentoring program. Let them know that this first exercise will help them to “See” more clearly what this type of program looks like.
2. Ask participants to individually write out or draw a picture of a culturally competent mentoring program. What does this program “look like?” What do staff look like? What do the young people look like? What makes a culturally competent program different from a non-inclusive program?
3. After all participants have completed their picture (or list), tell them to find a partner to share their thoughts with. Ask them to take turns presenting their thoughts to each other.
4. Group Discussion. Once all participants have spoken, ask for volunteers to share their drawings or thoughts. What was similar? What was different? Write responses on flip chart paper.
5. After the group has finished discussing what a culturally competent mentoring program “looks like” ask them to brainstorm a list of practices that might help to develop or strengthen their management practices. Record responses on flip chart paper.
6. Present **Tool 11: Cultural Competence Tips for Mentoring Programs**. Highlight any similar practices that participants spoke about and let them know that the tips and suggestions found in this tool are only a few of the many suggestions available to strengthen their program’s cultural competence. Ask if program staff have any questions.

#### B. DEVELOPING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES RELATED TO IMMIGRANT YOUTH (35 MINUTES)

Inform participants that a policy and procedures manual can be an important road map that can help them develop culturally competent practices.

1. Divide participants into 4 groups. These groups will include: Program Planning and Design, Program Management, Program Operations and Program Evaluation. Ask each group to brainstorm a list of policies and procedures they can develop specifically related to needs of immigrant and refugee youth in their program. Trainer’s Note: Once all participants are in their groups, you should hand out copies of MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership’s *Elements of Effective Practice*. Tell participants that these guidelines were established to offer mentoring programs important general ideas and suggestions for running an effective mentoring program. However, because these are general guidelines, policies and procedures related to specific populations are not included.

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## TRAINING EXERCISE 3, CONTINUED

2. Have participants review the *Elements of Effective Practice* in their groups. Ask them to brainstorm specific policies and procedures related to working with immigrant youth that can compliment this resource. While groups are working, walk around the room and answer any questions they might have about the *Elements of Effective Practice* or strategies to design specific policies and procedures related to working with immigrant youth.
3. Ask a volunteer from the Program Planning and Design group to present their suggested policies and procedures related to this topic. Ask other groups if they have any questions and invite them to contribute additional insights.
4. Next, ask a volunteer from the Program Management group to present their suggested policies and procedures. Again, ask if other participants have any additional contributions and clarify questions. Repeat this process with Program Operations and Program Evaluation.
5. When all groups have shared, let them know that they have all contributed to a thorough policy and procedures manual that is more responsive to effectively managing mentoring programs for immigrant youth. Encourage them to take notes and use these materials when they return to their own programs.


### C. DEBRIEF (15 MINUTES)

1. Ask each participant to share how their idea of a culturally competent mentoring program changed as a result of participating in this session. Make a list on flip chart paper. Remind participants that they have gained an important tool in creating such a program—a refined policy and procedures manual. Thank them for the work they are doing. Pass out training evaluations.



## **CHAPTER 4**

### **Finding and Preparing Mentors to Work with Immigrant Youth**





## CHAPTER 4

# Finding and Preparing Mentors to Work with Immigrant Youth

Contrary to popular belief, mentoring is actually similar to “rocket science.” A great deal of precision, care, planning and oversight is required for these important relationships to “get off the ground.” And, without all the *right* parts—including appropriately screened and oriented mentors—your program may be taking unnecessary risks that can actually create greater harm than good in the young person you want to serve. This may hold more truth for relationships involving diverse populations—including immigrant youth.

In order to help you identify and support the skills and traits of high quality mentors that can work with immigrant youth, this chapter provides a series of tools that describe the *roles that mentors can play in mentoring relationships, tips for developing a volunteer job description, recruitment strategies, screening suggestions* and *ways to orient new volunteers* to work with immigrant youth.

### I. Roles that Mentors Can Play in Mentoring Relationships

The first part of finding qualified mentors to work with immigrant youth is to closely examine the potential roles that mentors can play in their support and development. What will successful relationships between mentors and immigrant youth in your program look like? What roles will mentors play in the lives of these young people? By answering these questions, you will better position yourself to define and target potential volunteers in your community that have skills needed to be successful in their mentoring roles.

## TOOL 16

### ROLES THAT MENTORS CAN PLAY IN MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS INVOLVING IMMIGRANT YOUTH

- **Cultural Assimilation** Mentors can serve as “cultural translators” and guides to negotiating American culture as well as supporters of their mentee’s culture. They can also provide perspective to help the young person better cope with and respond to conflicts that may occur with his or her parents during the assimilation process.
- **English Language Acquisition** Mentors can help their mentee learn to speak and read English.
- **Emotional Support** Immigrant youth often feel socially isolated and may be victims of teasing and bullying because they are different. A mentor can provide important support by creating a strong sense of attachment and belonging in the mentoring relationship.
- **Advocacy** Mentors can help their mentee learn to access resources to meet a variety of needs. Examples include how to use public transportation; find and use a local library; get involved in other youth programs.
- **Advice and Counsel** Mentors can help both the mentee and his/her family (as appropriate) on issues such as homework, job application skills, obtaining a driver’s license and applying for college.
- **Role Modeling** When it is possible to have same-culture matches, the mentor provides an important model for assimilation, developing a bicultural or bilingual identity, and achieving success in a new culture.

## II. Developing a Volunteer Job Description Based on Desirable Mentor Characteristics and Qualities

Once your program has discussed and brainstormed roles that you want mentors to play in the lives of immigrant mentees, you should convene a working group of staff and program advisors to develop a volunteer job description. This job description should highlight the requirements of mentoring—including the time commitment, skills, knowledge and abilities that every mentor should have. In addition, the job description should note specific qualities that mentors working with immigrant youth should possess. Tool 17 offers different pros and cons of various mentor qualities and characteristics that can help you with your program’s discussion and decision. By taking the time to carefully define which characteristics are right for your program, you can create a stronger and more complete volunteer job description that can help you determine where you will target your outreach and recruitment efforts.



## TOOL 17

### MENTOR QUALITIES AND CHARACTERISTICS

Characteristic	Pros	Cons
<b>1. Same Ethnic Identity</b>	<p>Mentors that belong to the same ethnic group as a mentee may confer certain benefits such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• language acquisition;</li><li>• role modeling;</li><li>• assisting with assimilation; and</li><li>• negotiating cultural conflicts.</li></ul>	<p>Mentor may belong to a close community of immigrants, which includes the mentee's family. Parents may worry that these new relationships will expose too much about the family's situation and experiences to others. Policies around confidentiality should be fully defined before recruitment of same ethnic identity mentors occurs.</p>
<b>2. Same Race</b>	<p>Mentors from the same racial background as a mentee may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• increase the comfort level of parents and families of mentees; and</li><li>• assist with the identity development of a mentee.</li></ul>	<p>Research has indicated that same race matches and cross race matches can promote benefits in young people. However, similarity of mentor and mentee can be an even greater bellwether for forming a close bond—a key requirement for promoting benefits in a young person.</p>
<b>3. Cultural Competence</b>	<p>The mentor's ability to empathize and understand the experiences of a young person is essential for the relationship to succeed. Mentors that are culturally competent are more likely to appreciate the norms, culture and expectations of a mentee and his or her family—ultimately taking a more developmental rather than prescriptive approach to the relationship.</p>	<p>A potential mentor does not have to have in-depth knowledge of the culture of a mentee. However, programs that actively recruit mentors without this background must provide additional orientation and training to help support developmental approaches within the relationship. Caution must be used when potential mentors have not had previous exposure to different cultures and greater program oversight in the relationship must be conducted to ensure that differences do not hinder the formation of a close bond.</p>

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## TOOL 17, CONTINUED

Characteristic	Pros	Cons
4. Same Gender	Cultural differences around gender exist. Programs must work with the mentee's family to determine preferences about the gender of a potential mentor.	Cross-gender matching (female mentors with male mentees) must be done with extreme care when working with immigrant youth. In some cases, cultural norms about the roles of girls and boys may be different, especially in relationship to expectations regarding education, work roles and responsibilities.

## TOOL 18

### SAMPLE MENTOR JOB DESCRIPTION

#### Position

Mentor of Immigrant Youth

#### Purpose

To act as a role model, advocate and support for immigrant youth

#### Duties

- Commitment to building a supportive relationship with an immigrant youth
- Attends and actively participates in 6 hour mentor orientation and prematch training
- Meets in person with mentee at least 4 hours a month
- Completes and submits activity logs after each match meeting
- Has regular contact and followup with match support specialist
- Attends quarterly ongoing mentor training
- Provides community and educational resources to mentees
- Works with mentee to practice English

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## TOOL 18, CONTINUED

### **Qualifications**

- Ability to empathize and understand young people from different cultural backgrounds
- Nonjudgmental, with ability to take a developmental approach to working with a young person
- Bilingual Spanish/English
- Experience working with immigrant youth in our community
- Sincere desire to be a supportive figure in the life of an immigrant youth
- Active listening skills

### **Length of commitment**

Mentor must commit to at least a one year relationship

### **Benefits**

- Exposure to new cultures
- Will receive orientation, training, and ongoing support from program that includes: an overview of assets and strengths of immigrant youth, challenges faced by immigrant youth, a resource manual with activity suggestions and strategies to develop a close bond with their mentee
- Opportunity to have fun, develop new appreciation for diversity, and make a difference in the life of an immigrant youth

### III. Recruitment Strategies—Finding the “Right” Mentors to Work with Immigrant Youth

Once your program has determined various roles that you want your mentors to play in their relationships with immigrant youth, explored the characteristics that you want in potential mentors, and developed a job description, the next step is to actively recruit mentors. Tool 19 offers ideas and tips for recruitment strategies.

#### TOOL 19

##### RECRUITMENT TIPS AND STRATEGIES

1. Partner with local immigrant and refugee relief agencies and literacy organizations, many of which are faithbased, to recruit individuals already volunteering with these populations to secure mentors with experience working with this population.
2. Reach out to professional, social and religious organizations relevant to the ethnic group you serve.
3. Recruit college students to be mentors to younger children. Many universities and colleges have service-learning requirements that focus on working with immigrant youth. Students can receive course credit, develop new professional skills, and make a difference. When recruiting college students, be sure to identify strategies to keep relationships going, even during summer months, in order to ensure maximum benefits for mentees.
4. Host a series of community forums featuring current mentoring relationships involving immigrant youth.
5. Partner with after school and youth service agencies to strengthen the informal mentoring relationships youth are already forming with program staff and volunteers.
6. Use language specific media aimed at the population(s) you seek to recruit.
7. Target your audience—focus on groups that may already have an interest in the young people you serve. This may include congregations, volunteer clearinghouses, teachers, health care providers, or other professionals involving caregiving.
8. Use the Internet—make sure you have a Web site that describes your program and offers different languages. Also, sites such as craigslist.org can be great recruitment tools for accessing new volunteers.
9. Word of mouth—make sure your current mentors are supported, recognized and valued. By creating good experiences for these volunteers, they may be more likely to encourage their friends, family members, coworkers, and neighbors to also get involved.
10. Use a recruitment advisory group. Work with community members, business leaders, parents and young people to “get the message out” about your program. You do not have to conduct your recruitment efforts alone—work with others to help you, especially if they have key connections to target groups that you most want to secure.
11. Go to resource fairs in your community.
12. Leave targeted and language specific brochures with agencies serving immigrant families.

## IV. Screening Potential Mentors

Screening potential mentors to work with immigrant youth requires careful attention to two things—safety and suitability. Your program should follow rigorous screening practices, including a written application, criminal background checks, references, an interview and other techniques that can thoroughly protect a young person from harm. Tool 20 provides tips to determine the suitability of a volunteer to work with immigrant youth.

### TOOL 20

#### HELPFUL TIPS TO CONSIDER WHEN DEVELOPING SCREENING TOOLS FOR POTENTIAL MENTORS

You may want to address the following qualities, strengths and experiences of potential mentors during your application, orientation, and screening process:

- Interest in world affairs and learning about other cultures;
- Level of empathy, cultural sensitivity and ability to be nonjudgmental;
- Willingness and ability to make a minimum of a one-year commitment;
- Prior experience, if any, working with immigrant or refugee populations;
- Willingness to help child stay connected to his or her cultural background;
- Comfort and ability level in handling a mentee with prior traumatic experiences; and
- Receptiveness to two way learning experiences.

## V. Orienting New Mentors

After you have recruited and screened mentors to work with immigrant youth, you must provide them with resources, support and initial orientation that can better prepare them for starting new relationships with their mentees. In addition to your program's general orientation that details information about policies, procedures, confidentiality, mandatory reporting and an overview of what a mentor is and is not, you will also want to provide specific resources and tools for mentors that will be working with immigrant youth. These tools may include cultural competence resources, information about language acquisition, community resources, and background information about the specific population(s) your mentors will be working with. Tool 21 describes contents of a mentor resource handbook that can be given to mentors working with immigrant youth in your program.

### TOOL 21

#### CONTENTS OF A HANDBOOK FOR MENTORS

The following is a list of potential resources that can be included in a mentor resource handbook to be distributed during mentor orientation:

- Program staff contact information and roles
- Program mission and goals
- List of major cultural and religious holidays
- Community resources for immigrant families
- School resources for immigrant youth
- Current events and description of political, cultural or homeland news and sources to learn more
- List of potential trauma that may or may not have been experienced by different ethnic groups
- Maps and information about the mentee's homeland
- Clarification of program guidelines related to working with mentee's family
- Culturally competent icebreakers
- Advice from current mentors
- Language assessment information regarding the skill level of a mentee (if appropriate)
- Activity suggestions and do's and don'ts regarding spending money on mentees
- Volunteer job description
- Information about developmental stages of young people
- Warning signs related to depression, suicide, drug or alcohol use
- Demographics of young people in your community

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## TOOL 21, CONTINUED

- Assets and strengths of immigrant youth
- Challenges that may be faced by immigrant youth
- Diversity tools and exercises
- Information about developmental versus prescriptive approaches to mentoring
- Stages of mentoring relationships
- History of immigrant populations in your local area
- List of businesses, restaurants, churches and community events that cater to immigrant population(s) in your area
- Quotes from mentees about the benefits of mentoring
- Realistic expectations about the mentoring relationship—an overview of what a mentor should and should not expect in terms of mentee growth strategies to overcome common challenges in mentoring relationships

## TRAINING EXERCISE 4

### RECRUITING MENTORS TO WORK WITH IMMIGRANT YOUTH

**Goal** To strengthen targeted recruitment practices for mentors that will work with immigrant youth in your program

**Audience** Program coordinators

**Supplies** Handouts, flip chart, markers, overhead or LCD projector

**Length of exercise** 70 minutes

This session will help program coordinators identify the traits and characteristics of mentors that are best suited to work with immigrant youth in their programs. In addition, program coordinators will be able to develop a written recruitment plan and learn how to target their recruitment message to this population.

#### **A. IDENTIFYING TRAITS OF MENTORS THAT CAN WORK WITH IMMIGRANT YOUTH. (20 MINUTES)**

1. Explain to participants that it is important to determine the traits/characteristics of mentors that will work with immigrant youth before actively starting their recruitment efforts.
2. Have a group brainstorm a list of traits a mentor should have to work with all young people. Write responses on one side of flip chart paper under the heading "Mentor Traits."
3. After a thorough list has been documented, ask participants to brainstorm a list of traits needed to work with immigrant youth. Document these responses under the heading "Mentor Traits—immigrant youth."
4. Explain to participants that mentors working with immigrant youth may require additional traits that go beyond those of other volunteers. This brainstorming activity shows the differences between other mentors in your program and mentors that will work with immigrant youth. Let them know that some of their list may be innate to the volunteers themselves (i.e. born into same culture as mentee, started speaking same language as mentee) while others can be learned (i.e. cultural competence skills).
5. Using overhead or LCD projector, go over [Tool 17: Mentor Qualities and Characteristics](#). Lead participants in a discussion that weighs pros and cons of potential mentors. Here are some leading questions you can use: Are same race, ethnicity, and culture of mentors and immigrant youth mentees important? Why or why not? (Trainer's Note: You may want to provide definitions of each of these terms for participants. Definitions are found at the beginning of this manual).
6. Tell participants that this discussion is only one part of the process of determining the qualifications mentors need to work with immigrant youth. Let them know that they have a choice in determining what is right for their program and that each program may be different.

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## TRAINING EXERCISE 4, CONTINUED

### **B. ROLES THAT MENTORS WILL PLAY IN RELATIONSHIPS WITH IMMIGRANT YOUTH. (20 MINUTES)**

1. Tell participants that a second decision they must make is about the role that mentors will play in relationships with immigrant youth. Depending on the goals of these relationships, they will want to further define which types of volunteers will be best suited to work with immigrant youth in their program.
2. Ask participants to work in small groups to discuss the roles that mentors can play in relationships with immigrant youth. Give them a few minutes to brainstorm a list of potential things a mentor can do with such a young person. You can offer the following prompt: "Mentors can help a young immigrant with assimilation, school, etc."
3. After all groups have compiled a list, ask one volunteer from each group to highlight their top 3 roles.
4. Write each group's response on flip chart paper under the title "Roles that Mentors Can Play with Immigrant Youth."
5. Present [Tool 16: Roles that Mentors Can Play in Mentoring Relationships Involving Immigrant Youth](#). Highlight similarities between the handout and group suggestions as well as differences. Again, let participants know that these roles may be different based on the unique goals of each program. However, when thinking about recruitment of potential volunteers, it is imperative to have these roles clearly defined before any active recruitment is conducted.

### **C. TARGETED RECRUITMENT (20 MINUTES)**

1. Now that participants have had the chance to explore different traits of volunteers as well as roles mentors can play in relationships with immigrant youth, the program should create a targeted message to secure mentors that fit what they are looking for.
2. Let participants know that a best practice in recruitment is to target their message specifically to groups they want to secure as mentors. They should have different approaches and variations of their program's message to secure the "right" volunteers for these relationships.
3. Use an example: Hold up a marker. Ask one participant to "sell" it to you. Tell the participant that they should sell you this particular marker because you are a trainer/facilitator. Why should you buy it? Write down the adjectives and words that are used on flip chart paper. Now, choose another participant to "sell" you the marker because you are an artist. Why should you buy this marker? You can also use: distributor, businessman, etc. Once you have taken them through several different variations, let them know that this is how they should approach their recruitment message for finding volunteers to work with immigrant youth.
4. As a group, have participants brainstorm groups of individuals that they want to target their recruitment message to. If participants struggle to create a list, you can prompt them with "Spanish speaking men, church groups, teachers, etc."

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## TRAINING EXERCISE 4, CONTINUED

5. Once a solid list has been drafted, ask participants to break into small groups and choose 1 or 2 “groups” to create a targeted recruitment message for. Tell them to also brainstorm a list of places they might be able to find these volunteers.
6. After all groups have completed their assignment, ask one person from each to share their “target audience,” “message,” and source. Document each of these on flip chart paper. When each group has finished, ask if others have any additional ideas or suggestions. Add to the list as appropriate.
7. Let participants know that they have just created the first part of a written recruitment plan. They have identified a target audience, developed a message and brainstormed different sources for potential volunteers. (Trainer’s Note: A great suggestion is to type up notes from this session and share with participants later—this list can be a great resource for program staff once they return to their sites.)

### D. DEBRIEF (10 MINUTES)

1. Thank participants for their hard work during this session. Let them know that they can gain additional skills and insights by reviewing Chapter 4 of *Mentoring Immigrant Youth: A Toolkit for Program Coordinators*. Highlight important supplemental materials they may be interested in learning about—such as tools on screening, orientation and a mentor resource handbook.
2. Ask each participant to describe one key thing they learned during the session and one best practice they will agree to implement in their program once they return to their site.



## **CHAPTER 5**

### **Creating, Supporting and Evaluating Mentoring Relationships Involving Immigrant Youth**





## CHAPTER 5

# Creating, Supporting and Evaluating Mentoring Relationships Involving Immigrant Youth

In order for formal mentoring relationships to be effective, programs must take proactive and engaged approaches to support mentors working with immigrant youth. This chapter offers an overview of strategies you can use—before, during and after each match—that can help to strengthen bonds and promote long lasting relationships that meet the goals of your program.

Topics covered in Chapter 5 include: mentor training, ongoing match support, conducting outreach to immigrant communities and tips for developing process and outcomes-based evaluation of mentoring relationships.

### I. Mentor Training

In order for mentors to feel prepared to work with immigrant youth, your program must offer training that can help new volunteers gain realistic expectations about their new relationship. In addition, training on issues specifically related to the unique needs, assets, challenges and strengths of immigrant mentees is suggested. In general, it is a good idea to train new mentors on topics such as youth development, stages of a mentoring relationship, activity suggestions, communication and boundary setting. For mentors that will soon work with immigrant youth, your program may want to develop supplemental training materials that specifically deal with issues they may encounter in these unique relationships. Topics that can be covered include: tips and ideas for helping a young person with language and acculturation issues, activity suggestions involving cultural sharing, good practices related to working with families (if appropriate), listening skills and understanding both assets and challenges of the population. Training Exercises 5 and 6 offer ways for new volunteers to practice skills that will be necessary to gain higher levels of self-efficacy in their mentoring roles.

## TRAINING EXERCISE 5

### CULTURAL COMPETENCE

**Goal** Developing relationships with young people from different cultures

**Audience** New mentors

**Supplies** Flip chart, markers, handouts (Mentor Instructions – Activity 1, Mentor Instructions – Activity 2, Mentee Instructions – Activity 1, Mentee Instructions – Activity 2)

**Length of exercise** 20–30 minutes

Explain to participants that this exercise will help them learn more about how they can support a young person from a different background. Often, culture and language can be a barrier to forming or sustaining a close bond. This activity can be useful because it can help mentors develop new perspectives on cultural competence.

1. Divide the participants into two groups—mentors and mentees.
2. Pass out “Mentor Instructions—Activity 1” to the mentor group. Pass out “Mentee Instructions—Activity 1” to the mentee group. Ask the participants to take a few moments to read over their instructions. Make sure they understand the directions.
3. After everyone has read and understood the profile sheets, ask them to self-select into mentor/mentee pairs.
4. Tell pairs that they will have 5 minutes to complete their role play assignments.
5. At the end of five minutes, ask the group to share their experiences. First, ask the participants to describe what they felt during the activity. Were they frustrated? Was the experience easy? Did they feel uncomfortable? Why? Write down responses on one side of the flip chart paper.
6. Second, ask mentors if they would approach real-life mentees in the same way? Why or why not? What is different about this role play versus real life?
7. Let participants know that language and culture can be barriers in many relationships, especially involving those from different life experiences. The approach that a mentor takes can make a huge difference in how a mentee feels and benefits from a relationship. In this exercise, the mentor entered the relationship with a prescriptive approach. Ask participants how they might have handled the role play if they were given more clues as to the culture of their mentee? What would have been different? Lastly, ask mentors if they felt they could develop a close bond with a young person from a different culture when they can't look beyond the norms of their own culture?
8. After the discussion is complete, let participants know that starting a relationship with a young person from a different culture requires an “open minded” approach as well as gaining insight from the program to share important information about the background and history of their mentee. By taking part in this exercise, they were able to see how a mentoring match might fail when a mentor is not prepared.
9. Ask participants to brainstorm a list of approaches and strategies that might be important when building a relationship with a young person from a different culture. Record these items on flip chart paper.

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## TRAINING EXERCISE 5, CONTINUED

10. Ask each participant to describe one thing he/she will do when approaching a young person from a different culture.

### MENTOR INSTRUCTIONS—ACTIVITY 1

You are a mentor that will meet a young person from a different “culture” for the first time. Your case manager has let you know that this young person is struggling to assimilate into your community and wants you to help. Before you meet with your mentee, you should familiarize yourself with all the rules of your “culture.” These rules must be followed at all times!

- No words are used in your culture. You can only make eye contact and use gestures.
- As an elder, it is your responsibility to share the history of your culture with a young person. When you meet a mentee for the first time, you always begin by sharing your culture’s history with them. Sharing your history involves a series of gestures—first, start by touching your nose. Then, tap on each ear three times, and finally grab your left elbow. Remember, you cannot use any words and you must share the entire history of your culture without stopping. If you are unable to tell the history of your culture completely, you must start again.
- Young people must be taught to be quiet. They are still learning your culture and often need to be reminded to follow the rules. When teaching a young person to be quiet, wave your hands three times. This lets them know that they must listen to you. The best way to teach a young person to be quiet is to let them know immediately that they are breaking a rule. If no one tells a rude young person to be quiet, they will think that talking is an accepted practice.

**Assignment** You will have 5 minutes to meet with your mentee. Your responsibility for this first session is to teach your mentee more about your culture.

### MENTEE INSTRUCTIONS—ACTIVITY 1

You are a mentee that is new to a “culture.” You are really struggling to understand how to behave in your new community and have been given a mentor to help you. You will soon be meeting this person for the first time. Before you meet with this mentor, you should be reminded of the rules of your own culture:

- Spoken words are valued in your culture. In order to show respect, it is important for you to tell others how you feel and to talk as much as possible.
- While talking is important, you left your homeland before you could learn all of its language. Currently, you only know 4 phrases that you were able to learn before you left. These phrases are:
  1. “chesh” = “Hello”
  2. “knee rezoomium” = “ I don’t understand”
  3. “Sha-proshum” = “I’m Sorry”
  4. “prosha” = “please”

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## TRAINING EXERCISE 5, CONTINUED

- Since arriving in this culture, you have learned that when someone meets you, they tend to do a series of gestures with their hands. They seem to get very upset and wave their hands a lot. However, because you are polite, you always tell new people that you don't understand "knee rezoomium" and you are sorry "sha-proshum" when you have offended someone. This is very important to you and reflects your culture's value of respect.

**Assignment:** You will have 5 minutes to meet your new mentor and learn more about his or her culture.

## TRAINING EXERCISE 6

### SHARING CULTURE

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**Goal** Cultural sharing-icebreaker

**Audience** New mentors

**Supplies** Index cards, newsprint, markers

**Length of exercise** 15 minutes

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Welcome participants and thank them for their desire to work with an immigrant youth. Let them know that we all come from different backgrounds and cultures and that their new relationship will be a great way for them to learn more about the perspective of a young immigrant.

#### A. INTRODUCTIONS (15 MINUTES)

1. Ask each person to write their name in the center of an index card. In the top right hand corner, ask them to write the name of a mentor that has helped them to achieve success in their culture. In the top left hand corner, ask them to write three things that their family has given them (i.e. name, security, love). In the bottom left hand corner, ask them to write one way their culture is different from other cultures. In the bottom right hand corner, ask them to describe one strategy they plan to use when working with a young immigrant from a different culture.
2. Have participants pair up with each other. Tell them that they will use this index card to introduce themselves. They will have 5 minutes to share.
3. After each participant has had a chance to introduce themselves, let them know that their partner will be responsible for introducing them to the group.
4. After all pairs have been introduced, thank them for sharing their culture with the group. Let them know that they will soon be given a chance to learn more about the culture of a young person who will have his or her own background, experiences and culture.



## II. Supporting Mentoring Matches

In order for mentoring matches to be effective, programs must play an active role in guiding and working with each match. Tool 22 offers a timeline for match support activities, starting with the first meeting between a mentor and immigrant mentee.

### TOOL 22

#### TIMELINE FOR MATCH SUPPORT

##### FIRST MEETING

- Have a clearly defined structure for the first meeting between mentor and mentee. Determine where, when, and who will be present when the mentor and mentee first become acquainted. Staff should always be present for the first meeting—offering introductions and making sure that both the mentor and mentee feel comfortable. Your program should also decide whether the mentee’s parent(s) or caregiver(s) will also be present.
- Use an ice-breaker that allows mentors and mentees to share their culture. One suggestion—have mentors and mentees draw a “mentor/mentee” map of their lives leading up to the present. Tell them to include the places they have lived, significant events, and “milestones” that they want to share. This can also include interests and hobbies and when they first started enjoying an activity. (From Building Relationships, National Mentoring Center)
- In order to help the match build continuity, have mentors and mentees set up their next three meetings. By starting the relationship out with a defined schedule, mentors and mentees can begin the process of building expectations with each other.
- Have mentors and mentees sign a contract. Give them an opportunity to add different items that they feel are important such as what they can expect if someone must miss a meeting.

##### FIRST MONTH

- Keep parents informed about your mentoring program. Having materials translated into different languages is appropriate. However, keep in mind that illiteracy may be an issue. Therefore, you should also develop pictures and other visual materials that can help to communicate what it is your program is doing and how to get in contact with your staff.
- Check in with both mentors and mentees on a frequent and consistent basis. Remember that you are also trying to build trust with your new matches—reaching out to do in-person check-ins can really help to facilitate your place in these new relationships.
- Provide a new mentor support group at the end of the first month. This can give them a chance to share their initial challenges and successes with other new mentors—building a solid support of peers when they most need to feel that their concerns/needs are being addressed.

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## TOOL 22, CONTINUED

- Send out weekly newsletters via email to mentors, giving them “tips of the week” and highlighting suggested strategies from their initial training.

### MONTHS 2-6

- Continue to check in with mentors and mentee’s frequently and consistently to troubleshoot problems that may occur.
- Provide recognition of milestones for mentoring matches—offering certificates and/or cards to matches after duration milestones in their relationship have been met.
- Sponsor program-wide events. These events can include holiday celebrations from different cultural and ethnic groups, international potluck dinners with meals representing all the cultures of your program, outings to special events or festivals, or servicelearning activities.
- Provide mentors with updates about news in their mentee’s homeland, forwarding any relevant information that may be particularly important.
- Offer parent or family support groups (if appropriate).
- Generate and document best practices from your agency that have been particularly positive for young people during the initial months of their match. This can help your program to record and retain practices that can be replicated.
- Celebrate and recognize the accomplishments of each unique mentoring match. Provide certificates in the mentee’s native language as well as English.
- Provide optional ESL training sessions for mentors, having expert teachers provide instruction on grammar, tenses, and strategies to encourage experiential learning.
- Document all meetings between mentors and mentees and detail types of activities they engaged in as well as mentee progress.

### MONTHS 6-12

- Continue to offer monthly or quarterly mentor support groups. Enhance these support groups with speakers from local immigrant or refugee social support agencies, educational professionals, mental health practitioners, ESL teachers, and others that have expert knowledge around issues facing immigrant youth. Give your mentors opportunities to evaluate and assess the usefulness of these sessions as well as contribute to selecting topics of interest to them.
- Recognize mentors by sending inspirational quotes, thank you notes, and certificates for their hard work and dedication. Be creative.
- Recognize mentees during special events, send text messages to thank them for participating in your program (if appropriate), give them donated tickets to special cultural celebrations.

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## TOOL 22, CONTINUED

- Document all mentor and mentee activities.
- Provide updates to parents regarding your program. Remember to use a variety of outreach strategies, including translation and picture representations—don't assume that they can read and write.
- Ask high performing mentoring matches to take leadership roles in your agency—involve them in steering or advisory groups, recruitment efforts, and speaking to new mentors and mentees to let them know what they should expect during their new match.
- Provide opportunities for reflection and closure preparation if the match will terminate at the end of the year. Have mentors and mentees add on to their initial “mentor map” showing where they see themselves going from this juncture. This can also give them an opportunity to share what they have learned from each other.

### III. Parent and Family Involvement in the Mentoring Match

In addition to helping your mentors think more critically about the role of culture in relationships with immigrant youth, it is equally important to remember that culture may be a barrier in your own outreach efforts. First, remember that the word “mentor” may not translate into other languages. For example, individuals from Spanish-speaking languages do not have a specific word for mentor. You will need to find an appropriate substitute that allows parents and families to more clearly understand what your program does and how you will support their child. Second, some cultures may place more value on oral and in-person interaction versus written brochures and marketing materials. This may require planning to ensure that you have the time and resources to do face-to-face outreach. Lastly, literacy may be an issue—don’t assume that written translations of your program’s materials will be accessible to all families and communities. Your program will need to explore additional ways of “getting the message out” to communities that are illiterate—even in their own language. Tool 23 offers tips and suggestions for conducting community and family outreach in your community.

#### TOOL 23

##### PARENT/FAMILY OUTREACH TIPS

- Use visual or oral tools to engage families. Don’t assume that translation of materials into the native language of an immigrant means that they will be able to understand.
- Remember that the concept of a mentor may be unfamiliar to refugee and immigrant youth from different cultures. Prepare ways to explain and describe your agency’s services to a variety of audiences.
- Conduct outreach for parents. Offer opportunities for parents to gain their own resources to assist with assimilation. This can be done through workshops that offer overviews of American educational systems and requirements and parenting in a new culture. Outreach for parents should offer opportunities to strengthen networks among parents to create greater social support systems.
- The meaning of “mentor” may not easily translate into Spanish and has an academic touch to it. In order to better explain what a mentor is, suggestions include using the concept “pedrino/madrina” (godparents). However, these words may carry a religious connotation and may not be appropriate at all times.
- A big challenge that faces many programs attempting to serve immigrant youth has been determining the legal status of potential youth and mentors. While programs want to help as many children as possible, they take serious risks assisting illegal youth. In addition, difficulties in conducting background checks occur for potential mentors without proper Social Security documentation. While many of these mentors might be good for youth, without the legal documentation they cannot offer support and cannot be accepted into your program.

## IV. Program Evaluation

In order to ensure the quality of your mentoring services for immigrant youth, your program will want to do two essential types of evaluation: measure program process and measure expected outcomes. Your plan for measuring the process of your program should include the following: selecting indicators of program implementation viability and volunteer fidelity, such as training hours, meeting frequency and relationship duration; and developing a system for collecting and managing specified data. In order to measure expected outcomes, your plan should include: specifying expected outcomes; selecting appropriate instruments to measure outcomes, such as questionnaires, surveys, and interviews; and selecting and implementing an evaluation design. Tool 24 offers key items to consider when developing both process and outcomes based evaluation for mentoring services for immigrant youth

### TOOL 24

#### EVALUATION TIPS

##### POTENTIAL QUESTIONS FOR PROCESS EVALUATION

- How well is your program conducting outreach to immigrant youth, families, and communities? Which strategies are more successful?
- How well does your cultural competence training prepare mentors to work with immigrant youth?
- How often are your matches meeting?
- What groups of potential volunteers are most responsive to your targeted recruitment messages? Why?
- How have mentors used their orientation handbook? Should you include additional topics?
- How long does your screening process take? Is the length of time longer for volunteers working with immigrant youth?
- How often does your program conduct match support? What types of support do mentors and mentees find most helpful?

##### POTENTIAL QUESTIONS FOR OUTCOMES EVALUATION

- Have the English language skills of mentees improved during their relationship?
- Are more mentees applying for college?
- Do mentees demonstrate improvements in grades, self-esteem, attendance, relationships with peers, relationships with parents and indicators of juvenile delinquency?
- In what ways are mentees benefiting from your program?
- In what ways are mentees assimilating better due to their mentoring relationship?
- In what ways are mentors benefitting from relationships with immigrant youth?





# RESOURCES





# Resources

## FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

**The Department of Education (ED)** provides support to immigrant and refugee students. This includes:

- Title III[m3]: Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigration Students  
*Courtesy “Mentoring Immigrant and Refugee Youth” Online Forum. MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership. [www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/pg40.htm](http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/pg40.htm)*
- Title I: Education for the Disadvantaged [www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/pg1.html](http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/pg1.html)

**The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)** has responsibility for domestic resettlement services for arriving refugees. The **Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR)** at HHS provides funding for refugee services programs through state governments and nongovernment organizations. [www.hhs.gov\[m4\]](http://www.hhs.gov[m4])

**Department of Homeland Security (DHS)** is responsible for providing immigrant-related services and benefits to people who are entitled to stay in the United States, on a temporary or permanent basis. [www.dhs.gov](http://www.dhs.gov)

**The Department of State (DOS)** coordinates resettlement policy and provides funding for agencies that assist newly arrived refugees. [www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov)

**The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS)** determines which applicants meet the requirements for refugee status and are admissible to the United States. [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov)

## NATIONAL AGENCIES

**The Annie E. Casey Foundation** is a private charitable organization with the primary mission of fostering public policies, human service reforms and community supports that more effectively meet the needs of today’s vulnerable children and families. [www.aecf.org](http://www.aecf.org)

**Bridging Refugee Youth and Children’s Services (BRYCS)** is a national training and technical assistance agency that addresses challenges faced by refugee youth and children. BRYCS provides important materials for educators, families and community service agencies to strengthen targeted approaches to working with refugee youth. [www.brycs.org](http://www.brycs.org)

- *Growing Up in a New Country: A Positive Youth Development Toolkit for Working with Refugees and Immigrant Youth*
- *Refugees and the U.S. Child Welfare System: Background Information for Service Providers*
- *Raising Children in a New Country: A Toolkit for Working with Refugee Parents, and Enhancing Child Care for Refugee Self-Sufficiency*

**California Tomorrow** helps to create a just and inclusive multiracial, multicultural and multilingual society by promoting equal access to social, economic and educational resources. [www.californiatomorrow.org](http://www.californiatomorrow.org)

- *Pursuing the Promise: Addressing Equity, Access, and Diversity in After-School and Youth Programs*

**Episcopal Migration Ministries (EMM)** works with other faithbased and secular groups to provide resettlement assistance to refugees. [www.ecusa.anglican.org/emm](http://www.ecusa.anglican.org/emm)

- A list of local EMM affiliates can be found at:  
[www.ecusa.anglican.org/3687\\_3209\\_ENG\\_HTM.htm?menu=menu32086](http://www.ecusa.anglican.org/3687_3209_ENG_HTM.htm?menu=menu32086)

**Hebrew Immigration Aid Society (HIAS)** provides support to Jewish refugee resettlement in the United States. HIAS oversees the Refugee Family Strengthening Program and Loreo (local Russian emigre organizations). [www.hias.org](http://www.hias.org)

**International Rescue Committee (IRC)** assists with humanitarian relief and refugee resettlement in regions experiencing violence and deprivation. IRC also provides technical assistance to community-based organizations across the United States and refugee developed community based organizations through Project SOAR (Strengthening Organizations Assisting Refugees). [www.theirc.org](http://www.theirc.org)

**The Intercultural Development Research Association** is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to strengthening public schools for all children. [www.idra.org](http://www.idra.org)

- *Hacia Adelante—Pathways to College—A Guide for Latino Families*
- *Hispanic Families as Valued Partners: Educator’s Guide*
- *I’m Going to College—Fun Activities and Pictures to Color for Early Elementary Children*

**Lutheran Immigration and Relief Services (LIRS)** is a national voluntary agency that assists newcomers to the United States through a network of affiliated local agencies. LIRS provides outreach, training and technical assistance. [www.lirs.org](http://www.lirs.org)

- *Working with Refugee and Immigrant Children: Issues of Culture, Law, and Development*

**MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership** is the leader in expanding the power of mentoring to millions of young Americans who want and need adult mentors. [www.mentoring.org](http://www.mentoring.org)

- *Mentoring Immigrant and Refugee Youth Research Corner. Dr. Jean Rhodes.*
- *Mentoring Immigrant and Refugee Youth: Online Forum*

**National Mutual Aid Associations (MAAs)** are grassroots, community-based organizations managed to assist various resettled refugee groups. A list of Mutual Aid Associations can be found at:  
[www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/partners/maa.htm](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/partners/maa.htm)

- A directory of Southeast Asian MAAs: [www.searac.org/maa/national\\_mass.html](http://www.searac.org/maa/national_mass.html)

**National Somali Bantu Project** provides service learning opportunities for students working with Somali Bantu refugees. Also offers information, materials and resources related to providing services to Somali Bantu populations. [www.somalibantu.org](http://www.somalibantu.org)

**Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory** is one of ten regional educational centers funded by the U.S. Department of Education. NWREL contains a variety of materials for educational leaders, schools and youth service providers. [www.nwrel.org](http://www.nwrel.org)

- The National Mentoring Center at NWREL provides training and technical assistance to youth mentoring programs across the country. [www.nwrel.org/mentoring](http://www.nwrel.org/mentoring)
- The Region X Equity Assistance Center developed *Meeting the Needs of Immigrant Students* [www.nwrel.org/cnorse.booklets/immigration/5.html](http://www.nwrel.org/cnorse.booklets/immigration/5.html)

**The Center for Applied Linguistics** works to improve communication through better understanding of language and culture. The Center promotes and improves teaching and learning of languages, identifies and solves problems related to language and culture, and conducts research on issues related to language. [www.cal.org](http://www.cal.org)

- The Center for Applied Linguistics has materials and background information on the following refugee populations: Meskhetian Turks, Liberians, Hmong, Muslim refugees, Somali Bantu, Bosnians, Haitians, Iraqi Kurds, Somalis and Banyamulenge Tutsi.

**The Center for Health and Health Care in Schools (CHHCS)** is a nonpartisan policy and program resource center located at The George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services. [www.healthinschools.org](http://www.healthinschools.org)

- *Children of Refugees and Immigrants: What the Research Tells Us*

**The Center for Mental Health in Schools** is one of two national centers concerned with mental health in schools that are funded in part by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

- *Easing the Impact of Student Mobility: Welcoming and Social Support*

**The Foundation for Child Development (FCD)** is a national, private philanthropy that sponsors the New American Children Program. FCD explores ways to address the unique needs of immigrant children and their families. [www.fcdus.org](http://www.fcdus.org)

- *Reaching All Children? Understanding Early Care and Educational Participation Among Immigrant Families* (Center for Law and Social Policy)
- *Leveling the Playing Field: Supporting Immigrant Children From Birth to Eight*

**The Upstate Center Act for Youth** is a New York State Department health initiative that integrates prevention strategies and builds youth developmental assets for young people aged 10–19. [www.human.cornell.edu](http://www.human.cornell.edu)

- *Creating Successful Programs for Immigrant Youth*

**The Urban Institute** promotes sound social policy and public debate on national priorities. The Urban Institute gathers and analyzes data, conducts policy research, evaluates programs and services and educates Americans on critical issues and trends. [www.urbaninstitute.org](http://www.urbaninstitute.org)

- *Children of Immigrants: Facts and Figures*
- *Overlooked and Underserved: Immigrant Students in U.S. Secondary Schools*
- *The Health and Well-Being of Young Children of Immigrants*
- *The New Demography of America's Schools: Immigration and the No Child Left Behind Act*

**U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants** provides support, social services and lifebuilding opportunities through various national programs, including the Reception and Placement, Matching Grant, Healthy Refugees Healthy Families, Food and Nutrition, Financial Literacy, Partnership for Citizen, Preferred Communities, Somali Bantu and Disabled Refugee programs. [www.refugees.org/participate.aspx](http://www.refugees.org/participate.aspx)

**U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants: The National Center for Refugee and Immigrant Children** provides pro bono legal and social services to unaccompanied children as well as information and materials that are relevant to educators and social workers serving this population.

- Information about local programs at the state level can be found at:  
[www.refugees.org/article.aspx?id=1114&subm=55&area=participate](http://www.refugees.org/article.aspx?id=1114&subm=55&area=participate)
- *Teaching About Immigrants and Refugees: The Curriculum Guide*
- *Encouraging Refugee Awareness in the Classroom: A Guide for Teachers*

**U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops/Migration and Refugee Services (USCCB)** provides assistance to asylees, refugees and refugee children. [www.usccb.org/mrs](http://www.usccb.org/mrs)

**WestED** is a nonprofit research, development and service agency that increases education and human development within schools, families and communities. [www.wested.org](http://www.wested.org)

- *Bridging Cultures between Home and School: A Guide for Teachers*

## INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES

**UK Youth (UK)** is the largest nonuniformed National Voluntary Youth Organization in the UK with over 7,000 local youth groups, clubs, and projects. [www.ukyouth.org](http://www.ukyouth.org)

- *UK Youth Peer Qualification Programme*

**Save the Children (UK)** addresses needs of children in the United Kingdom who suffer from poverty, disease, injustice and violence. [www.savethechildren.uk](http://www.savethechildren.uk)

- *Young Refugees: Setting Up Mentoring Schemes for Young Refugees in the UK.* A guide for mentors and programs serving refugee youth that includes information about benefits, mentor recruitment, training tips and program profiles. Available in PDF format on Save the Children's Web site.

**The Refugee Council (UK)** has materials related to teaching refugee issues, working with refugee children and bilingual folk tales. [www.refugeecouncil.org.uk](http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk)

**University of Calgary** has web-based diversity resources from around the world that includes online resources, funding sources, glossaries, examples of projects and selected readings. [www.ucalgary.ca](http://www.ucalgary.ca)

- *Diversity Toolkit* [www.ucalgary.ca/~dtoolkit/home.htm](http://www.ucalgary.ca/~dtoolkit/home.htm)







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