



New American Pathways<sup>®</sup>  
HELPING REFUGEES AND GEORGIA THRIVE

**From Surviving To Thriving:  
Serving Refugee and Non-Native Families in the US**



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### Who is a Refugee?



- Invited by the U.S. government, a refugee has escaped his or her homeland fleeing persecution because of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, sexual orientation/gender identity

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### Global Picture



- Only about 1% of refugees worldwide have the opportunity to be resettled.
- 45,000 will be resettled in the US in 2018

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### Global Picture



- There are more than 60 million forcibly displaced people in the world today – more than at any other time in recorded history.

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### Where do Refugees Come From?



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## Refugee's Journey

The diagram illustrates the refugee's journey through five stages:
 

- Flight from home:** A group of people, including children, are shown in a state of displacement.
- Arrival in refugee camp environment:** A large tented settlement in a rural area.
- Life in refugee camp environment:** A group of people, including children, are shown in a tented settlement.
- Selection for resettlement:** A woman is shown in a selection process.
- Resettlement:** A woman is shown in a new home with an American flag in the background.

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## Everyday Life in Refugee Camps

- Hard, repetitive work
- Many chores
- Confined space
- Loose structure
- Limited opportunities for work
- Survival mode
- Basic needs are somewhat met (food, medical care)
- Relative safety (not always)
- Tight-net community

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## Camp Simulation

- Group 1: Please follow your guide to the refugee camp
- Group 2: Please follow your guide to the classroom

The first image shows a refugee camp with many small, simple huts. The second image shows a classroom with a chalkboard and a teacher.

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## Mixed Baggage from the Refugee Camp

- Learned helplessness
- Trauma (often undiagnosed PTSD)
- Habit of living in survival mode
- Interrupted education
- Parental responsibility centered around safety
- Resiliency
- Social capital
- Hopes and aspirations
- Survivor mentality
- Desire to learn
- “We came to the US for our children”

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## Reflection

- How did you feel about the camp?
- How did you feel about the classroom? Were you anxious?
- What was surprising?
- Q/A for educators?

A close-up photo of a young child with a joyful expression, resting their chin on a wooden post.

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## Recruitment

A group of people, including children and adults, are sitting around a table with various dishes of food, likely at a community meal.

- Who serves refugees in your area?  
(Refugee resettlement organizations, ESL classes, places of worship)
- Who can introduce you to the families?  
(Community leaders, case workers, volunteers)
- When is the next festival?  
(Get out there and have fun!)
- How long is the family in the US?

1. Find a community
2. Find a broker
3. Find a family

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## Breaking the Ice

- Read about the culture and the history of conflict
- 5 magical words in their language
- Remove your shoes when inside the house
- Try the food when it is offered!
- Remember: your families rely mostly on visual cues
- Follow the broker's lead



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## Establishing Boundaries

- Accepting gifts?
- Values conflict: who's problem is it?
- Dual relationship
- Power differential
- Self-disclosure: when and why?
- Who's needs are being met?



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## Curriculum: Sticky Points

- Food play: approach with caution
- Kids may not be allowed in a kitchen
- No mirror play
- Literacy activities for illiterate parents
- Parental engagement: a foreign concept



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## Common Mistakes

- A Hustle Host: "They are new in my country"
- A Hero: "I'm the only one helping this family!"
- A Seeker of "exotic experience":  
"Tell me about your refugee camp"

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## Your Best Contribution

- You play crucial part of families' acculturation process
- Help them find new parenting identity
- Encourage families to draw on their strengths
- Have fun together!



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## Thank You!

- Please write to us if you have any questions or comments:
- [A.Hardy@newamericanpathways.org](mailto:A.Hardy@newamericanpathways.org)
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