



SECTION #13

New American Culture and Community

- International Institute of Akron Presentation - An Insight into the Refugee Journey
- New American Resources List
- SAMHSA's Refugee Behavioral Health

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE

— OF AKRON —



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An insight into the refugee journey

The resettlement process from overseas to Akron and the challenges towards integration and adjustment

Agenda

- ❖ The refugee process and journey pre-arrival to the U.S.
- ❖ The types of services at IIA for Refugees and Immigrants
- ❖ Groups of refugees arriving in Akron, their cultural norms, and how to embrace this
- ❖ Challenges facing refugees and their strength
- ❖ Community Outreach and how to get involved

New Americans: Refugee Vs Immigrant

- All refugees are immigrants-----Not all immigrants are refugees.
- Refugees are Individuals who have crossed an international boundary because they are unable or unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of their former country due to a well-founded fear of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, or membership of a particular social group.
- Refugees come first come into contact with UNHCR which is mandated to provide food, shelter and safety.
- Asylees are a subtype of refugees as they meet the same definition of a refugee but needed to travel to the U.S. or other final country first before applying for this protective status.



An immigrant (non-refugee) is usually someone who has voluntarily left their home country for a variety of reasons, including economic reasons or to be closer to family.

Pre-resettlement



- Imprisonment, torture, loss of property
- Forced to flee their home
- Separation from family and friends
- Experience harsh weather and/or environmental conditions
- Limited access to food and money
- Lived in refugee camp
- Can become ill and/or Experience nutrient deficiencies

Contd.....



- Not allowed to work or to go to school
- Harassment from local residents
- Targeted by thieves
- Witness or experience violence, camp raids
- Uncertainty for the future
- Loss of sense of self or meaning
- Witness/experience acts of violence
- Experience fear, anxiety, trauma, sadness, hopelessness

Durable solutions

- **Repatriation**
 - Return to home country or country of citizenship.
 - Voluntary basis only.
 - Extended time periods before environments are stable and safe enough for people to return home.
- **Integration in the first country of asylum**
 - Integration means having access to education, employment eligibility, security and pathway to citizenship
 - Host countries often unstable due to their own conflicts.
 - Political ties between home country and host countries can hinder this option.
- **Third country resettlement**
 - This is where the United States comes in
 - 19 other countries are involved but the US is one of the largest resettlement countries

US Refugee Resettlement Program

- US Congress determines the number of refugees to allow into the country
- Presidential Determination
- Refugees are screened at an Overseas Processing Entity (OPE)—persecution story documented.
- Interviews with Immigration Officials
- Medical Screening & Security Checks



IJA WELCOMES NEW AMERICANS TO AKRON TO MAKE OUR COMMUNITY THEIR HOME.

Our mission is to contribute to the well-being of our community by creating and implementing programs and services that assist those born outside the U.S. to integrate into American society.

We work to promote public awareness of the value of ethnic diversity and to encourage international communication.



Our Services



IMMIGRATION
REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT
EMPLOYMENT COUNSELING
EDUCATION
INTERPRETING & TRANSLATION
COMMUNITY INTEGRATION



**90 Day
Resettlement
Services**



Secure and furnish home using items from our donation room and local stores.



Welcome refugees at Akron Canton airport and bring them to their new home.



Arrange for a culturally appropriate welcome meal upon client's arrival in Akron.



Home and personal safety orientation and home visits.



Referral and assistance with applications to social service agencies.



Referral to public health for health screenings and continued primary care and needed specialty care.



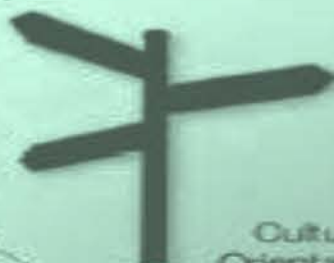
Enrollment in English language classes and employment services.



Assistance in accessing public transportation.



Assistance in enrolling in local schools for refugee youth.



Cultural Orientation.



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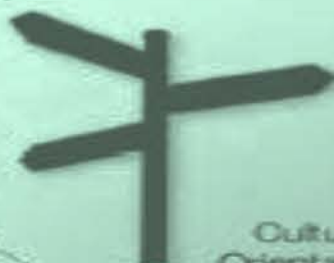
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Cultural Orientation.

Extended Case management

Preferred Communities program for special needs

Population type	Vulnerabilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Youth• Woman at Risk• Elderly• Single Parent• Social/psychological Conditions• Secondary Migrant• Physical Disability• Survivor of Torture	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social and Environmental factors• Mental Health and Emotional Trauma• Gender based Violence• Domestic Violence• Physical Disabilities• Medical Conditions

Who is coming to Akron?

Country of Origin	Country of Asylum	Language
✓ Democratic Republic of Congo	Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania, Burundi, Kenya, Malawi	French, Kiswahili, Kinyarwanda
✓ Burma	Thailand, Malaysia	Burmese, Karen, Mon, Chin
✓ Afghanistan	Pakistan	Farsi, Dari & Pashtu
✓ Iraq	Jordan, Turkey	Arabic
✓ Bhutan (largest refugee population in	Nepal	Nepali

Democratic Republic of Congo (Congolese)

Currently the largest incoming refugee group to Akron



Cultural Values (Congolese)

- 90 % Christian by faith
- 10% Muslim and other
- Family system
- Gender roles
- Attitude towards western medicine
- Lack of understanding about the preventative care
- Eye Contact
- Diet
- May offer some drinks or palm wine



Cultural values (Burmese)

- Humility
- Self-promotion is considered shameful
- Avoid confrontation
- Harmony
- Sense of Community
- Cheerfulness
- Respect for elders and parents
- Communication is indirect



Cultural Values (Afghan)

- The two major languages among the Afghans are Pashto and Dari
- Collective culture
- Cultural values are highly influenced by the religion Islam
- Pray five times a day either in isolation or in congregation during sunrise noon, mid-afternoon, sunset and nighttime.
- They refrain from eating, drinking, smoking from sunrise to sunset during Ramadan
- The family matters are considered private matters and tend to keep confidential.
- Boys usually have much more freedom than girls



Common Stressors among resettled refugees

- Culture shock
- Family separation
- Isolation (geographical, language, culture)
- Ambivalence towards resettlement(better living condition Vs. strict work environment)
- Generational role exchange
- Gender Inequality
- Issues about birth, marriage and death rites (esp. Bhutanese)
- Dilution of traditional norms
- Substance use or Alcohol in Youth/Adult
- Domestic Violence/family conflict

Common Stressors among resettled refugees

- Unfamiliar with English, Western culture, urban life
- Stress of paperwork
- Mistrust of police (esp. Refugees from Burma)
- Unfamiliar with laws
- Alcohol abuse
- Domestic abuse
- Organizing self
- Maintaining schedule/Punctuality
- Weather
- Elders feel trapped in home

Common Stressors among resettled refugees

- Unfamiliar with setting goals
- Budget management
- Challenges of community organizing (Refugees from Burma)
- Cultural diversity and lack of interpreters (Burma)
- Expectation Vs. Reality (Afghan)
- Loss of status
- Women having responsibility of taking care of lot of children (Afghan)
- Losing loved ones
- Cultural and intergenerational dissonance

Refugee Core Stressors

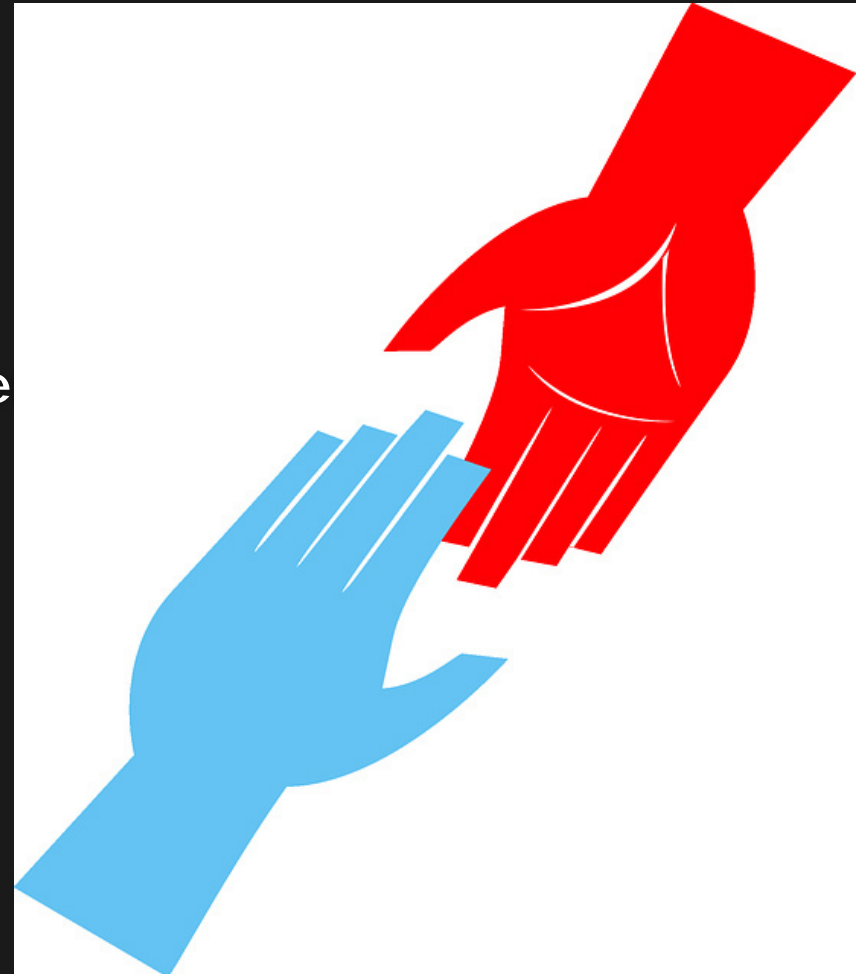


Mental Health Concerns

- Flashbacks
- Recurrent, intrusive thoughts related to trauma history
- Avoidance of thoughts , events and stimuli that trigger memories of the trauma
- Difficulty falling asleep
- Nightmares
- Difficulty trusting others or authority figures
- Recurrent depression
- Generalized anxiety
- Restricted range of emotions
- Chronic pain
- Migraines, gastrointestinal upset, lower immunity and generalized fatigue

Mental health Concerns

- PTSD
- Adjustment stress
- Memory Loss
- Poverty caused by multiple wars/Displaceme
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Acute Stress Disorder
- Alcohol/Substance Use
- Family Conflicts



Possible School Experiences In a refugee camp

- Significant disruption of education, may not have had formal education
- Limited resources
- Parents not used to participating in education
- No electricity, makes it difficult to study after dark
- Schools may have had different rules/expectations



COMMUNITY OUTREACH



VOLUNTEER - INTERN



FOR MORE INFORMATION

WEBSITE

iiakron.org

FACEBOOK

International Institute of Akron

TWITTER

[@iiakron](https://twitter.com/iiakron)

**Population Focus Learning Series:
New American Culture and Community**

June 20, 2019

WEBSITES & DATA RESOURCES

General Resources

International Institute of Akron

iiakron.org

Asian Services In Action, Inc.

asiaohio.org

Catholic Charities Serving Portage & Stark Counties

<https://www.ccdoy.org/locations/catholic-charities-serving-portage-stark-counties/>

Ohio Department of Job and Family Services - Ohio Refugee Services

jfs.ohio.gov/refugee/index.stm

Refugee Services Collaborative Of Greater Cleveland

rscleveland.org/

Ohio Commission on Minority Health

mih.ohio.gov

Education Resources

Ohio's New Americans

olaf.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Ohio-Immigrants-Report-FINAL-1.pdf

Immigrants in Ohio

americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/immigrants-ohio

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

unrefugees.org/

ACLU- Immigrants' Rights

<https://www.aclu.org/issues/immigrants-rights#current>

The Refugee Project
therefugeeproject.org

U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants
refugees.org/

Physical and Sexual Health Resources

Summit County Office of Minority Health
scph.org/omh

International Community Health Center (ASIA-ICHC)
asiaohio.org/services/chp/

Mental Health & Substance Abuse Resources

Stark Help Central
starkhelpcentral.com

StarkMHAR – Care Network
starkmhar.org/care-network/care-network-providers/

NAMI – Canton
namistarkcounty.org/

SAMHSA – Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
samhsa.gov/

Refugee Behavioral Health

National and Regional Resources

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

SAMHSA

Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration

OFFICE OF REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT

An Office of the Administration for Children & Families

ORR provides refugees and other eligible populations with opportunities to maximize their potential in the United States, linking people in need to critical resources to assist them in becoming integrated members of American society.

- **Refugee Health:** Many factors can affect refugee health, including conditions in the country of origin or refugee camp. Without feeling healthy, it is difficult to work, to attend school, or to take care of a family. Physical and emotional wellness and access to healthcare are foundations for successful resettlement.
- **ORR's Division of Refugee Health**
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/programs/refugee-health>
 - **Women's Health Videos:** A four-part video series, "Somali Refugee Women: Learn about your Health!" covers a variety of health issues, including reproductive health, prenatal care, pregnancy, cancer screenings, diet, exercise and more.
- **Refugee Health Technical Assistance Center** <http://www.RefugeeHealthTA.org>
 - *Access to Care:* Affordable Care Act, Language Access (including interpreter best practices), Translated Health Education Materials
 - *Refugee Health Updates:* News, Resources, Funding , Trainings and Events
- **Refugees and the Affordable Care Act (video in several languages and materials):**
<http://refugeehealthta.org/access-to-care/affordable-care-act/resources-for-providers-and-refugees/>
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/health>
- **Refugee Health Information Network** <http://www.RHIN.org>
 - Multilingual health information for refugees and their health providers
- **Refugee Suicide Prevention Training Toolkit** <http://refugeehealthta.org/physical-mental-health/mental-health/suicide/suicide-prevention-toolkit>
- **Refugee Youth and Mental Health (videos and materials):**
<http://refugeehealthta.org/physical-mental-health/mental-health/youth-and-mental-health/>

REFUGEEHEALTH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER

Refugee Resources

- Survivors of Torture Technical Assistance Provider Websites
 - <http://gulfcoastjewishfamilyandcommunityservices.org/refugee/refugee-programs/national-partnership-forcommunity-training/>
 - <http://www.healtorture.org/content/mental-health-resources>
- Healthy Roads Media Refugee Mental Health Resources (e.g. video, audio, fact sheets)
http://www.healthyroadsmedia.org/topics/mental_health.htm
- USCRI Refugee Family Strengthening Program (translated into Nepali, Arabic, Spanish)
<http://www.refugees.org/resources/for-refugees--immigrants/family-strengthening-resources/familystrengthening-1.html>

SAMHSA: Trauma

<https://www.samhsa.gov/trauma-violence>

There is a strong link between trauma and mental and substance use disorders and other chronic physical diseases.

- **National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN)**

<http://nctsn.org>

SAMHSA: Suicide Prevention

<https://www.samhsa.gov/suicide-prevention>

- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline** – 1-800-273-TALK (8255) is a free, 24-hour hotline available to anyone in suicidal crisis or emotional distress.
- **Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC)** – provides technical assistance, training, and materials to assist states, tribes, campuses, organizations, and stakeholders develop suicide prevention programs, interventions and policies.
- **National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention** – a public/private partnership that advances the *National Strategy for Suicide Prevention (NSSP)* through the work of nearly 200 organizations.
- **Behavioral Health Treatment Services Locator** – a directory of mental health and substance abuse treatment facilities in the United States and U.S. territories.



SAMHSA: Technical Assistance Centers

Center for the Application of Prevention Technologies Support (CAPT)

www.captus.samhsa.gov

Comprehensive training and technical assistance on Substance Use Prevention and Epidemiology

Addiction Technology Transfer Center (ATTC)

www.attcnetwork.org

Comprehensive training & technical assistance center for substance use treatment & recovery support services workforce

State Refugee Contacts

State Refugee Contacts <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/orr/state-programs-annual-overview> & click on the state, then click on key contacts



HHS Regional Contacts

SAMHSA Regional Administrators - <https://www.samhsa.gov/about-us/who-we-are/regional-administrators>

ACF-ORR Regional Representatives - <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/orr/about>