

Supporting Students with Refugee and Immigrant Backgrounds

2019--MJSD

Learning Objectives:



Teachers will be able to:

- ✓ *discuss difference between immigrants and refugees and who they are*
- ✓ *understand the challenges of families and students with Refugee/Immigrant Backgrounds*
- ✓ *discuss support for our refugee and immigrant families*
- ✓ *have a link/guide for MJSD to Resources & Supports for student success*

The Refugee's Experience: *Distinctive Characteristics*

Immigrant



Anticipated Change



Preparation and Control: Has a *Plan*



Anchor Families, US Ties;
Community



Uninterrupted Formal Education,
(Generally)



Pre-Arranged Employment
Opportunities



Self-Sufficient

Economic migrants have
choices

Refugee



Unanticipated Trauma



Flee Home – Lack Control; Trauma;
Loss



Limited to No Anchor
Family/Community



SLIFE (Students with Limited or No
Formal Education)



Employment and Educational
Barriers; Challenges



Initial Reliance: World Relief (CBOs);
Direct & Immediate Assistance

Refugees are ***forced*** to move

Global Trends



“Refugee”

1951 UNHCR defines...

A refugee* is someone who...

“...owing to a *well-founded fear of being persecuted* for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion; is *outside* the country of his nationality or habitual residence; and is *unable* to, or owing to such fear, is *unwilling* to avail himself of the protection of that country.”

◆ *Persecution*

◆ *Displacement Beyond International Border*

◆ *Inability & Fear of Returning*



World Conflicts Causing Refugees and Displaced Persons, 2019



A Closer Look at Uganda



Refugee “Camp” Experience



50% Urban
30% Tent

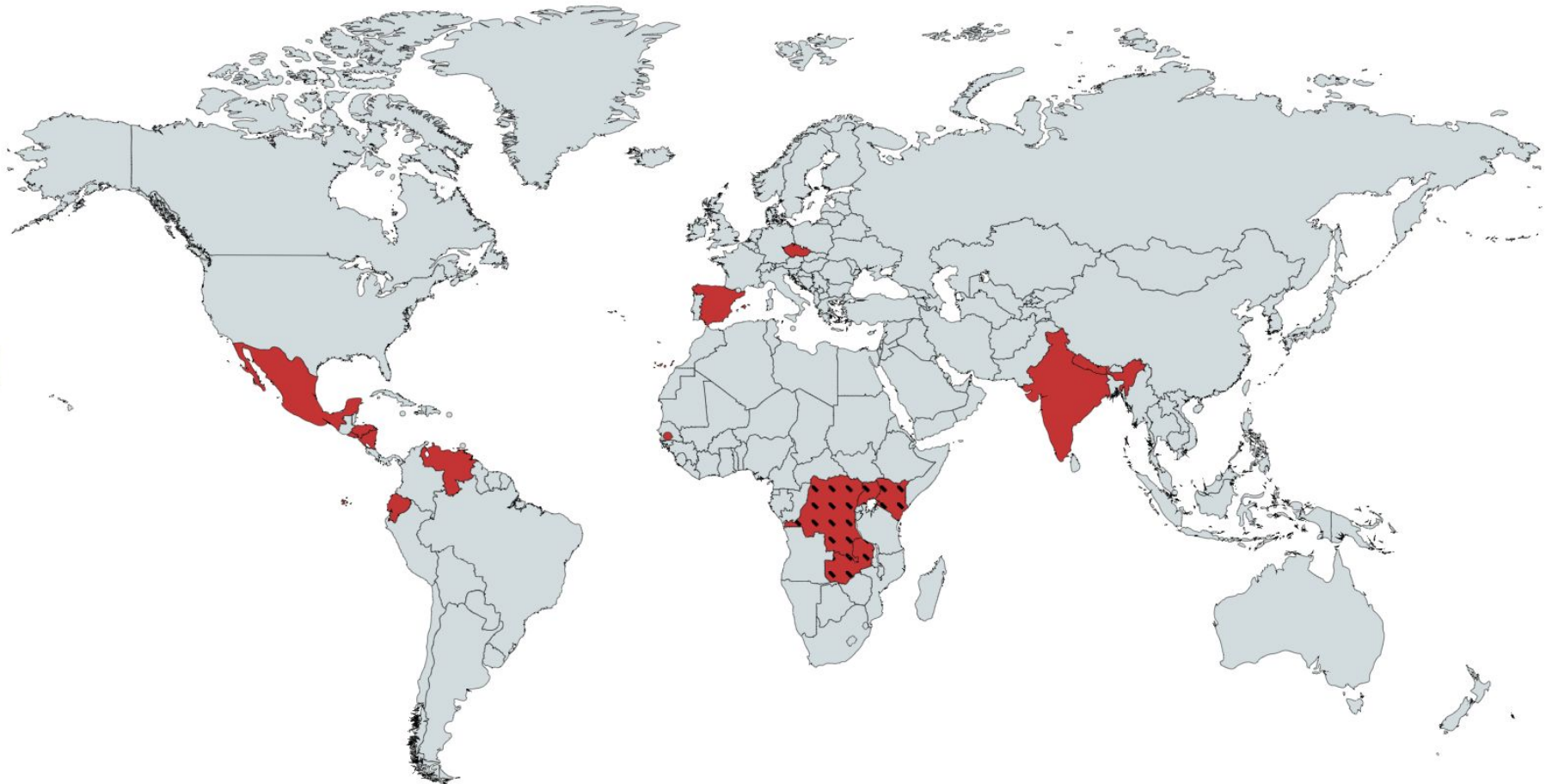
May take
many years

Children
may be
born in
“camp”

Journey
involves
serious
hardships.



Where do our Menasha students who are newcomers and refugees come from?



Congolese Refugees in the US



Discussion


Table Talk

- What are the top 2 challenges you have encountered with Students with Refugee backgrounds and Immigrant backgrounds?
- If you have not worked directly with students that are refugees or immigrants, what 2 challenges would you anticipate?
- Share out with the large group.

Numbered Heads:

- 1) Speaker
- 2) Recorder
- 3) Time-keeper
- 4) Listener

Supporting Students with Refugee Backgrounds (SRBs) in MJSD



How does MJSD support SRBs' transitions?

Resources? Processes?

Adjustment & Trauma Refugees and Immigrants



What can we expect to see with our students as they adjust to their new life?

How can we best support students who have been through trauma?

Adjustment: Starting Over... *Again*

Self

Peers

School

Family

Adjustment Considerations

- **Language Barriers? - Social & Academic**
- **Emotional and Physical/Health Needs**
 - Identity & Self-Esteem – Sense of Belonging
 - Anxiety?
 - Developmental Needs?
 - Cultural and Family Values -Different?
- **Socio-Economic Needs** (poverty; dependence?)
- **Internal Locus of Control; Self-Regulation**
 - Perception as "victim of circumstance", dependent on external circumstances??
- **Challenges: Learn and Adjust to New...**
 - school rules, routines, content, skills, stamina for full school day, attendance, homework, new foods...

- **Language and Cultural Barriers**
- **"Fit In"** with Peer Groups
- **Unfamiliar** Food, Clothing, Traditions, Culture
- **Coping** Skills and Support System
- **Cultural Biases?** – New Community
- **Barriers?**
 - Participate & Engage: Community Activities
- **Financial Stresses?**
 - Poverty, Limited Resources to Participate
 - Access to Activities

- **Languages:** English & First ? Second? Third?
Multiple Languages Oral, Auditory, Literacy
- **Education?** Different?
 - Systems, Processes, Models and Expectations
- **New Learning?**
 - Individualism, Risk-Taking, Eye Contact, Participation, Collaborative Work, Problem-Solving Model...
- **Formal Education?**
 - SLIFE: Experiential & Content Gaps
- **School Discipline** - Type, Procedures; Policies
- **Potential for Stereotyping and Bullying?**

- **Loss** Family & Friends (grief; mental health; PTSD)
- **Health** Concerns (medical and dental)
- **Anchor** Family or Community- Limited? None?
- **Communication** and Language Learning
 - ELL school/employment/drivers license
- **Discipline:** Appropriate; Culture; Roles in Family
- **Community** Integration; Engagement; Participation
- **Financial**– Family Employment; \$ Assistance?
- **Self-Sufficiency** Pathway
- **Credentials**, Professional or Workplace Skills May Not be Recognized (ECE; valid certification)
- **May Work Multiple, Low-Paying Jobs**

SRB Stages of Adjustment



Trauma May Present as...

- Stomach Aches, Headaches, Muscle Aches & Stiffness
- Dizziness, Sweats, Weakness/Unease with Lower Limbs
- Numb Emotions, Behavior Acting Out, Tension, Anxiety, “Avoidance”
- Fight & Flight Responses
 - *“The instinctual brain is revved up for survival and has no use for words when danger is perceived. With traumatic activity, the brain is hardwired to bypass cognition (the rational brain).” ***
- Depression, Anxiety, Self-Consciousness, Sleep Disruptions, Night Terrors
- Difficulty : Attention, Concentration, Memory, Attendance”
- Difficulty Developing Relationships
- Grief, Anger, Hypervigilance, Hyper-Sensitive (On alert).

Precautions & Potential Triggers

People

- Police Liaison
- Authority Figures
- People Staring
- Unfamiliar Body Language (Non-Verbal)
- “Office” of “Officials”

Teaching & Learning

- Prolonged Activity (Stamina)
- Concept of Participation
- Gender Groupings
- Fear of Failure
- Poor Sense of Achievement
- Inability to Advocate Needs
- Curriculum Content
 - War, Human Dev.

School Environment

- Dark hallways, rooms
- Office
- “Detention”/Conference Rm
- Specialists’ Offices
- Cramped Spaces
- Open Spaces w/ Unpredictable Activity (Recess)
- Field Trips

Activity

- Changes; Transitions
- Bus Rides
 - (w/out Parent)
- Unstructured Activities
 - Recess; Rough Play
- Drills & Evacuation Practices
- Lunch Rooms (Stimulation)
- Individual Participation
- Tests
- Masks, Costumes

Sensory

- Bells and Alarms
- Intercoms (Sudden Auditory)
- Stomping Feet
- People Speaking too Quickly
- Loud Voices; Multiple
- Harsh Tones Voice
- Screaming at Recess

Holistic Strategy : Student Success

School: Policies and Practices

- Student Data
- Attendance; Safety
- Health Plans
- Academic Plans
- Grade/CARE Teams
- PBIS
- Links to Services
- PD

Curriculum: Teaching and Learning

- Learning Needs/Strengths
- Scaffolding
- Concept Mapping
- Graphic Organizers
- Content-Based ELL
- Technology + Realia
- Western Learning Models
- Take risks + Build trust

School Environment

- Structured - Predictable
- Clear, Consistent Routines
- Quiet Spaces
- Advocacy Training
- Teach Social Skills
- Teach Emotional Literacy
- PBIS
- Climate of Diversity
- Buddy Systems

Community-Based Collaboration & Support

- Resettlement Agencies
- United Way Resettlement Network
- Volunteers
- Literacy Council
- UWO and FVTC

Parents: Building Relationships & Engagement

- Welcome & Orientation
- * Attendance * Calendar
- *Health Plans (Emergency #)
- *Confirm Language Support
- Invite Participation (PTA)
- Conference Early

Discussion

Chalk Talk

- ❖ Go back to your Anticipation Guide
 - How has your thinking changed about immigrants and our newcomers?
 - I learned that.....
 - A question I have is.....
 - I would be interested in more information about.....

- ❖ Be ready to share out (if there is enough time)

A thought to leave you with...

“To be called a refugee is the opposite of an insult; it is a badge of strength, courage, and victory.”

Tennessee Office for Refugees

Resources, Includes SRB & Trauma

- ❖ [Serving Refugee Clients in Menasha](#)
- ❖ British Columbia Ministry of Education (2009), Students from Refugee Backgrounds: A Guide for Teachers and Schools,
https://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/ell//refugees_teachers_guide.pdf
- ❖ Center for Applied Linguistics, Cultural Orientation Resource Center,
www.culturalorientation.net
- ❖ Minnesota Department of Education (2010), Working with Refugee Students in Secondary Schools: A Counselor's Companion,
http://ell.spps.org/uploads/mde_ell_for_counselors.pdf
- ❖ Teaching Refugees with Limited Formal Education,
<http://www.teachingrefugees.com/student-background/tool-kit/>
- ❖ The Victoria Foundation for Survivors of Torture (2011), School's In for Refugees.
www.foundationhouse.org.au

Trauma

- ❖ NCTSN [The National Traumatic Stress Network]
<http://www.nctsnet.org/>
- ❖ Who we Are *“Established by Congress in 2000, the National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) brings a singular and comprehensive focus to childhood trauma. NCTSN’s collaboration of frontline providers, researchers, and families is committed to raising the standard of care while increasing access to services. Combining knowledge of child development, expertise in the full range of child traumatic experiences, and dedication to evidence-based practices, the NCTSN changes the course of children’s lives by changing the course of their care.*
- ❖ *The Network is funded by the Center for Mental Health Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, US Department of Health and Human Services through a congressional initiative: the Donald J. Cohen National Child Traumatic Stress Initiative. As of November 2009 the Network comprises 60 members. Affiliate members—sites that were formerly funded—and individuals currently or previously associated with those sites continue to be active in the Network as affiliates.*

Refugee Information

- ❖ Center for Applied Linguistics: Cultural Orientation Resource Center, www.culturalorientation.net
- ❖ Cultural Orientation Resource Center (Cultural Background Information, <http://www.culturalorientation.net/learning/backgrounders>)
- ❖ Minnesota Department of Education (2010), *Working with Refugee Students in Secondary Schools: A Counselor's Companion*, http://ell.spps.org/uploads/mde_ell_for_counselors.pdf
- ❖ UNHCR website, www.unhcr.org
- ❖ World Relief (Fox Valley) <http://worldrelief.org>

Students with Refugee Backgrounds

- ❖ BRYCS – Bridging Refugee Youth and Children’s Services, <http://www.brycs.org>
- DeCapua, Smathers, & Tang (2009), Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education. University of Michigan Press.
- ❖ Teaching Refugees with Limited Formal Education, <http://www.teachingrefugees.com/student-background/tool-kit/>
- ❖ World Relief (Fox Valley) <http://worldrelief.org>
- ❖ Minnesota Department of Education (2010), Working with Refugee Students in Secondary Schools: A Counselor’s Companion, http://ell.spps.org/uploads/mde_ell_for_counselors.pdf
- ❖ The Victoria Foundation for Survivors of Torture (2011), School’s In for Refugees. www.foundationhouse.org.au
- ❖ UNHCR website, www.unhcr.org

Government Resources

- ❖ Federal Office of Refugee Resettlement - ORR , <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/>
- ❖ U.S. Department of State,
<http://www.state.gov/j/prm/releases/letters/2012/202353.htm>
- ❖ U.S. Department of State (country profile), <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/>
- ❖ U.S. Department of State,
<http://www.state.gov/j/prm/releases/letters/2012/202353.htm>
- ❖ U.S. Department of State (country profile), <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/>