

On Their Way

An Orientation Curriculum for Unaccompanied Refugee Minors

Dani M. Abrams

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FOR APPLIED
LINGUISTICS

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Finally, we extend our deepest appreciation to the refugee minors who graciously and openly shared their experiences with us. We hope that this curriculum helps facilitate the resettlement and adjustment of the refugee minors who follow.

Introduction

Overview

This manual was developed to strengthen the orientation to resettlement in the United States that U.S.-bound unaccompanied refugee minors receive. A cultural orientation working group, made up of individuals from overseas cultural orientation programs; resettlement agencies; the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration at the U.S. Department of State; the Office of Refugee Resettlement at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; and others, came together with the staff of the Cultural Orientation Resource (COR) Center at the Center for Applied Linguistics to determine the contents of this curriculum. COR Center staff also conducted focus group meetings with resettled refugee minors, foster parents, resettlement agency staff, school personnel, and others familiar with these youth and their resettlement needs.

The term *cultural orientation* has typically been applied only to the orientation that refugees receive overseas before departing for the United States, while the term *community orientation* has been used to refer to efforts provided within the United States. In this manual, we have used the abbreviation *CO* to refer to both cultural and community orientation. Our use of *CO* also supports a notion emphasized in this manual: that *CO* begins overseas and resumes in the United States. Similarly, we have used the term *trainer* to refer to all *CO* providers, be they overseas or U.S. agency staff. Although U.S. staff often do not view themselves as trainers, we use the term in the U.S. context for the sake of simplicity and to underscore the educational significance of the services they provide.

The material in this manual is designed for use by overseas orientation providers and, with adaptation, by those who deliver orientation in the United States.

Using This Manual

This manual has been developed for all *CO* programs preparing unaccompanied refugee minors for resettlement in the United States. Much of the content is also appropriate for general youth *CO* and has been tagged accordingly with the symbol shown to the right.



Design of the Curriculum

The curriculum is divided into seven units, addressing seven topics of particular interest to unaccompanied refugee minors:

- The Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program
- Travel and Settling In
- Family Life
- Education
- Cultural Adjustment
- Social Interactions
- Rights and Laws

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Each unit begins with a Topic Overview for the Trainer, followed by activity plans. The overview provides the trainer with basic information needed to facilitate activities on the topic. This overview concludes with a chart that indicates the unit activities, the approximate amount of time required for each activity, key aspects of the activity plan, and the page on which each activity plan begins.

The activity plans, the core of the curriculum, provide a variety of activities that familiarize the participant with the topic. The design takes into account the time constraints under which CO programs operate: Each of the seven units begins with a basic activity plan. These seven basic activities take a total of approximately 3 hours and present the most pressing information. Additional activities allow trainers to elaborate on the basic information, as time allows.

Activity Plan

With some variation, the activity plans follow the same basic format:

- **Time.** Each activity plan begins with an approximate length of time for conducting the activity.
- **Important Aspects of the Plan.** In the left-hand column of the activity plan, icons (see the chart below) indicate which of six aspects have been incorporated into the plan. For example, the heart icon indicates that the activity plan addresses attitudes.







KEY			
Icon	Description	Icon	Description
	Knowledge		Expansions for <i>Story of Me</i>
	Skills		Variations for poster(s)
	Attitudes		Transferable to youth CO (with adaptations)

- **Objectives.** The objectives provide a general idea of the purpose of the activity plan and the information covered.
- **Materials.** Required and optional materials are listed in a checklist format, allowing the trainer to track what has been assembled.
- **Presentation.** The presentation introduces the topic to participants in simple and straightforward English. The trainer can read the presentation to the participants or paraphrase it for them.
- **Activity.** The main section of the plan, the activity provides learner-centered activities and/or discussion topics for the group.
- **Reflection.** Reflection questions enhance understanding, allow for discussion and clarification, and enable the trainer to begin an informal evaluation of participant learning.
- **Expansions and Variations.** Included in most activity plans, this section provides ideas for additional activities on the topic and alternatives for parts of the activity plan.
- **Additional Resources.** Included in some activity plans, this section provides the trainer with additional resources on the topic.

- **Learning English.** To help participants learn English, key topic-related words are listed in a box at the end of the activity plan. Definitions can be found in any English dictionary; a recommended volume with large text and color pictures is *The Oxford Picture Dictionary for Kids* (Keyes, J. R. [1998]. *The Oxford picture dictionary for kids: Monolingual English version*. New York: Oxford University Press.).
- **Activity Plan Materials.** Each activity plan ends with the pictures, lists, cards, and other materials needed for the activity.

The following page shows a visual representation of the activity plan.

Title of the Activity Plan

Time (in minutes)	
	<p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Gives a general idea of the information covered in the activity plan
	<p>Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Lists required and suggested materials, with boxes to the left to check off
	<p>Presentation</p> <p>Introduces the topic in simple English; can be read to participants or paraphrased for them</p>
	<p>Activity</p> <p>Provides learner-centered activities and/or discussion topics and represents the main section of the activity plan</p>
	<p>Reflection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? Enhances understanding and allows for discussion and clarification ? Enables the trainer to begin an informal evaluation of what the participant is learning
	<p>Expansions and Variations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ∞ Gives ideas for additional activities on the topic ∞ Provides alternatives for parts of the activity plan ∞ Provides alternative activities for younger and less literate participants
	<p>Additional Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Lists additional resources on the topic
<p>Learning English Lists topic-related vocabulary words to assist participants in learning English</p>	

Activity Plan Materials

Provides the pictures, lists, cards, and other items needed in the activities.

Two features of the curriculum merit mention: *Story of Me* and the poster alternative. A supplement to this manual, the *Story of Me* grew out of a suggestion that was submitted by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) administered Overseas Processing Entity (OPE) in Southeast Asia during the information-gathering stage of curriculum development. OPE IOM Southeast Asia suggested that the unaccompanied refugee minor curriculum include a set of materials similar to IOM's *Life Book*, a workbook that CO participants complete during and after CO and that they bring with them to the United States for reference and memories. IOM's suggestion led to the development of *Story of Me*, a participant-made book based on variations of activities in the manual. Activity plans with a *Story of Me* variation can be identified by the icon to the right.



The poster alternative is a way to convey essential information that trainers do not have the time to convey through activities. The trainer simply puts the information on a poster and hangs it in the training area so that participants can learn the information on their own. To save trainers preparation time, the content of the posters is provided at the end of the activity plan. To ensure participant comprehension and promote English language learning, the trainer may want to provide the information in both the participants' native language and English. Activities with a variation for a poster are identified by the icon to the right.



Instructional Approach

The instructional approach in this curriculum is based on state-of-the-art CO delivery practices. The approach is guided by several notions. One is that CO is a form of cross-cultural learning that focuses on the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to navigate a new culture. Another is that participants learn best when they are actively engaged and when instruction takes into account their backgrounds, needs, interests, and learning styles and preferences.

Here we briefly discuss some of the ideas underlying the curriculum and their practical application.

Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes

CO is not just about the delivery of basic information. CO specialists view orientation as a form of *cross-cultural learning* that contains three components: knowledge, skills, and attitudes. For the purposes of this manual, *knowledge* is a body of information usually of a factual nature; it is something concrete that a person can learn during CO training. Unaccompanied refugee minors who know nothing about the program will gain knowledge as they learn basic facts about the program.

Skills refers to the mental, manual, or verbal ability needed to do something. Skills allow someone to perform a task. During CO training, unaccompanied refugee minors may develop the skill of finding a balance between their own cultures and U.S. culture.

Attitudes are thoughts and beliefs and are often unexamined and based on feelings. Addressing attitudes may allow a participant to adopt new values or perspectives. In CO training, refugee youth who show no interest in education might change their attitude when they learn about the different educational opportunities in the United States.

In this manual, three icons, found in the left-hand column of the activity plan, represent the three components: knowledge, skills, and attitudes. As the trainer, you can decide which of the three are most important for participants to learn and can choose activities accordingly. However, it is important to remember that people typically do not learn in discrete categories; there is often a blending of the three components, even though one might dominate. For example, when people are learning about

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cultural differences, they are adding to their knowledge on that topic. But they are also enhancing skills such as showing tolerance toward members of other cultures and developing new attitudes about cultural differences.

Learner Characteristics

Key factors that affect CO learning include the following learner characteristics:

- Age
- Language background
- Level of prior education
- Degree of first language literacy
- Cultural background
- Cultural learning preferences and styles
- Individual learning preferences and styles
- Emotional and psychological issues
- Physical well-being
- Motivation
- Personal situations and stressors

Recognizing the impact of these learner characteristics on learning is extremely important when delivering CO to unaccompanied refugee minors and other refugee youth. Taking into account these characteristics, and accommodating them whenever possible, will enhance learning and retention.

Learning Styles

In the past in the United States, and still today in many parts of the world, teachers have taught and learners have learned through *rote learning*. With rote learning, the learner learns new information by *rote* (the use of memory), with little opportunity for discussion or disagreement. This style of learning is not just uninteresting; it is not very effective because it does not allow the learner to make sense of what is being taught. Especially when a student is trying to develop new skills and attitudes, rote learning is not optimal.

Research suggests that most learners learn best when they are actively engaged in what they are learning. According to the National Training Laboratory, research shows that, on average, participants retain the following amount of information when it is presented through different training methods (World Bank. (n.d.). *The learning pyramid*. Retrieved from http://siteresources.worldbank.org/DEVMARKETPLACE/Resources/Handout_The-LearningPyramid.pdf):

- Lecture: 5%
- Reading: 10%
- Audiovisual: 20%
- Demonstration: 30%
- Discussion groups: 50%
- Practice by doing: 75%
- Teaching others: 90%

This research suggests that the more actively engaged participants are, the more effective CO will be. Although it is almost always a good idea to get learners actively engaged, it is important to recognize that different people learn in different ways or styles. Recognizing various learning styles enables the trainer to design the activity to fit the participant, so that the individual will reap the most reward and retain the information presented.

In recent years, a number of theories have looked at how people learn, including the following:

- Howard Gardner’s multiple intelligences theory (http://www.thomasarmstrong.com/multiple_intelligences.htm)
- Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (<http://www.myersbriggs.org/my-mbti-personality-type/mbti-basics/>)
- DiSC Profile (<http://www.onlinediscprofile.com/>)
- Visual, auditory, and kinesthetic and tactile (<http://www.chaminade.org/inspire/learnstl.htm>)
- Kolb’s learning styles model and experiential learning theory (http://changingminds.org/explanations/learning/kolb_learning.htm)

Here we will briefly discuss Kolb’s learning styles model and experiential learning theory. Kolb’s ideas may help the trainer better understand participants’ learning preferences and as a result tailor instructional methods to participant needs.

According to Kolb, there are four learning styles:

1. *Divergers* process experiences, looking for many different meanings. These learners often ask the question *why*. Divergers typically enjoy working with others, like a calm atmosphere, and prefer receiving constructive feedback.
2. *Convergers* think about things and then try their ideas to see if they work. The most common question for them is *how*: They want to understand how things work in practice. Facts are important to convergers, and they tend to work best on their own, while learning through doing.
3. *Accommodators* take a hands-on approach and prefer to do rather than think. They tend to ask *what if* and *why not*. Creative risks outweigh routine for accommodators, and they prefer to learn by doing rather than by listening to lectures.
4. *Assimilators* prefer to think rather than act and commonly ask, “What is there I can learn?” Organization and structured understanding are preferred, accompanied by lectures and demonstration. For assimilators, reading is much more effective than role-plays or simulations.

Because each participant will enter the CO classroom with a different set of learning styles and preferences, tailoring activities to accommodate as many different learning styles as possible is a particularly effective method for reaching all participants.

From Theory to Practice

Here are some ways to put into practice the ideas about learning we have been discussing. These suggestions work with groups of all sizes and individuals of all ages.

- *Get to know your participants.* Find out the background and interests of participants so you can tailor CO classes to their previous and future experiences and interests. Plan materials and

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exercises according to the learning styles, interests, levels, and needs of your participants. Determine as much as you can about the area where your participants are going to be resettled to help them feel more at ease with their upcoming move. Learn about the fears and concerns regarding resettlement and address these as often as possible to help ease them. Throughout the session, listen and learn, and adapt accordingly.

- *Promote active learning.* Remember that people learn more when they take an active role in their own learning. Use activities and games that make learning fun. Have fillers such as icebreakers (some ideas are available here: <http://www.cal.org/co/domestic/toolkit/tools/icebreakers.html>), topics for writing or drawing, and games ready in case there is a lull or downtime.
- *Be an active participant.* This will increase the size of the group and also demonstrate to participants how to be active and engaged. Show your enthusiasm for the topic. Model the process of learning by doing it yourself: listen, tell participants what you are hearing and what it means to you, and discuss. Ensure participants have the opportunity to think, process, and give ideas, thoughts, and input. Take turns asking and answering questions with participants, encouraging them to correct and add on to what you have to say.
- *Increase relevance.* Enhance learning and understanding of key points by emphasizing those that relate to your participants. Don't skimp on topics, but expand discussions of topics that are more relevant to your participants. Personalize the issues through the case studies provided in the curriculum presented here, and make these case studies more relevant by changing details, such as names and places. To ensure that the session is covering material that interests participants, solicit ideas from them about topics they would like to cover. Provide opportunities for them to do their own research on topics of interest. Use the Additional Resources section of activity plans to find resources that may be of special interest to participants.
- *Give and receive feedback.* Listen to what your participants are telling you, and incorporate their feedback into your future activities with them. Check frequently for understanding and explain challenging points, rephrasing if the participants seem not to understand.
- *Establish a safe space.* A place where participants feel comfortable expressing themselves enhances learning and discovery. Trainers can create a safe space through nonhierarchical room setups (see p. 10), a friendly and welcoming atmosphere, small-group or pair exercises, and a cultural familiar use (or nonuse) of chairs and tables. Encourage all participants to share their thoughts and feelings and to ask questions as issues arise. Visit http://www.cal.org/co/domestic/toolkit/tools/Soothing_Tensions.pdf for ideas and tips on soothing tensions among participants.
- *Utilize the Story of Me.* The *Story of Me* personalizes learning. It gives participants something of their own to take away with them and provides a private space where they can express, in words or pictures, their thoughts, ideas, feelings, and concerns. Encourage participants to draw or write about what they would do in certain situations.
- *Play devil's advocate.* A devil's advocate is someone who argues the opposing perspective for the sake of discussion. During discussion, draw from your experiences with other individuals to take the opposing perspective of the issue at hand. This will help participants see another point

of view and take another look at their own views. Try not to immediately agree with participants at the beginning of each discussion. Rather, help participants examine their own thoughts and ideas by gently asking them why they hold a certain view.

Working With Youth

Children are still developing their learning styles along with their bodies and brains. Trainers need to take into consideration these physical and mental changes by using a variety of methodologies to engage participants. It is also important to review material frequently and check for participant understanding.

Each CO class for unaccompanied refugee minors that has more than one or two participants may include a range of ages. In such classes, the trainer may find it effective to make use of a peer-mentoring technique, pairing up participants of different ages and encouraging the older participant to act as mentor to the younger participant. This creates camaraderie and promotes optimal understanding on different levels for both individuals.

To establish a safe space and develop trust among participants and between participants and trainer, warm-up games, icebreakers (some ideas are available here: <http://www.cal.org/co/domestic/toolkit/tools/icebreakers.html>), and activities for the group are recommended prior to more intense activities or discussions about personal thoughts and feelings. These warm-up activities should be regularly incorporated into CO classes and are a great way to start a training session or day, in that they help participants feel free to open up during CO class.

To encourage participants to identify how they feel about specific topics, make use of the emotions faces provided on p. 277.

Finally, take frequent breaks between activities to keep participants more thoroughly engaged.

Working With Small Groups

Many CO classes for unaccompanied refugee minors will be small, with only three or four participants, or sometimes just one or two. You should not feel daunted! There are many advantages to working with smaller groups:

- With small groups, you are better able to tailor your instruction to the needs of each participant.
- Many participants feel more comfortable voicing their questions and opinions in a small group.
- Smaller groups provide trainers with the opportunity to connect individually with their participants.
- With fewer participants in the room, there is often more space for movement and activities.
- Participants are more likely to attend CO classes and complete assignments and homework in smaller groups, because nonparticipation is more visible.
- With fewer participants, the participants and the trainer have more time to provide feedback to one another.
- For the trainer, a smaller group means less preparation time: fewer pages to copy, supplies to gather, and materials to put together.

Setting Up the Room

The way a room is physically arranged influences the learning experience that occurs in it. Setting up the room ahead of time is very important because it allows participants to find a seat and start feeling comfortable before the session begins. It also saves time.

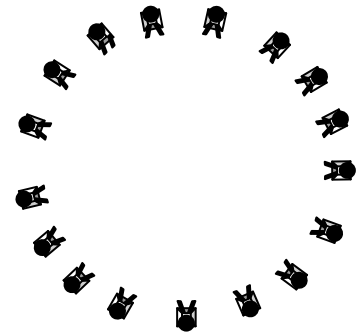
There are a variety of ways to set up a room, and different setups are better for different environments and activities. For instance, a cluster of small groups is usually better for group work than desks in rows (or classroom style). The use of desks, tables, chairs, and cushions is optional. Desks or tables may help participants feel more comfortable and less exposed and are ideal when writing or drawing is involved. Not using desks and tables might be more appropriate or even necessary for cultural groups that are not accustomed to them, when working with youth, or when facilitating games or role-plays.

Making participants feel comfortable is important to achieving a successful training or orientation session, so take time to plan ahead. Try different strategies to see what works best with your space, topic, and group.

Here are some common room setups and their purposes.

The *circle style* is ideal for large-group discussions. Some other considerations:

- Is good for brainstorming and sharing ideas as equals or for creating the feeling of equality among participants.
- Can be used with or without tables.
- Allows participants to sit around one large table or in a circle or square made up of smaller tables, leaving empty space in the center of the circle or square.



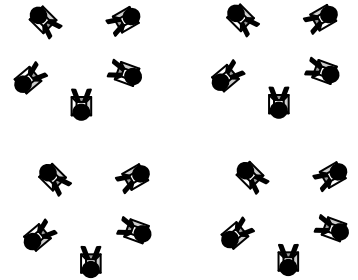
The *U-shaped style* is best for watching presentations, watching videos, having large-group discussion, or listening to panelists or speakers. Some other considerations:

- Can be used with or without desks or tables.
- Facilitates discussion among participants or between participants and trainer.
- Can be shaped like a semicircle, with the chairs on the edges facing inward so that participants can see one another better.



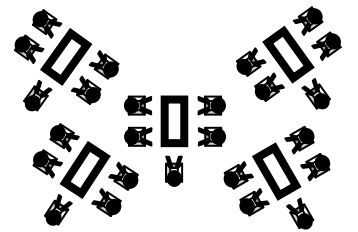
The *cluster style* is optimal for small-group work and discussion. Some other considerations:

- Is good for working through problems, issues, critical incidents, and case studies.
- Can be used with or without chairs, desks, or tables.
- Can be set up in circles, squares, ovals, rectangles, and so forth.



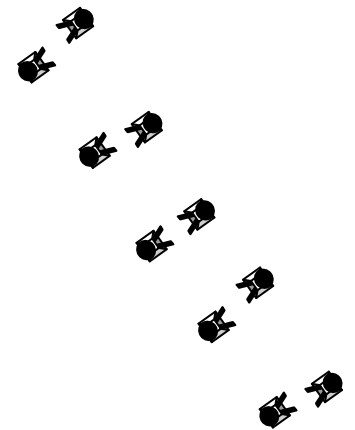
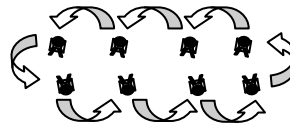
The *herringbone style* is optimal for activities that involve both small-group work and large-group discussions, and for informal presentations. Some other considerations:

- Participants can see the presenter and any visuals at the front of the room, yet can still work in small groups.
- The group can move back and forth between large-group discussions and small-group work without having to rearrange furniture.
- This style works best with small tables for each group, because work can be done on the tables.



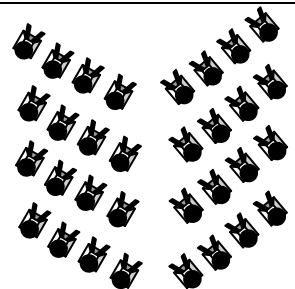
The *partner style* is best used for pair or partner work and games. Some other considerations:

- Is good for introductions.
- Need to plan for groups of three if there is an odd number of participants or if participants feel more comfortable in groups of three.
- Can be used in a “carousel” manner, with participants moving to different chairs to talk with others:



The *V-shaped style* is ideal for medium-size group presentations. Some other considerations:

- Can be used with or without desks or tables.
- Is similar to classroom style, but does not allow for as many seats; however, angling the seats provides participants a better view of one another and facilitates for small-group discussions.

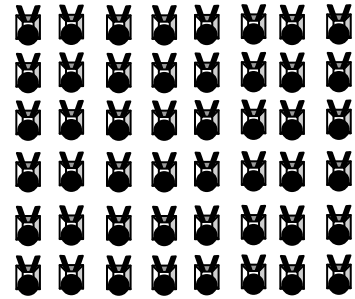


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The *classroom style* is optimal for large groups that are watching videos or listening to presentations, briefings, or lectures. Some other considerations:

- Can be used with or without desks or tables (theater style).
- Is good when group discussion is not as important.
- Does not allow space for movement.
- Can be used for question-and-answer sessions with speakers.
- Can include an aisle or two between seats for better mobility.



Forming Groups

There are many ways to put participants into groups. Some activities within this manual include grouping activities, interactive ways to divide participants into groups while also reviewing information. Trainers can also group people randomly by counting off, distribute small colored pieces of paper or pictures to match, or have participants take different shapes or colors from a box. The Cultural Orientation Resource Center offers icebreakers online, including grouping activities: <http://www.cal.org/co/domestic/toolkit/tools/icebreakers.html>.

Some trainers like to group the more dominant people together and the quieter ones together to break the pattern of a few people dominating the whole discussion and the quieter participants deferring to the more vocal participants. With some topics, groups divided by gender or age may be more appropriate or may experience a more cohesive discussion or learning environment. In some cultures, women may participate more freely and honestly within a group of women. And younger boys and girls may be less inhibited and more likely to open up when their older peers are not present.

However groups are formed, it is always a good idea to have the small groups report back to the whole group. This allows each group to get the perspectives of others: for the boys to hear from the girls, the older teens to hear what the younger adolescents have to say, and the more talkative participants to find out what the quieter ones are thinking.

Methodology

Participants in CO classes come from a variety of educational, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds. They also come from diverse living conditions—from isolated refugee camps to urban centers—which influence how they think and act. Some participants may be able to make connections between their past lives and life in the United States, while others will find little connection between the two. To effectively prepare refugees for resettlement, trainers must often assume the perspective of class participants.

Trainers should try to draw parallels and connections between participant knowledge and the new information presented, between what participants already know and what they need to learn. To meet the objectives of CO, instruction should be learner centered, interactive, and experiential. A mix of activities is very effective. Vary the groups by size, depending on the activity. Following a small-group

or partner work session, bring the large group together to debrief and discuss. This will give participants the opportunity to share and explore ways of thinking about things and approaching situations that they might not have thought about or discussed during their small-group work.

The following chart lists some suggested methods and their uses. All of these instructional techniques have benefits. The choice of method depends on the objectives of a particular session, the characteristics of the learners, and the time and resources available. For example, brief lectures and large-group discussions are appropriate techniques for introducing a topic and imparting knowledge; demonstrations, role-plays, and field trips may be more useful for teaching skills; and case studies and simulations are well suited for exploring attitudes. Any given method can be used for multiple types of learning, and each type of learning can be achieved with more than one method. For example, group discussions and role-plays can be used to observe and analyze attitudes as well as to impart knowledge and teach skills.

Note that not all participants will be comfortable with all of these methods. Some participants may not be used to methods that require active participation. Nevertheless, they are likely to learn and retain more if they are actively engaged than if they are just passively listening. Participants will already be in the process of adjusting to many differences in the United States; adapting to the U.S. style of education may be a challenge, but doing so will be beneficial to them in the long run. Be sure to introduce new styles of learning gradually, however. At the beginning, a brief introduction to the topic, followed by a small-group discussion, may be easier to handle than a game or a role-play.

Method	Ideal for	Other considerations
Brainstorming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bringing up new ideas on a specific topic • Imparting and sharing participants' knowledge • Exploring opinions and attitudes on a topic • Involving participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorming is similar to a group discussion but allows more ideas to be brought up. • Following a brainstorming session with a group discussion is often effective.
Case studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considering problems based on real-life situations • Identifying possible solutions • Teaching skills • Involving participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case studies (or stories) are usually based on real-life experiences and present a situation for a group to analyze and solve. • Case studies are good for large- and small-group discussions. • Case studies are different from simulations in that situations are discussed rather than acted out.
Debates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring two opposing attitudes or behaviors, often with no clear correct answer • Engaging participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The trainer should be aware that debates can become heated and competitive, and the trainer may be asked by participants to take a side.

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Method	Ideal for	Other considerations
Demonstrations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Showing and telling• Teaching skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The trainer performs the task and participants observe.• Instead of just talking about a concept, the trainer demonstrates the information in action.• Effectiveness is limited if participants are not allowed to perform the task as well.
Discussions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Imparting and sharing knowledge• Exploring opinions and attitudes on a topic• Involving participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussions have benefits similar to those of brainstorming, but fewer ideas are discussed.• Discussions are very effective when used as a reflection after any session.• Small-group discussion allows participants who are uncomfortable in a large-group setting to express themselves.• Small-group discussion prevents the trainer from dominating the conversation.
Field trips	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allowing hands-on experiences• Entering and learning about a new environment• Teaching skills• Engaging participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Field trips can be used in a wide variety of places and for different topics.• Field trips provide an opportunity to experience firsthand an actual environment or situation and enter it safely with guidance.
Games	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practicing skills while having fun• Allowing real-life application of skills• Teaching skills• Engaging participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Games provide the opportunity for participants to enjoy learning.• General games can be adapted to use questions that refer to your topic.• Be sure that the games you use do not offend participants by seeming childish (e.g., by using graphics designed for children).

Method	Ideal for	Other considerations
Lectures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conveying a lot of information in a short period • Briefly introducing a topic • Presenting basic information • Imparting knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some groups may initially be more receptive to lectures than to hands-on activities. • Lectures may not lead to learning, as participants are passive observers and do not have the opportunity to apply learning. • Lectures can be more effective when preceding or following another method. • Lectures are more interesting when combined with visuals, examples, and anecdotes, and when open-ended questions are encouraged.
Parking lot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deferring irrelevant questions or those the trainer does not have time to address immediately • Demonstrating that the trainer will follow up on unanswered questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the wall, hang a flipchart labeled “Parking Lot.” • When questions that cannot be answered arise, write them on the flipchart. • If you do not know the answer, be honest and say so; get back to the participants later with the information.
Reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debriefing sessions, whether simple or challenging • Checking for understanding (evaluation) • Ensuring all questions and concerns are covered • Engaging participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is extremely important to allow time to debrief and reflect at the end of a topic. Leave adequate time after every session for at least a brief reflection period. • Use reflection questions, such as asking participants how they now feel about the topic and how their feelings have changed over the course of the activity/discussion, to evaluate the session. The answers will help you improve the program for future sessions.
Role-plays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dramatizing a problem or situation • Identifying possible solutions • Engaging participants before a discussion • Teaching skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants assume a role and act out a situation with their group while other participants observe. • Role-plays enable participants to practice skills and experience situations. • It is extremely important to debrief and reflect after a role-play.

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Method	Ideal for	Other considerations
Simulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exploring attitudes• Learning and practicing skills• Discussing cultural adjustment and culture shock• Engaging participants• Identifying possible solutions• Considering problems based on real-life situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Simulations duplicate the real-life settings in which the skills are required.• Simulations are different from role-plays because they require participants to completely immerse themselves in a situation and explore the feelings and attitudes they experience.• Groups can be encouraged to describe and analyze challenges.
Videos	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providing visuals• Using with guided discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information can be conveyed in an interesting manner.• A useful technique is to pause the video and ask participants to discuss what they have seen, predict what might happen next, and relate the topic to real-life situations.

Activity Plan Matrix

Unit 1: The Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program	Time							Page
Topic Overview for the Trainer								25
The Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program: The Basics	20 min		✓	✓	✓			27
The Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program: Case Study	30 min		✓	✓	✓			33
Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Living Arrangements	20 min		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	39







Unit 2: Traveling and Settling In	Time							Page
Topic Overview for the Trainer								51
Travel and Settling In: The Basics	25 min	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		53
Packing	30 min	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	63
Sequences of Travel	25 min	✓	✓		✓		✓	73







Unit 3: Family Life	Time							Page
Topic Overview for the Trainer								85
A Day in a Refugee Minor's Life: The Basics	25 min	✓	✓	✓	✓			87
Family Life: Case Study	30 min		✓	✓	✓			103
Family Left Behind	30 min		✓	✓	✓			109
Diverse U.S. Families	20 min		✓	✓	✓		✓	113
Learning to Live With Your Foster Family	35 min		✓	✓	✓			119
Changing Roles	30 min		✓	✓	✓			125
Religious Roles	30 min	✓	✓	✓	✓			137
Siblings	30 min		✓	✓	✓			141







Unit 4: Education	Time							Page
Topic Overview for the Trainer								145
Education: The Basics	30 min		✓	✓	✓	✓		147
Education: Case Study	30 min	✓	✓	✓	✓			155
A Day at School	25 min	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		159
Educational and Cultural Differences	25 min	✓	✓		✓			165
Inside a Backpack	15 min	✓	✓	✓	✓			171
Group Collaboration	25 min	✓	✓	✓	✓			177
School Roles	30 min	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	183

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Unit 5: Cultural Adjustment	Time							Page
Topic Overview for the Trainer								191
Cultural Adjustment: The Basics	30 min	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		193
Cultural Adjustment: Case Study	30 min	✓	✓	✓	✓			199
Health: New Foods	45 min	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	205
Dealing With Culture Shock	30 min	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		227
Home and Community: Fitting In	25 min	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		235
Home and Community: Appliances and Electronics	25 min	✓	✓	✓	✓			241
Time and Planning	20 min	✓	✓	✓	✓			249

Unit 6: Social Interactions	Time							Page
Topic Overview for the Trainer								253
Social Interactions: The Basics	25 min	✓	✓	✓		✓		255
Social Interactions: Case Study	30 min	✓	✓	✓	✓			259
Role Models	25 min	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		265
Communicating a Positive Environment	25 min	✓	✓	✓	✓			267
Listening Skills	20 min	✓	✓	✓	✓			269
Nonverbal Communication	35 min	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	271

Unit 7: Rights and Laws	Time							Page
Topic Overview for the Trainer								279
Rights and Laws: The Basics	25 min	✓	✓	✓	✓			281
Rights and Laws: Case Study	30 min	✓	✓	✓	✓			287
Age Changes	25 min	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	293
The Law	40 min	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	297
Rules and Discipline	20 min		✓	✓	✓	✓		301
Needs and Wants	25 min	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		305

Key

Icon	Description
	Knowledge
	Skills
	Attitudes
	Expansions for <i>Story of Me</i>
	Variations for poster(s)
	Transferable to youth CO (with adaptations)

Topic Overviews Combined

Each of the seven topics addressed in this manual begins with a Topic Overview that provides the trainer with basic information on the topic and the activity plan. It is recommended that the trainer begin by reading all seven Topic Overviews to gain a full understanding of the issues facing unaccompanied minors and an idea of the activities that address those issues. To make that task easier, we provide here, in one place, all seven Topic Overviews.

Unit 1: The Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program

This section provides an overview of the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees defines *unaccompanied refugee minors* as children who do not have a parent, relative, or other responsible adult able and willing to take care of them. Upon their arrival in the United States, these children are placed in the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program, funded by the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement, and receive foster care services and benefits. Although most of these youth arrive alone in the United States, children who arrive with parents or other relatives may also become eligible for Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program services if their caregivers can no longer adequately care for them.

Most of these refugee minors are placed in foster homes. States must follow U.S. government regulations and requirements regarding programs, services, and benefits for these youth. The children must enter the program before their 18th birthday and stay in it until they turn 18. They can remain in a foster care program until the age of 20 to 23, depending on the state's child welfare guidelines. After age 18, participation in the program is voluntary.

While the unaccompanied refugee minors are in foster care, programs continue family tracing for as long as possible. Some of these refugee minors have been able to reunite with their biological families either in the United States or in their country of origin. As with U.S.-born children in foster care, family reunification is always a goal for unaccompanied refugee minors when it is feasible and in the child's best interest.

The Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program is designed to help these children develop the life skills needed for social and economic self-sufficiency. To that end, refugee foster care includes a comprehensive set of services and financial supports that promote general resettlement adjustment, educational development, and independence. Services are geared toward helping the youth blend and balance the culture of home and the culture of the new environment. Services include the following:

- Intensive case management by social workers
- Assistance with adjusting immigration status
- Educational support, including English language training, college counseling, and career counseling and training
- Health, mental health, and legal services
- Indirect financial support for housing, food, clothing, and other necessities
- Mentoring and life skills training, particularly in the areas of budgeting, housing, health and sexuality, food preparation, social and legal systems, transportation, education, and community resources
- Opportunities to participate in cultural, recreational, and religious activities
- Support for social integration

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Foster families vary greatly in their religious beliefs and practices. Some participate in religious activities regularly, some may attend worship services only for social or cultural purposes, and some may not attend services at all. Refugee youth are free to practice the religion of their choice or to not practice a religion. Foster families and social workers help those interested in practicing a religion to find a place of worship of their choice.

Every unaccompanied refugee minor has a caseworker who supports the youth in her or his adjustment to the United States. Caseworkers are required to meet frequently with their refugee clients, with the frequency depending on the situation, the state, and the child. These meetings may occur more frequently at the beginning of the caseworker–client relationship. Two lead voluntary agencies work with the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement to assist unaccompanied refugee minors: Lutheran Immigration Refugee Services and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Additional resources on refugee youth are available from Bridging Refugee Youth and Children’s Services at <http://www.brycs.org>.

Unit 2: Travel and Settling In

This section provides an overview of unaccompanied refugee minors’ travel to the United States and their early resettlement experiences. Most of the information here applies to all refugee youth, although unaccompanied refugee minors have one unique benefit: Unlike other refugees, they do not have to repay the travel loan.

This section includes activities that allow unaccompanied refugee minors to discuss and practice packing and features a simulation of the upcoming travel experience. The information provided is straightforward, and most of it is applicable to all refugees resettling in the United States.

The activities also provide unaccompanied refugee minors the opportunity to discuss the very early stages of the adjustment process and to begin to prepare for their upcoming adjustment.

The first few weeks in the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program may be a busy and confusing time. The children will be getting to know their new foster family and adjusting to their new household and routines. If they arrive during the school year, they will also be adjusting to a new school. Youth who arrive during the summer will start school in August or September when the school year begins.

Shortly after they arrive in their new communities, these children will learn about the basic rules, procedures, expectations, and responsibilities of the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program and about rights and responsibilities and emergency and safety procedures in the program. In the first few weeks, the children will have appointments with many people and at many places, including

- foster parents or social workers,
- the Social Security office (to apply for a U.S. Social Security card, which serves as identification and allows access to medical insurance and employment),
- a doctor (to update immunizations and get a health screening),
- the court (to begin the legal process of becoming a foster child), and
- school officials for testing and enrollment.

Interpreters are usually provided for refugees who do not speak English.

Unit 3: Family Life

This section provides an overview of family life in the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program.

Most unaccompanied refugee minors in the United States are placed in foster homes. Foster care is not uncommon in the United States, and there are government-run programs in place to ensure that foster children receive proper care.

In foster care, a child is placed in a home that is not her or his own. Generally, children are placed in foster homes when their own parents or other relatives are unable to take care of them adequately.

Refugee foster care programs follow the same state or county laws and regulations that govern foster care for U.S.-born children. All foster care programs, whether for refugee children or U.S.-born youth, are licensed and monitored regularly by their state child welfare authority, and foster families are required to go through a background clearance and licensing process. In both the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program and mainstream foster care programs, a legal authority of the state is designated to act in place of the child's parents. Refugee youth are eligible for all of the same services for which a U.S.-born youth is eligible.

Because of their backgrounds, unaccompanied refugee minors have needs that are different from the needs of U.S.-born foster children. For that reason, foster programs for refugee youth are separate from domestic foster care programs. The Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program has been developed by agencies with expertise in working with refugees and is funded by the Office of Refugee Resettlement at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services through the State Refugee Coordinator offices. Foster families for unaccompanied refugee minors understand the backgrounds and needs of refugee youth, and social work staff assist with special services that these youth may need. These special services include English language and vocational training, assistance with family tracing, and counseling for trauma and cultural identity and adjustment issues.

The Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program recruits families from different backgrounds. Some foster families are made up of U.S.-born citizens; others are foreign-born immigrants or refugees. Foster care placements are based on the individual needs of a refugee youth, with attention to her or his cultural, linguistic, and religious background; special health, educational, and emotional needs; and personality, temperament, and wishes. The program tries to place youth in families of the same ethnic background, but this is not always possible. All families receive orientation, and some have a great deal of experience with this group of children and are very knowledgeable about their needs.

In addition to foster care, some programs for unaccompanied refugee minors utilize group homes and supervised, semi-independent, and independent living arrangements, though these situations are not as common and are generally used only after refugee youth have adjusted to living in the United States. Group homes enable these children to live with other youth in semi-autonomous arrangements while receiving training, support, and intensive assistance in learning the life skills they will need to live independently.

Unaccompanied refugee minors in foster care are under the legal care of their foster parents. Relatives in the United States who want the refugee youth to live with them must first pass a screening. When a refugee minor turns 18, she or he can choose to go elsewhere, and at that point she or he would no longer be part of the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program.

Foster parents are never allowed to hurt children in their care. They may not punish a refugee youth for bed-wetting, delegate punishment to another child, deny food or other necessities, or make a foster

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child do strenuous exercise or work as punishment. If a foster family is mistreating the refugee minor, it is important that the child let the caseworker know immediately so the issue can be addressed.

Refugee youth should be prepared to learn family household rules (about television, bedtime, telephone use, spending time with friends), participate in daily household chores (such as cooking, cleaning, laundry, and yard work), and start learning English as quickly as possible to help ease their adjustment to life in the United States.

Unit 4: Education

This section provides an overview of the U.S. education system with respect to unaccompanied refugee minors. Most of the information applies to all refugee youth.

Education in the United States is free and required by law for all children between the ages of 6 and 16. Additionally, all schools are required to offer English as a second language (ESL) assistance to children who need this service.

Most children in foster care go to public school. Schools differ in their educational offerings and resources, but most classes at public schools are conducted in English. Although refugee minors may find that they attend school with other children from the same country or who speak the same language, most of their classmates will speak English and will probably be U.S. citizens. U.S. schools can be very diverse, with students and teachers from many different countries and cultures. This mix of races, ethnicities, cultures, and religious beliefs can be both exciting and frightening for those who are not used to it.

Some unaccompanied refugee minors entering the program have missed years of schooling because of situations in their home countries or countries of asylum. It is important that they develop the motivation to learn English and go to school, so that they can achieve a good life in the United States. Some school districts offer summer school options, which can help prepare these children for the upcoming school year.

Although school is the priority for youth in the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program, some participants may legally be able to work, depending on the state they are in and their age. The number of hours they work may be limited, depending on their age and school obligations, and the refugee youth will need permission to work from the foster parents and sometimes the school.

Youth who have participated in the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program for several years may be required to work, especially if they have already obtained their high school diploma or general equivalency diploma (GED). The amount that a refugee youth works depends on the individual's educational plans and options and on state laws. Many young people in the United States work part-time while working on higher education degrees.

Unit 5: Cultural Adjustment

This section provides an overview of the cultural adjustment issues that unaccompanied refugee minors face upon entering the United States. Most of the information applies to all refugee youth.

Cultural adjustment takes many forms, and young people often have a particularly challenging time with the adjustment process. Self-understanding is very helpful in making the transition to life in the United States. The activities in this section are designed to help participants explore who they are and how they will explain themselves to others, and to realize that they will need to find a healthy balance

between the old culture and the new. The unit includes life skills activities as well as activities related to the children's physical and emotional well-being.

Unit 6: Social Interactions

This section looks at unaccompanied refugee minors' social interactions and relationships. Most of the material applies to all refugee youth.

To succeed in the United States, refugee minors need to form positive and healthy relationships at home, at school, and at work. As they explore ways to make friends, participants consider the importance of role models and positive friendships and learn about cross-cultural communication, communication strategies, and nonverbal communication.

Unit 7: Rights and Laws

This section provides an overview of U.S. rights, freedoms, and laws as they relate to unaccompanied refugee minors. Most of the material applies to all refugee youth.

To participate in the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program, youth must follow several government regulations:

- They must attend school.
- They may not stay overnight without a foster parent present. This means that an unaccompanied refugee minor is not allowed to spend the night at a friend's home unless the friend is also in foster care.
- They are not allowed to travel out of state without a foster parent or caseworker. After the youth turns 18, out-of-state travel can be considered with the guardian's consent.
- When refugee minors leave the house, they must always tell the foster parents where they are going, and they must come home on time.

Refugee foster care includes a comprehensive set of services and financial supports that help children in their resettlement, educational development, and preparation for independence. Services seek to help these youth find a balance between the culture they bring with them and the culture they find in the United States. Services include the following:

- Intensive case management by social workers
- Assistance with adjusting immigration status
- Educational support, including English language training, college counseling, and career counseling and training
- Health, mental health, and legal services
- Indirect financial support for housing, food, clothing, and other necessities
- Mentoring and life skills training, particularly in the areas of budgeting, housing, health and sexuality, food preparation, social and legal systems, transportation, education, and community resources)
- Opportunities to participate in cultural, recreational, and religious activities
- Support for social integration

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An Orientation Curriculum for Unaccompanied Refugee Minors

Unaccompanied refugee minors are free to practice the religion of their choice or to not practice a religion at all. Foster families vary greatly in their religious beliefs and practices. Some participate in religious activities regularly, some may attend worship services only for social or cultural purposes, and some may not attend services at all. Foster families and social workers help those interested in practicing a religion to find a place of worship of their choice.

Every unaccompanied refugee minor has a caseworker who supports the youth in her or his adjustment to the United States. Caseworkers are required to meet frequently with their refugee clients, with the frequency depending on the situation, the state, and the child. These meetings may occur more frequently at the beginning of the caseworker–client relationship. Two lead voluntary agencies work with the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement to assist unaccompanied refugee minors: Lutheran Immigration Refugee Services and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Additional resources on refugee youth are available from Bridging Refugee Youth and Children’s Services at <http://www.brycs.org>.

Unit 1: The Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program

Topic Overview for the Trainer

This section provides an overview of the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees defines *unaccompanied refugee minors* as children who do not have a parent, relative, or other responsible adult able and willing to take care of them. Upon their arrival in the United States, these children are placed in the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program, funded by the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement, and receive foster care services and benefits. Although most of these youth arrive alone in the United States, children who arrive with parents or other relatives may also become eligible for Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program services if their caregivers can no longer adequately care for them.

Most of these refugee minors are placed in foster homes. States must follow U.S. government regulations and requirements regarding programs, services, and benefits for these youth. The children must enter the program before their 18th birthday and stay in it until they turn 18. They can remain in a foster care program until the age of 20 to 23, depending on the state's child welfare guidelines. After age 18, participation in the program is voluntary.

While the unaccompanied refugee minors are in foster care, programs continue family tracing for as long as possible. Some of these refugee minors have been able to reunite with their biological families either in the United States or in their country of origin. As with U.S.-born children in foster care, family reunification is always a goal for unaccompanied refugee minors when it is feasible and in the child's best interest.

The Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program is designed to help these children develop the life skills needed for social and economic self-sufficiency. To that end, refugee foster care includes a comprehensive set of services and financial supports that promote general resettlement adjustment, educational development, and independence. Services are geared toward helping the youth blend and balance the culture of home and the culture of the new environment. Services include the following:

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- Support for social integration







Foster families vary greatly in their religious beliefs and practices. Some participate in religious activities regularly, some may attend worship services only for social or cultural purposes, and some may not attend services at all. Refugee youth are free to practice the religion of their choice or to not practice a religion. Foster families and social workers help those interested in practicing a religion to find a place of worship of their choice.

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Unit 1: The Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program

Every unaccompanied refugee minor has a caseworker who supports the youth in her or his adjustment to the United States. Caseworkers are required to meet frequently with their refugee clients, with the frequency depending on the situation, the state, and the child. These meetings may occur more frequently at the beginning of the caseworker–client relationship. Two lead voluntary agencies work with the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement to assist unaccompanied refugee minors: Lutheran Immigration Refugee Services and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Additional resources on refugee youth are available from Bridging Refugee Youth and Children’s Services at <http://www.brycs.org>.

The following chart gives a brief overview of the activities in Unit 1. The first activity provides an overview of the topic and contains the most important information. It is recommended that this activity be provided in all CO trainings for unaccompanied refugee minors, with additional activities covered as time permits.

Unit 1: The Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program	Time							Page
The Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program: The Basics	20 min		✓	✓	✓			27
The Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program: Case Study	30 min		✓	✓	✓			33
Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Living Arrangements	20 min		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	39

KEY

<i>Icon</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Icon</i>	<i>Description</i>
	Knowledge		Expansions for <i>Story of Me</i>
	Skills		Variations for poster(s)
	Attitudes		Transferable to youth CO (with adaptations)

The Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program: The Basics

20 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To provide an overview of the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program
- ✓ To clarify the definition of *unaccompanied refugee minor* and explore the program
- ✓ To discuss benefits and services available to these youth



Materials

- ☐ Tape
- ☐ Five prepared flipcharts: Foster Care, Eligibility for the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program, Requirements in the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program, Benefits of the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program, and Education
- ☐ Informational Sheet Strips, cut out (see samples, p. 29)



Presentation

An unaccompanied refugee minor is a child who does not have a parent, relative, or other adult to care for her or him. Most of these youth are under 18 years of age and are resettled alone in the United States. The goal of the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program is to help these young people gain the life skills they need to become self-sufficient adults.

Activity

Hang the prepared flipcharts in the front of the room. Explain that there are many different facets to the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program and that the flipcharts refer to five of them. Read the titles to participants and ask participants what they think the titles mean.

Mix up the Informational Sheet Strips and read one aloud to participants. Ask which heading it would fall under, and have a participant tape the strip to the correct heading once it has been correctly identified. Do this with each of the Informational Sheet Strips and discuss as necessary.

When working with a smaller or younger group of participants, the trainer may find it more effective to actively participate in the discussion.

Reflection

- ? How would you summarize the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program?
- ? What are your feelings and thoughts about the program at this point?
- ? Why do you think learning English will be important for you?
- ? What do you think the best thing about the program will be?
- ? What do you think will be the most challenging thing about the program?

Expansions and Variations

- ∞ Have participants debate the pros and cons of 1) entering the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program, 2) staying in school, and 3) both going to school and working.



Additional Resources

- ✦ For more information on the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program, refer to these two Web sites: <http://www.usccb.org/mrs/URM-FAQ02-23-2006.pdf> and http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/programs/unaccompanied_refugee_minors.htm
- ✦ Regarding U.S. laws about adoption and specifically adoptions of unaccompanied refugee minors, the federal law states that these youth are “generally not eligible for adoption since family reunification is the objective of the program.” Children *may* be adoptable in cases in which state criteria are met. However, if refugee minors are adopted, they are not eligible to participate in the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program.

Learning English

budgeting	career	case manager
challenging	counseling	foster
legal	life skills	minor
refugee	relatives	resident
self-sufficient	social worker	tuition
unaccompanied		

Informational Sheet Strips (Training Material)

Foster Care
Unaccompanied refugee minors are usually placed in foster homes with one or two foster parents to care and provide for them.
Other children in the United States are also in foster homes. Usually they have been placed in these homes because there are problems in their own homes.
Eligibility for the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program
Unaccompanied refugee minors must enter the program before their 18th birthday and can choose to stay in the program up to ages 20–23, depending on the state where they live.
Requirements in the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program
Unaccompanied refugee minors must attend school.
Unaccompanied refugee minors may not stay overnight in a house where there is not a foster parent. This means a refugee cannot spend the night at a friend's home unless the friend is also in foster care.
Refugee minors are not allowed to travel out of the state without a foster parent or caseworker present. Once the child turns 18, she or he may be able to travel out of state with the guardian's consent.
Whenever they leave the house, refugee youth must tell the foster parents where they are going, and they must come home on time.
Benefits of the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program
The program helps unaccompanied refugee minors change their immigration status.
The program helps unaccompanied refugee minors find English language training and career and college counseling and training, college tuition, and special education services.
Refugee minors under 18 can go to school for free. Those over 18 may also be able to go to school for free, depending on state laws.
The program helps unaccompanied refugee minors with paperwork.
The program helps refugee minors get health, mental health, and legal services.

On Their Way

Unit 1: The Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program

The program will help unaccompanied refugee minors look for their relatives.
The program gives the refugee minors' foster parents money to pay for all their living needs, such as housing, clothing, food, and medical care.
Unaccompanied refugee minors do not have to pay back the travel loan.
Refugee youth work closely with social workers.
The program gives refugee minors life skills training in many areas, such as money budgeting, housing, food preparation, transportation, and health.
Refugee youth in the program will have a chance to participate in cultural, social, and religious activities.
The program will help refugee minors meet other young people their age.
Education
Education in the United States is free through the 12th grade. The age limitation for public high schools is different in different states. Most students are 18 when they graduate, but some states allow adults in their early 20s to continue studying in high school. A high school diploma helps you a lot in finding a job and supporting yourself. This is why education in the United States is very important.
To stay in the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program and to avoid paying bills like a regular adult, you must stay in school. Staying in school will help you learn more English and get a better job someday.
Learning English is very important to your success in the United States.
If you are a resident of a state, you pay much less tuition at public colleges and universities than someone who is not a resident. In most states, you can become a resident after you have lived in the state for 1 year. Even if you are older than most of your classmates, it is a good idea to stay in high school for at least 1 year, so that you can become a resident and pay less tuition.

On Their Way

Unit 1: The Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program

The Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program: Case Study

30 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To learn more about the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program
- ✓ To identify real-life situations and issues that unaccompanied refugee minors have encountered
- ✓ To discuss potential solutions to some problems these children may encounter



Materials

- ☐ Case study (see sample, p. 35; change names as appropriate to help participants relate to the situation), one copy per participant
- ☐ Prepared flipchart with reflection questions listed (see samples, p. 34)
- ☐ Markers
- ☐ Tape



Presentation

When they first arrive in the United States, unaccompanied refugee minors go through a number of steps to get settled in their new communities. They go through most of these steps with the help of their case manager and their foster parents.

In this activity, you will learn about the experiences of one unaccompanied refugee minor as he settled in his new community in the United States. You will learn about his experiences through a story, or case study. Many of the things he had to do you will also have to do in the future.

The case study is based on actual experiences of unaccompanied refugee minors in the United States. The names, locations, and other information have been changed, but the case study shows the real-life issues that these youth face in the United States.

Note to trainer: This case study is very dense in terms of new concepts, and therefore the trainer should spend some time setting the stage to avoid overwhelming participants.

Activity

Put participants into groups of two to four and distribute the case study. Have participants read the case study, answering the questions that have been inserted in it along the way. When they have finished, ask the small groups to answer the final reflection questions on the prepared flipchart.

Bring the large group together and ask for a spokesperson from each small group to summarize the main points of the small-group discussions. Discuss further as necessary.

When working with younger or less literate participants, the trainer can read the case study aloud to the group and then lead a large-group discussion about the reflection questions.

On Their Way

Unit 1: The Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program

Reflection

- ? What were the most important steps Reyahd took? How did Reyahd feel about taking these steps? How would you feel about taking these steps?
- ? What were some of the resources or supports available to Reyahd? How did he use them?
- ? What other resources or supports might be available? How might you make use of these?
- ? What things do you think were unfamiliar to Reyahd in this case study? What things would be unfamiliar to you?

Learning English

appointment

case study

comfortable

counselor

education

goals

immunizations

legal permanent resident

plan

refugee

relatives

resident

The Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program: Case Study (Handout)

When Reyahd, a 15-year-old unaccompanied refugee minor, arrived in the United States in October, he was greeted by his case manager, Suan, and his foster family. His foster father was Iraqi and his foster mother was Indonesian. Reyahd's foster parents had been working with Suan and the resettlement agency to complete paperwork so that Reyahd could be their foster child. The foster parents had two young biological daughters, ages 5 and 7 years. Since Reyahd was the only male child in the household, he was given his own bedroom with a bed, closet, dresser, and side table. His family was very friendly and funny, and was very excited to have Reyahd. Reyahd soon found out that both his foster parents were employed and were also taking classes toward college degrees. His two sisters attended the local public elementary school.

Reyahd understood the goals of the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program. He understood that the program would provide him the basic things he needed in the United States. It would give him a place to stay, food, and clothing. It would help him adjust to his new culture and would see that he got the life skills and education he needed so that one day he could support himself. At the same time, the program would try to find his parents or any other adult relatives.

The day after Reyahd arrived, Suan took him to the doctor's office for immunizations. She explained that he needed these to enroll in school. Reyahd's doctor told him he would have to return for more appointments in the next few weeks for a complete check-up. The purpose of the check-up was to make sure that he was in good physical and mental health. Suan and the doctor told Reyahd about the mental health services available. They explained that he might want to talk with a counselor about any concerns or feelings he had. Reyahd said he did not need to meet with a counselor that day, but in the future if he ever needed to talk to a counselor, he would let Suan know.

What has Reyahd done so far? Who has he met? What things are new for him, do you think? Which ones would be new for you? How would you feel if you were Reyahd?

Two days later, Suan and Reyahd visited the public high school he would start attending the next week. Reyahd had to take a test in English. He was feeling very nervous about this test, because he had not learned a lot of English before. Suan sat in the testing room with him, and this made him feel more comfortable. Suan explained that this test was so that his new teachers could decide which grade to place him in.

The next day, Suan and Reyahd went to family court. Suan told Reyahd that he should not worry about going to court; all unaccompanied refugee minors had to go. The visit to the court would allow the resettlement agency to act in place of Reyahd's parents and make important decisions for him about his education, medical care, and legal status. She told him that after he had been in the United States for 1 year, they would apply to change his legal status from refugee to legal permanent resident. The judge was very helpful, and with the assistance of an interpreter, he explained what was happening in the courtroom. Because Reyahd could see that the judge wanted to help him, he did not feel so nervous.

What has Reyahd done so far? Who has he met? What things are new for him, do you think? Which ones would be new for you? How would you feel if you were Reyahd?

On Their Way

Unit 1: The Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program

Later that afternoon, Suan and Reyahd went back to the resettlement agency to talk about Reyahd's goals and the reasons he chose to enter the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program. He said that he wanted to learn English, continue his education, and get a good job someday so that he could support himself. Suan told Reyahd that she would do her best to help him meet his goals. She also told him about the group sessions with other kids in the program. She told him about the independent living specialist who worked at the resettlement agency. Suan explained that this specialist talked to groups of kids about the life skills that refugee youth need to become self-sufficient adults in the United States.

The following morning, Reyahd met with the independent living specialist. She gave him a test of his life skills. The test was fun. It tested his understanding of independent living skills, like shopping and budgeting money. Reyahd was unfamiliar with some of the tasks in the test, but he was excited that he would be learning these skills in the future. That afternoon, Reyahd met with Suan, the independent living specialist, his foster parents, and a teacher from his new school. Together they developed a monthly plan for him to work on certain life skills. The specialist told Reyahd that they would meet at the end of every month to see how many of his goals for the month he had met and to plan goals for the next month.

The next Monday, Reyahd started school. On his very first day, he met students who offered to help him learn the customs of the school and tell him which people at school he needed to talk to about different issues. Reyahd was excited about his new friends. He looked forward to the time when he could understand and speak English better. Then he would feel more comfortable at school and meet more students in the school.

On Their Way

Unit 1: The Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program

Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Living Arrangements

20 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To understand the need to remain in school and with a foster family in order to remain in the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program
- ✓ To further define the types of living situations available to unaccompanied refugee minors
- ✓ To consider the pros and cons of foster families in the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program



Materials

- Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Living Situation Chart, one per participant (see sample, p. 45)
- Writing implements, one per participant
- Definitions of Living Situations for Unaccompanied Refugee Minors (see sample, p. 43)
- Sample Completed Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Living Situation Chart (see sample, p. 49)
- Optional: Living Arrangements Poster (see sample, p. 47)
- Optional: Sample U.S. Family Tree (see sample, p. 49)



Presentation

To stay in the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program, you must live with a foster family or be in another type of refugee youth living arrangement. Most unaccompanied refugee minors live with a foster family, at least during their first months in the United States. Your foster family could be an older brother or sister or another relative if that person has foster parent status in the United States. But usually the people in a foster family are not your relatives. Even though they are not relatives, they will look after you and treat you like a member of their family.

Some refugee youth live in a group home or some other kind of living arrangement. But most of these refugees have been in the United States for a while and have proven that they are ready to live on their own.

Although you may have relatives already living in the United States, you may not be able to live with them. You may not even be able to live near them, because only certain places in the United States have programs for unaccompanied refugee minors. If your relative becomes a certified foster family, then it may be possible to live with that person and stay in the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program. But you do not have to stay with a relative if you do not want to. It is up to you to decide if you want to live with a relative. If you have had bad experiences with relatives in the past, you should let your caseworker know.

If you have a brother or sister with you in the United States, that person may not be able to live in the same foster home with you. The program may decide that it is better for the two of you to live in separate homes, or the program may not be able to find a home that can take more than one foster child. But even if you and your brother or sister cannot live together, you will live in the same area, near each other.

 Activity

Distribute Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Living Situation Charts and writing implements to each participant. Read, explain, and discuss the definitions of the different types of living situations available to unaccompanied refugee minors by using the information provided. Have participants complete each column of the chart in their own words or by drawing pictures based on the definitions provided. Refer to the Sample Completed Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Living Situation Chart for assistance in leading the discussion.


Put participants into pairs or small groups, and instruct the groups to share their completed charts and brainstorm additional pros and cons of the potential living arrangements based on the definitions provided. The trainer should monitor the groups and provide assistance as necessary.

Bring the entire group together and ask each group to summarize the pros and cons that were discussed.

When working with a smaller or younger group of participants, the trainer may find it more effective to actively participate in the brainstorming part of this activity.

 Reflection

- ? What are your thoughts about foster care?
- ? How are you feeling about the different types of living situations?
- ? What do you think of the pros and cons of the different living situations?
- ? How would improving your English help you in your new living situation?
- ? Which of the living situations is your long-term goal?

 Expansions and Variations

- ∞ Use the information in Definitions of Living Situations for Unaccompanied Refugee Minors (p. 43) to create a matching game (like Memory) for participants to play. The game can be used to teach participants about the different types of living situations, or it can be used as a review of the different arrangements discussed.
- ∞ If participants are creating a *Story of Me* (see p. 5 in the introduction to this manual for more details) during CO, have participants use the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Living Situations Chart in their books. While the group is completing the chart on flipchart paper, participants can fill in their own charts.
- ∞ If there is not time during CO for participants to address living arrangements, consider putting up a poster in the room for participants to learn about the possible arrangements (see sample, p. 47). The poster, of course, would be larger than the sample provided here. If possible, translate the poster into the participants' native language(s). Provide the poster in both English and the native language to promote English language learning.
- ∞ Consider having a library corner for unaccompanied refugee minors, with visuals and translated information on foster care.

- ∞ Discuss what *biological family* means. Have participants create family trees. Show participants a U.S. family tree (see sample included; other samples can be found at <http://www.make-family-tree.com/images/FamilyTree2.png>, http://www.jdrf.ca/images/Life_with_Diabetes/LWD_07/LWD%20Family%20Tree.jpg, and http://esl-resources.com/family/family_tree3_pop.gif).
- ∞ Discuss kinship names in the United States. Highlight brothers, sisters, cousins, aunts, and uncles. Tell participants that in the United States these terms are usually used to describe a biological relationship.
- ∞ Discuss the pros and cons of living in foster care versus with biological family members.

Learning English		
adoption	environment	family
foster	living arrangement	reunite
roommate	school	sibling

On Their Way

Unit 1: The Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program

Definitions of Living Situations for Unaccompanied Refugee Minors (Training Material)

Unaccompanied refugee minors are usually placed in *foster homes*. A foster home is a home that is not your own. Many children in the United States live in foster homes. They are usually placed in foster homes because their own homes are not safe and healthy places for them. Each foster family has its pros and cons. If there is something about your foster home that you do not like, you should talk to your social worker or another adult you trust.

Group homes are houses or apartments where small groups of young people live together with a “house parent” or other Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program staff. The program sometimes places refugee youth in group homes when a foster family cannot be found for them. Usually the children stay in the group home for just a short time, until the program can find a family for them. But refugee youth who do well in group homes may be able to stay there. Children who are in group homes still have things that they have to do. For example, they still have to go to school.

There are three kinds of *semi-independent living* arrangements for unaccompanied refugee minors: 1) the youth live in foster homes but pay for some of their own costs with the money that the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program gives them, 2) the youth live with a roommate (usually another refugee) in an apartment or a house and sometimes in a dormitory room, and 3) the youth live in an apartment with roommates in a building that has adults who can help them.

On Their Way

Unit 1: The Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program

Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Living Situation Chart (Handout)

	<i>Description</i>	<i>Pros</i>	<i>Cons</i>
Foster home			
Group home			
Semi-independent living			

On Their Way

Unit 1: The Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program

Living Arrangements Poster (Training Material)

<i>Type of living arrangement</i>	<i>Description of living arrangement</i>
Foster home	Unaccompanied refugee minors are usually placed in <i>foster homes</i> . A foster home is a home that is not your own. Many children in the United States live in foster homes. They are usually placed in foster homes because their own homes are not safe and healthy places for them. Each foster family has its pros and cons. If there is something about your foster home that you do not like, you should talk to your social worker or another adult you trust.
Group home	<i>Group homes</i> are houses or apartments where small groups of young people live together with a “house parent” or other Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program staff. The program sometimes places refugee youth in group homes when a foster family cannot be found for them. Usually the children stay in a group home for just a short time, until the program can find a family for them. But refugee youth who do well in group homes may be able to stay there. Children who are in group homes still have things that they have to do. For example, they still have to go to school.
Semi-independent living	There are three kinds of <i>semi-independent living</i> arrangements for unaccompanied refugee minors: 1) the youth live in foster homes but pay for some of their own costs with the money that the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program gives them, 2) the youth live with a roommate (usually another refugee) in an apartment or a house and sometimes in a dormitory room, and 3) the youth live in an apartment with roommates in a building that has adults who can help them.

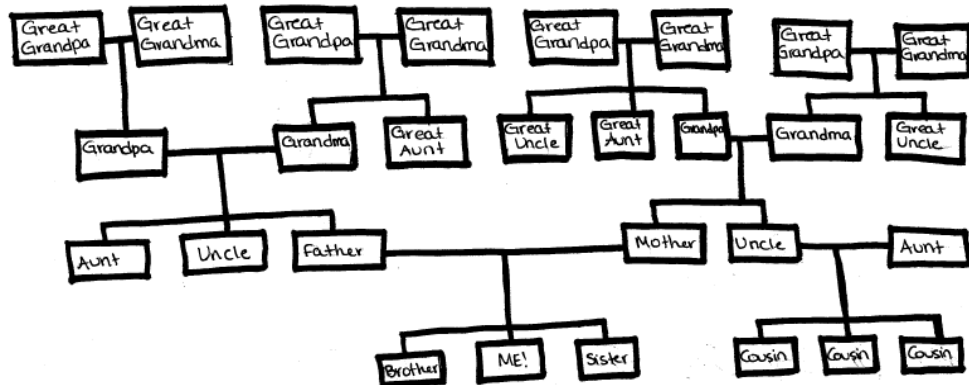
On Their Way

Unit 1: The Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program

Sample Completed Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Living Situation Chart (Training Material)

Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Living Situation Chart (Handout)			
	Description	Pros	Cons
Foster home	living with a family which is not your own	a family to care for you and help you, assistance with community integration, support at home	loss of independence, need to fit into a family, may share a bedroom, household chores
Group home	Small groups of youth living together in a house with a "house parent"	some independence, peer support networks at home, not isolated, opportunity to make friends	not as much support, often temporary, a lot of activity at home, may feel a little more isolated
Semi-independent living	1) with a foster family 2) with a roommate 3) apartment with a roommate	more independence, often living with less people so less opportunity for conflict at home	even less support at home, harder to integrate into the community, more self-care is needed

Sample U.S. Family Tree (Training Material)



On Their Way

Unit 1: The Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program

Unit 2: Travel and Settling In

Topic Overview for the Trainer

This section provides an overview of unaccompanied refugee minors' travel to the United States and their early resettlement experiences. Most of the information here applies to all refugee youth, although unaccompanied refugee minors have one unique benefit: Unlike other refugees, they do not have to repay the travel loan.

This section includes activities that allow unaccompanied refugee minors to discuss and practice packing and features a simulation of the upcoming travel experience. The information provided is straightforward, and most of it is applicable to all refugees resettling in the United States.

The activities also provide unaccompanied refugee minors the opportunity to discuss the very early stages of the adjustment process and to begin to prepare for their upcoming adjustment.

The first few weeks in the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program may be a busy and confusing time. The children will be getting to know their new foster family and adjusting to their new household and routines. If they arrive during the school year, they will also be adjusting to a new school. Youth who arrive during the summer will start school in August or September when the school year begins.

Shortly after they arrive in their new communities, these children will learn about the basic rules, procedures, expectations, and responsibilities of the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program and about rights and responsibilities and emergency and safety procedures in the program. In the first few weeks, the children will have appointments with many people and at many places, including







- foster parents or social workers,
- the Social Security office (to apply for a U.S. Social Security card, which serves as identification and allows access to medical insurance and employment),
- a doctor (to update immunizations and get a health screening),
- the court (to begin the legal process of becoming a foster child), and
- school officials for testing and enrollment.

Interpreters are usually provided for refugees who do not speak English.







The following chart gives a brief overview of Unit 2 activities. The first activity provides an overview of the topic and contains the most important information. It is recommended that this activity be provided in all CO trainings for unaccompanied refugee minors, with additional activities covered as time permits.

On Their Way

Unit 2: Travel and Settling In

Unit 2: Traveling and Settling In	Time							Page
Travel and Settling In: The Basics	25 min	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		53
Packing	30 min	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	63
Sequences of Travel	25 min	✓	✓		✓		✓	73

KEY

<i>Icon</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Icon</i>	<i>Description</i>
	Knowledge		Expansions for <i>Story of Me</i>
	Skills		Variations for poster(s)
	Attitudes		Transferable to youth CO (with adaptations)

Travel and Settling In: The Basics

25 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To provide an overview of traveling to the United States
- ✓ To understand the early steps unaccompanied refugee minors will go through during resettlement



Materials

- ☐ Travel Worksheet, one per participant (see sample, p. 59)
- ☐ Travel Reminders, one per participant (see sample, p. 55)
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Glue
- ☐ Sample Completed Travel Worksheet (see sample, p. 61)



Presentation

There are several steps you must take before you leave for the United States. There are also important things you will have to do after you arrive in the United States. You may have already started taking some of these steps. Not everyone does them in the same order.



Activity

Distribute Travel Worksheets, Travel Reminders Handouts, scissors, and glue to participants.

Have participants cut out the picture squares. Tell participants that these pictures show experiences that they will have before, during, and after their travel to the United States. Show the participants the Travel Worksheet and explain that the world represents “Before Travel,” the airplane picture represents “During Travel,” and the U.S. map represents “After Travel.”

Discuss the meaning of each picture and the experience that it shows. Encourage participants to read the descriptions aloud. Instruct participants to glue the pictures onto their Travel Worksheet in the appropriate places. Follow the same steps with the “During Travel” and the “After Travel” pictures. Refer to the Sample Completed Travel Worksheet for assistance.

Reflection

- ? How are you feeling about traveling?
- ? Will you use English during your travel?
- ? What happens after you reach your final destination?
- ? What do you think will be most confusing or frustrating?
- ? What will you do to relax if you are feeling stressed while traveling?

Expansions and Variations

- ∞ Have participants do a simulation of airplane travel (getting on, fastening seat belts, and so on).
- ∞ If participants are creating a *Story of Me* (see p. 5 in the introduction to this manual for more details) during CO, have participants use the Travel Worksheet in their books. Encourage participants to glue the travel reminders into their books.

Learning English

beverage

court

customs

destination

flight

food

relax

steps

stress

Travel Reminders (Handout)






Before Travel

 <p>Medical screening</p>	 <p>Passport and official paperwork</p>	 <p>Packing</p>	 <p>Saying goodbye</p>
 <p>Attending CO classes <i>Photo courtesy of OPE IRC Southeast Asia</i></p>	 <p>Going to the airport</p>		

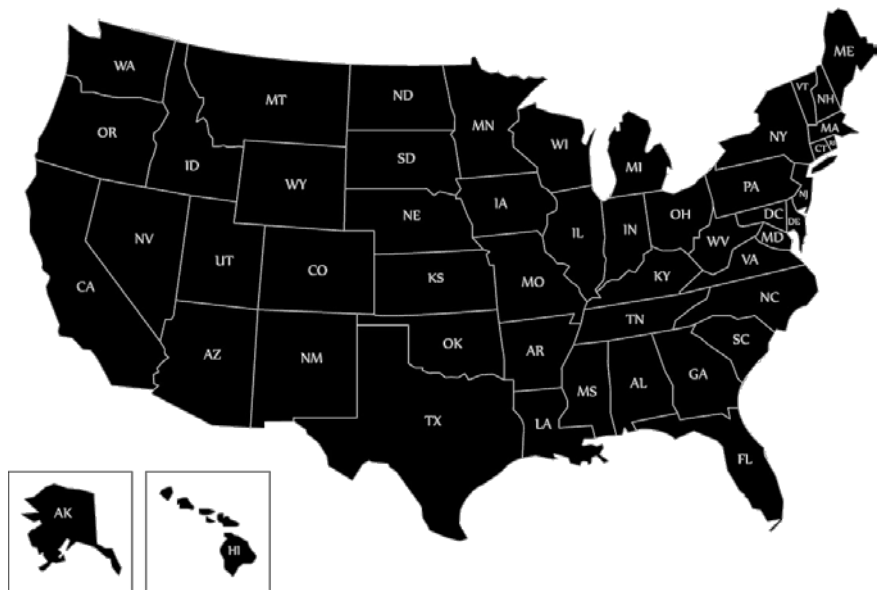
During Travel

 <p>Getting on the airplane</p>	 <p>Flight attendants can help you on the plane</p>	 <p>Airports may be very crowded</p>	 <p>Transfer flights and layovers are a possibility</p>
 <p>Food and beverages on airplanes are usually free</p>	 <p>Carry your IOM bag at all times</p>	 <p>Going through customs and showing documentation</p>	

After Travel

 <p>Medical screening (again)</p>	 <p>Being picked up by the resettlement agency or your foster family</p>	 <p>Moving into your new home <i>Photo courtesy of OPE IRC Southeast Asia</i></p>	 <p>Education and English language assessment, starting school</p>
 <p>Visiting family court</p>			

Travel Worksheet (Handout)



Sample Completed Travel Worksheet (Training Material)



Packing

30 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To begin thinking about packing
- ✓ To determine appropriate and legal items to pack
- ✓ To understand which items should go in carry-on bags and which should go in checked bags



Materials

- ☐ Three signs: Cannot Take, Pack in Your Checked Bags, and Pack in Your Carry-On
- ☐ Tape
- ☐ Packing Items pictures, cut out (see samples, p. 67)



Presentation



Before you leave for the United States, you need to pack your belongings and decide what you will take and what you will leave behind. The airlines will let you have up to two checked bags and one carry-on bag. Checked bags are bags that the airlines put in the baggage compartment of the airplane. A carry-on bag is a small bag that you carry with you on the airplane.



At the airport, you will give your checked bags to the airlines. You will not see the bags again until after you arrive in the United States.



The airlines have rules about the weight and size of checked bags. A checked bag cannot weigh more than 50 pounds (or 23 kilograms). It cannot be too big. Different airlines have different rules about the size.

There are some things that you cannot take on an airplane, either in your checked bag or in your carry-on bag, and there are some things you should take in your carry-on bag. For example, you cannot put matches in your checked bags or your carry-on bag. A knife, a pair of scissors, a stick, or anything sharp must go in a checked bag. You can carry liquids such as shampoo or lotions in your carry-on bag but only in very small amounts (up to 3 ounces or 100 milliliters), and the containers must be placed in a plastic bag. You must put anything bigger in your checked bag. You cannot put very large items, such as a bicycle, on an airplane without extra permissions and costs, and you cannot carry anything to drink with you onto the airplane.

It is against U.S. law for you to smoke cigarettes if you are under 17 and to drink alcohol if you are under 21. So young travelers should not put these items in their carry-on or checked bags.

It is important to pack your travel documents, medication, and IOM bag in your carry-on bag to make sure that they are not lost.

Activity

Hang the three signs on different walls of the room. Distribute the Packing Items pictures and pieces of tape to participants. Participants decide which sign their items fit under and tape them under the appropriate sign.

When all items have been taped under a sign, go through the three categories and ensure that participants understand what they are not able to take without prior permission and additional

costs (a bicycle, alcohol, live animals, matches, any amount of money greater than US\$10,000, fresh fruits and vegetables, etc.), and what they should pack in their checked luggage and carry-on (checked luggage: anything sharp, liquids in bottles larger than 3 ounces, lighters, etc.; carry-on bag: important documents, small bottles of liquids in a clear plastic bag, medication, money, etc.).

Reflection

- ? Which items can you *not* bring with you to the United States?
- ? Which items do you want to make sure you remember to pack?
- ? How many bags can you take?
- ? What will you make sure to pack in your carry-on?
- ? What will you make sure you do *not* pack in your carry-on?
- ? How are you feeling about packing for your trip to the United States?

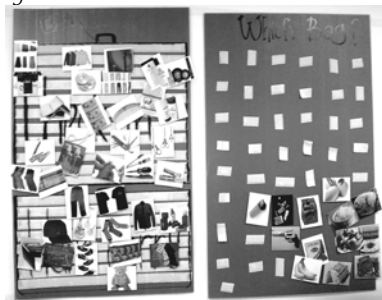
Expansions and Variations

- ∞ Have participants practice packing with actual bags and items. Alternative: Distribute three pieces of paper, scissors, and a set of pictures of packing items to each participant. Participants fold the three pieces of paper in half and label their “bags” as “Carry-On,” “Checked Bag #1,” and “Checked Bag #2.” Participants then put cut-out items in the appropriate “bags.” Discuss.
- ∞ In a variation of the packing activity, staff at the International Rescue Committee administered Overseas Processing Entity in Southeast Asia use mounting boards, Velcro, and cut-out items (see sample pictures that follow.) Participants transfer pictures of packing items from the mounting board to the appropriate bag, labeled as “Checked Bag” and “Carry-On Bag.” Pictures of items that cannot be taken into the United States remain on the original mounting board.

Before



After



- ∞ With fewer participants, use fewer items, choosing those most relevant to the background of participants.
- ∞ If there is not time to address packing during CO, consider putting an informational poster up in the room, listing items that can and cannot, and should and should not, be packed. Include pictures of the packing items (see samples included) on the poster.
- ∞ If participants are creating a *Story of Me* (see p. 5 in the introduction to this manual for more details) during CO, utilize the Packing section of the workbook. Participants glue the Packing Items pictures correctly under the labels “Cannot take,” “Pack in your checked bags,” and “Pack in your carry-on.”



Additional Resources

- ✦ Consider providing what the International Rescue Committee administered Overseas Processing Entity in Southeast Asia distributes to its participants: a CO handbook (or *Welcome to the United States: A Guidebook for Refugees*; <http://www.cal.org/co/publications/welcome.html>) to help them decide which items are appropriately packed.

Learning English

belonging

illegal

pack

carry-on bag

liquid

travel document

checked bag

medication

Packing Items (Training Material)

 <p>Alcohol</p>	 <p>Betel nut</p>	 <p>Bicycle</p>	 <p>Books</p>
 <p>Canned food</p>	 <p>Cheese</p>	 <p>Cigarettes</p>	 <p>Clothing</p>
 <p>Coffee beans</p>	 <p>Coffee pot</p>	 <p>Cooking utensils</p>	 <p>Documents</p>
 <p>Dried fruits and vegetables</p>	 <p>Fruit</p>	 <p>Gels</p>	 <p>Hair dryer</p>

 <p>Jewelry</p>	 <p>Juice</p>	 <p>Lighters</p>	 <p>Liquids</p>
 <p>Live animals</p>	 <p>Long-sleeve shirt</p>	 <p>Lotion</p>	 <p>Magazines</p>
 <p>Makeup</p>	 <p>Matches</p>	 <p>Memories and photographs</p>	 <p>Plants</p>
 <p>Prepared foods</p>	 <p>Prescription medicines</p>	 <p>Radio</p>	 <p>Rice</p>

 <p>Shampoo</p>	 <p>Sharp objects</p>	 <p>Spices</p>	 <p>Toiletries</p>
 <p>Toothbrush</p>	 <p>Toothpaste</p>	 <p>Unidentified pills</p>	 <p>US\$100</p>
 <p>Up to US\$10,000</p>	 <p>US\$20,000</p>	 <p>Vegetables</p>	 <p>Watch</p>
 <p>Water</p>	 <p>Weaving equipment</p>	 <p>Winter jacket</p>	

Sequences of Travel

25 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To identify the steps unaccompanied refugee minors will go through when traveling to and settling in the United States
- ✓ To consider which of the steps will be easier and which will be more challenging
- ✓ To begin thinking about the sequences of travel to the United States and the many steps it will take to get there



Materials

- ☐ Travel Sequence Cards, cut out (see samples, p. 75)
- ☐ Tape
- ☐ Optional: Common Airport Signs (see samples, p. 81)
- ☐ Optional: Common Safety Signs, cut out (see samples, p. 83)



Presentation

Your trip to the United States starts now (or may have already started) with preparations and processing, and ends when you are feeling settled and comfortable with your foster family in the United States. There are many steps that you will take to get settled in the United States. The process will take some time.



Activity

Distribute Travel Sequence Cards and pieces of tape to participants, giving each participant the same number of cards. Have participants tape the cards in the correct sequence onto a wall in the room. On the basis of the sequence taped to the wall, discuss the different steps participants will go through in their upcoming resettlement process.

With a smaller or younger group of participants, discuss the Travel Sequence Cards and their order together with them.

Reflection

- ? Which steps in the sequence make you feel the most uncomfortable?
- ? Which steps in the sequence do you think will be the easiest?
- ? What English words and phrases do you feel you need to know to make your travel easier?
- ? How are you feeling about the steps you are about to take?

Expansions and Variations

- ∞ Discuss common airport signs, both nonverbal and verbal (see samples, p. 81). Consider creating a poster with the signs and their meanings and (for nonverbal signs) English translations to hang in the room during CO.
- ∞ Play a game of Memory with important safety signs (see samples, p. 83). Include English translations, especially when working with less literate participants, to increase English knowledge skills. Consider putting safety signs onto a poster as suggested above.

On Their Way

Unit 2: Travel and Settling In

- ∞ If there is not time to address the sequences of travel during CO, consider putting up a poster (with the Travel Sequence Cards serving as visuals) for participants to learn the details.

Learning English

ask questions

class

comfortable

events

family

feeling settled

friends

goodbye

home

Travel Sequence Cards (Training Material)

Go through medical screening



Attend cultural orientation classes



Photo courtesy of OPE IRC Southeast Asia

Ask questions



Pack your luggage and carry-on bags



Say goodbye to friends and family



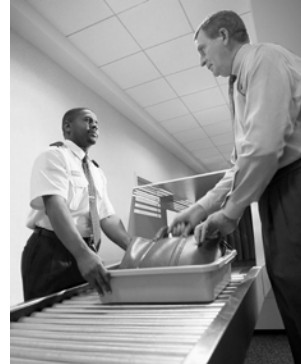
Go to the airport



Get your airplane ticket and check your bags



Go through airport security



Board the plane



Transfer to another plane at another airport



Land at your final destination



Get your luggage



Show the officers in the United States the documents in your IOM bag and go through immigration



Meet your foster family or caseworker at the airport



Move into your new foster home



Photo courtesy of OPE IRC Southeast Asia

Go through a medical screening (again)



Go to family court



Start school



Common Airport Signs (Training Material)

Common Safety Signs (Training Material)



Unit 3: Family Life

Topic Overview for the Trainer

This section provides an overview of family life in the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program.

Most unaccompanied refugee minors in the United States are placed in foster homes. Foster care is not uncommon in the United States, and there are government-run programs in place to ensure that foster children receive proper care.

In foster care, a child is placed in a home that is not her or his own. Generally, children are placed in foster homes when their own parents or other relatives are unable to take care of them adequately.

Refugee foster care programs follow the same state or county laws and regulations that govern foster care for U.S.-born children. All foster care programs, whether for refugee children or U.S.-born youth, are licensed and monitored regularly by their state child welfare authority, and foster families are required to go through a background clearance and licensing process. In both the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program and mainstream foster care programs, a legal authority of the state is designated to act in place of the child's parents. Refugee youth are eligible for all of the same services for which a U.S.-born youth is eligible.

Because of their backgrounds, unaccompanied refugee minors have needs that are different from the needs of U.S.-born foster children. For that reason, foster programs for refugee youth are separate from domestic foster care programs. The Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program has been developed by agencies with expertise in working with refugees and is funded by the Office of Refugee Resettlement at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services through the State Refugee Coordinator offices. Foster families for unaccompanied refugee minors understand the backgrounds and needs of refugee youth, and social work staff assist with special services that these youth may need. These special services include English language and vocational training, assistance with family tracing, and counseling for trauma and cultural identity and adjustment issues.

The Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program recruits families from different backgrounds. Some foster families are made up of U.S.-born citizens; others are foreign-born immigrants or refugees. Foster care placements are based on the individual needs of a refugee youth, with attention to her or his cultural, linguistic, and religious background; special health, educational, and emotional needs; and personality, temperament, and wishes. The program tries to place youth in families of the same ethnic background, but this is not always possible. All families receive orientation, and some have a great deal of experience with this group of children and are very knowledgeable about their needs.

In addition to foster care, some programs for unaccompanied refugee minors utilize group homes and supervised, semi-independent, and independent living arrangements, though these situations are not as common and are generally used only after refugee youth have adjusted to living in the United States. Group homes enable these children to live with other youth in semi-autonomous arrangements while receiving training, support, and intensive assistance in learning the life skills they will need to live independently.

Unaccompanied refugee minors in foster care are under the legal care of their foster parents. Relatives in the United States who want the refugee youth to live with them must first pass a screening. When a refugee minor turns 18, she or he can choose to go elsewhere, and at that point she or he would no longer be part of the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program.







On Their Way

Unit 3: Family Life







Foster parents are never allowed to hurt children in their care. They may not punish a refugee youth for bed-wetting, delegate punishment to another child, deny food or other necessities, or make a foster child do strenuous exercise or work as punishment. If a foster family is mistreating the refugee minor, it is important that the child let the caseworker know immediately so the issue can be addressed.

Refugee youth should be prepared to learn family household rules (about television, bedtime, telephone use, spending time with friends), participate in daily household chores (such as cooking, cleaning, laundry, and yard work), and start learning English as quickly as possible to help ease their adjustment to life in the United States.

The following chart gives a brief overview of the activities in Unit 3. The first activity provides an overview of the topic and contains the most important information. It is recommended that this activity be provided in all CO trainings for unaccompanied refugee minors, with additional activities covered as time permits.

Unit 3: Family Life	Time							Page
A Day in a Refugee Minor's Life: The Basics	25 min	✓	✓	✓	✓			87
Family Life: Case Study	30 min		✓	✓	✓			103
Family Left Behind	30 min		✓	✓	✓			109
Diverse U.S. Families	20 min		✓	✓	✓		✓	113
Learning to Live With Your Foster Family	35 min		✓	✓	✓			119
Changing Roles	30 min		✓	✓	✓			125
Religious Roles	30 min	✓	✓	✓	✓			137
Siblings	30 min		✓	✓	✓			141

KEY

<i>Icon</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Icon</i>	<i>Description</i>
	Knowledge		Expansions for <i>Story of Me</i>
	Skills		Variations for poster(s)
	Attitudes		Transferable to youth CO (with adaptations)

A Day in a Refugee Minor's Life: The Basics

25 minutes

The general idea for this activity plan came from plans for "A Busy Day" from the Church World Service administered Overseas Processing Entity in Accra, Ghana

(http://www.cal.org/co/overseas/toolkit/adjustment/CWS_Accra-Busy_Day.doc).



Objectives

- ✓ To understand the concept of a foster family
- ✓ To provide an overview of family life in the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program
- ✓ To understand what a typical day may look like in the United States
- ✓ To begin exploring family life in the United States



Materials

- Flipchart paper
- Markers
- Tape
- A large 24-hour clock (see sample, p. 99)
- Activity Cards, cut out (see samples, p. 91)
- Case study (see sample, p. 89)
- Sample Clock With Activity Cards Attached (see sample, p. 101)



Presentation

You may not have a daily routine now. But when you move to the United States and start school, you will probably find yourself in a regular routine, at least on school days.

Activity

Ask participants to brainstorm what they do now during the day, and record their answers (wake up, eat breakfast, go to school, etc.) on flipchart paper.

Hang the 24-Hour Clock on the wall. Explain to participants that although a 24-hour clock is being used for this activity, such clocks are uncommon in the United States.

Distribute Activity Cards and tape to participants. Read the case study to participants in segments. Participants tape the Activity Cards to the appropriate time on the clock (see sample picture included).

When working with a smaller or younger group of participants, the trainer may find it more effective to work with the participants to adhere Activity Cards to the 24-Hour Clock.

Reflection

- ? What differences do you see between your life now and your future life in the United States?
- ? Why do you think Rina's attendance at English as a second language (ESL) class is very important?
- ? What parts of this schedule are flexible, and what parts are not as flexible?
- ? What do you feel is missing from this schedule?
- ? How do you feel about this schedule?

❖ **Expansions and Variations**

- ∞ Have participants explore who does what chores in a U.S. family. Who does the shopping, cooking, cleaning, laundry, and yard work?
- ∞ Encourage participants to imagine what they will be doing on weekends in the United States (e.g., running errands, shopping, participating in a youth group, doing homework, and doing chores around the house).
- ∞ Have participants create a 24-hour clock for their current daily routines.

Learning English

cafeteria

clock

daily routine

diverse

future

homework

schedule

school

teacher

A Day in a Refugee Minor's Life: Case Study (Training Material)

Rina is a 16-year-old unaccompanied refugee. She has been living in the United States for about 1 year. She has settled into a regular routine during the week, and she knows what to expect and how much free time she will have on most weekends.

At 6:00 a.m. Rina wakes up, brushes her teeth, showers, gets dressed, and eats breakfast.

By 7:00 a.m. she is on her way to school! Rina rides the big yellow school bus to school, but some of her friends walk and others ride in a car driven by their parents. Some children take public transportation to school. At 7:30 a.m. Rina arrives at homeroom. This is her first year in high school, and in homeroom her teachers take attendance and tell the students about important things happening at the school.

At 8:00 a.m. Rina goes to class. Sometimes her first class is history or social studies. She also takes English as a second language (ESL) in the mornings. In that class, she is with other students whose first language is not English. After her ESL class, she goes to science class.

Rina has lunch in the school cafeteria at 11:00 a.m. The time when lunch is eaten (lunchtime) depends on a student's schedule, so students eat lunch at different times. Some students eat lunch at 11:00 a.m., some at 12:00 p.m., and others at 1:00 p.m. In the cafeteria, Rina goes through the line and quickly decides what she wants to eat. She brings her food to the cashier, pays for it, and finds somewhere to sit. When Rina first arrived at her new school, lunchtime was challenging for her because the foods were unfamiliar and she did not know where to sit in the cafeteria. After some time, she made friends, and now she sits with them during lunch.

Rina's afternoon classes are music or health, mathematics, and physical education or art. She enjoys the different kinds of classes and learning about new things at her new school. Sometimes she does not feel that she is very good at some of the subjects, but her teachers and classmates have encouraged her to try everything. There are some new subjects that she has really enjoyed!

School ends at 3:00 p.m., and Rina participates in after-school activities. She really enjoys chess club, which meets twice a week. She goes for extra tutoring sessions once a week and plays in a recreational basketball league when she has enough time. By 4:00 p.m. Rina is on her way home for a snack, to do some homework, and to hang out with her friends.

In the evening, Rina eats dinner with her foster family. After dinner, she finishes her homework and does her household chores. Each member of Rina's family has chores to do to keep the house clean and working well.

At 10:00 p.m., Rina goes to bed. She likes to make sure she has enough rest for the next day!

Activity Cards (Training Material)

Wake Up

Shower, eat breakfast, brush teeth, get dressed

Travel to School

Take school bus, walk, drive, take public transportation, go to homeroom

School

Classes: social studies, history

School

Classes: English as a second language (ESL)

School

Classes: science

School

Lunch in school cafeteria

School

Classes: music, health

School

Classes: mathematics

<p style="text-align: center;">School Classes: physical education, art</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">After School Activities, sports, clubs, organizations, tutoring</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">After School Activities, sports, clubs, organizations, tutoring</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">After School Travel home, snack, homework, see friends</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">After School Homework, see friends</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Evening Eat dinner</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Evening Homework, family time, household chores</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Evening Homework, family time, household chores</p>

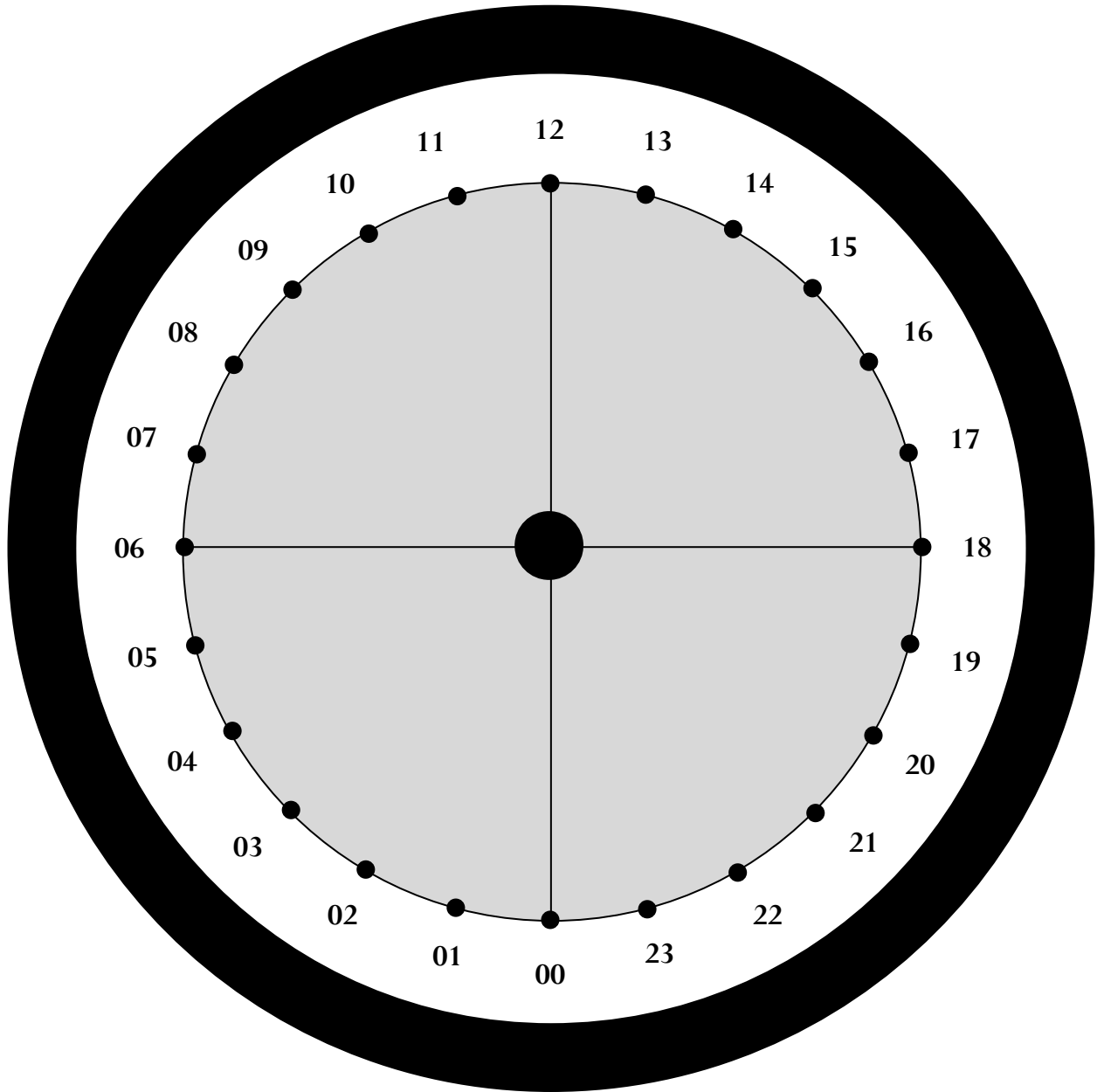
Evening Homework, family time, household chores
Evening Homework, family time, household chores
Bedtime
Sleep
Sleep
Sleep
Sleep
Sleep

Sleep

Sleep

Sleep

24-Hour Clock (Training Material)



Family Life: Case Study

30 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To learn more about family life in the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program
- ✓ To identify real-life situations and issues that unaccompanied refugee minors have encountered while living with a foster family
- ✓ To discuss possible solutions to problems they may encounter while living with a foster family



Materials

- Case study (see sample, p. 105; change names as appropriate to help participants relate to the situation), one copy per participant
- Prepared flipchart with reflection questions listed (see samples, p. 104)
- Markers
- Tape



Presentation

In the United States, most unaccompanied refugee minors are placed in foster homes. A foster home is a home that is not your own. In the United States, children are placed in foster homes when their own parents or other relatives are unable to take care of them.

Foster families are there to help you and care for you. Foster parents might not be your legal guardians. Usually the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program or the state or county is your legal guardian. But your foster parents are the ones who will take care of you, provide for your needs, take you to the doctor, and take you to school and other recreational activities. Your foster parents are also there to help you make good decisions, and they may give you rules to help guide you.

Refugee youth in the United States may face different issues and have different concerns about social interactions and friendship than their peers. This activity will help you identify some of these issues and concerns. Through a case study, you will learn about the challenges a refugee child faced in his foster family. Together we will work through some possible solutions.

Thinking about similar challenges you may face may help you make good decisions and avoid some of the problems in the case study.

This case study is based on the actual experiences of unaccompanied refugee minors. The names and other information have been changed, but the case study shows real-life issues that these youth face in the United States.

Activity

Put participants into groups of two to four and distribute the case study. Have participants read the case study, answering the questions that have been inserted in it along the way. When they have finished, ask the small groups to answer the final reflection questions on the prepared flipchart.

Bring the large group together and ask for a spokesperson from each small group to summarize the main points of the small-group discussion. Discuss further as necessary.

When working with younger or less literate participants, the trainer can read the case study aloud to the group and then lead a large-group discussion about the reflection questions.

 **Reflection**

- ? What are the main issues presented in this case study? How did Zahtin handle these issues? How would you handle these issues?
- ? What could Zahtin have done to avoid some of these issues ahead of time?
- ? What are some of the resources or supports Zahtin used? How did he use them? What other resources or supports might be available?

Learning English

adult

child

foster family

balance

chores

independent

biological children

connected

meeting

Family Life: Case Study (Handout)

Zahtin is a 15-year-old unaccompanied refugee who arrived in the United States and moved in with his foster family. He was very excited to have a family again because he thought it would be like living with the family he lived with many years ago. After meeting his foster family, he realized that his new foster parents were also very excited to have a child in the house again. They had three adult children who no longer lived near home and were happy to have Zahtin in their family.

Over the next 6 months, Zahtin made many friends at school by playing on his high school's soccer team. His English improved a lot, he liked his teachers and they liked him, and he was feeling more confident about living in the United States. He was very busy with school, soccer practice, studying, learning English, and spending time with his new friends. Zahtin usually arrived at home in the evenings very tired. He would fix a plate of food for himself and go to his room to eat, study, and sleep. His teachers and friends felt that he was doing very well.

But things at home did not seem so good. He did not feel like he had connected very well with his foster parents. Zahtin did not see them very often. On the weekends, he usually practiced soccer, saw his friends, or studied in his room. He would often ask one of his foster parents to drive him somewhere, but they usually did not say much to each other in the car. Sometimes he went shopping with his foster parents. He felt they were very generous. They bought him clothing, shoes, and special foods to remind him of home. But Zahtin was feeling very isolated at his new home and missed his family in the Congo.

What is happening at Zahtin's home? Could Zahtin's relationship with his foster parents be improved? If you were Zahtin, what would you do?

One afternoon Zahtin's case manager, Suzette, picked him up after school and told him they were going to a meeting with his foster parents. They had asked Suzette to schedule a meeting because they were feeling tension at home. At the meeting, Suzette asked Zahtin to tell them all about what was happening at home. Zahtin felt uncomfortable and said that everything was fine. He said that he appreciated everything his foster family had done for him. Zahtin's foster parents said that they were glad that Zahtin was part of their family, but they also said they had some concerns. They told him that they wished he would do more household chores and also spend more time with them. They said that they understood that Zahtin was very busy. They were also busy, but in the past they had always been able to make time for their family. They talked about how, with their biological children, the family always ate dinner together and spent time in the living room in the evenings reading, studying, playing games, or watching television together.

Although he did not say anything right away, Zahtin did not understand why he was expected to do chores around the house as if he were a servant. He also felt strange about the idea of playing games or doing other things with his foster family, instead of studying or working on becoming independent.

How does Zahtin feel? If you were Zahtin, how would you feel? What would you do?

Zahtin decided to be honest about his feelings regarding chores. Suzette explained that chores were expected of most children in the United States and that it was a part of being a family member in the United States. Since he wanted to be a part of a family, Zahtin agreed to do some household chores to help his foster parents.

Later, Zahtin spoke with Suzette alone about his mixed feelings about spending time with his foster parents. Suzette and Zahtin talked about how teenagers in the United States have to balance being part of a family while preparing for the independence of adulthood. She suggested that Zahtin try studying in the living room with his foster parents nearby, so that they would all feel more like a family.

What happened with Zahtin and his family? What were the frustrations about? If you were Zahtin, what other changes would you want to make? What changes would you want your foster parents to make?

Family Left Behind

30 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To consider thoughts and feelings about leaving one's biological family behind
- ✓ To explore feelings for the biological family versus the foster family and thoughts on how to balance the two
- ✓ To better understand the challenges of saving money to send to biological family members while in the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program



Materials

- ☐ Discussion Cards, cut out (see samples, p. 111; listed in order of importance)



Presentation

As you enter the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program in the United States, you may miss the family and friends you left behind. You may also feel torn between your feelings for your old family and friends, and those for your new family and friends in the United States. Over time, you may feel a need to find a balance between these feelings. Finding this balance can be a challenge not only during your first few days or weeks in the United States but for several months.

Activity

Divide participants into groups of two to three and distribute Discussion Cards. Give participants 7–8 minutes to discuss, and then bring the entire group back together. Ask a spokesperson from each group to summarize the main points of the small-group discussion. Discuss further as necessary.

When working with a smaller or younger group of participants, choose two to three of the more relevant discussion topics to expand upon in a large group discussion with participants.

Reflection

- ? How are you feeling about your foster parents?
- ? How are you feeling about the family you are leaving behind?
- ? What does it mean to have “torn feelings”?
- ? How will your understanding and use of English help you to adjust to your new foster family life?
- ? What do you need to spend more time thinking about?

Learning English

birth or biological family
money

family member
torn

foster parent

Discussion Cards (Training Material)

Topic 1	How would you feel if your foster parents bought you a lot of things?
Topic 2	It may be difficult to save money to send to your family in your home country or country of asylum while you are in school. How do you feel about that?
Topic 3	How are you feeling about leaving your family behind?
Topic 4	How do you feel about the role of your foster family versus your biological family?
Topic 5	After some time, your feelings toward your foster family and your biological family may change. For example, you might start to feel closer to your foster family. How do you feel about that?
Topic 6	How would you feel about getting an education in the United States and then bringing what you learn back to your home country?
Topic 7	Why is it that your foster family, resettlement agency, or caseworker cannot send money to your family in your home country or country of asylum?

Diverse U.S. Families

20 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To better understand the concept of a foster family
- ✓ To prepare for the diversity of U.S. foster families
- ✓ To explore thoughts and feelings about diverse families



Materials

- ☐ Diverse U.S. Families Collage (see sample, p. 115; additional copies may be useful)
- ☐ Flipchart paper
- ☐ Markers
- ☐ Tape
- ☐ Optional: Pets in the United States, cut out (see samples, p. 117)



Presentation

Most unaccompanied refugee minors in the United States are placed in foster care. U.S. foster families may be different from the kinds of families you are used to in your home country. They may be bigger or smaller than most families in your home country. They may be different in other ways too. The United States is a very diverse country, with people from all over the world. Because the United States is diverse, foster families are also diverse in their backgrounds. Some are U.S. citizens, and some are foreign-born immigrants or refugees.

There is no reason to be afraid of your foster family. Most are very nice, friendly, and happy to have you. Most people become foster parents because they want to help children who need a safe home and support so that they can become self-sufficient citizens.



Activity

Demonstrate the diversity of families in the United States by showing participants the Diverse U.S. Families Collage.

Hang a piece of flipchart paper and ask participants to brainstorm the possible diversity of their U.S. family. Make sure that if one quality (e.g., *rich*) is listed, a related quality (*poor*) is also listed. Characteristics include *married parents, single parents; lots of kids, no kids; black, brown, white, Asian; women do all the household chores, men do household chores, kids help with chores; loud, talkative, quiet; and rural, suburban, urban*. Encourage participants to explore the great diversity of U.S. families.

When working with a smaller or younger group of participants, brainstorm U.S. family diversity with participants.

Reflection

- ? What did you expect your new foster family to be like?
- ? What surprised you about U.S. families?
- ? Based on this activity, what do you think your foster family might look like?
- ? What language will you most likely use to communicate with your foster family?
- ? How do you feel about these diverse families?

❖ **Expansions and Variations**

- ∞ Use individual pictures from the Diverse U.S. Families Collage by opening the electronic version of this curriculum, copying and pasting a picture from the collage into a new Word document, and making it larger. In pairs or small groups, participants describe who is in the family, what their roles might be (who does the laundry, cooking, and so on), and how a foster child might fit into that family. Have the groups share and discuss.
- ∞ Tell participants that pets are often treated as children or members of the family in U.S. households. Some live inside the house and might even be permitted on kitchen countertops or other furniture. Use pictures to discuss participant feelings about having pets in their new foster homes (see samples, p. 117, Pets in the United States). Also note the pictures of families with pets in the Diverse U.S. Families Collage.
- ∞ If there is not time to address the diversity of U.S. families during CO for participants, consider putting a poster up in the room of an enlarged Diverse U.S. Families Collage for participants to see the possible diversity of their new families.
- ∞ Have participants draw a cartoon strip of their biological families, or support systems, and the roles and responsibilities of each person. Then have participants draw a cartoon strip of what their U.S. family might look like.

Learning English

citizen

diverse












self-sufficient

temporary care

Diverse U.S. Families Collage (Training Material)



Pets in the United States (Training Material)

 <p>Cat</p>	 <p>Dog</p>	 <p>Rabbit</p>	 <p>Ferret</p>
 <p>Fish</p>	 <p>Bird</p>	 <p>Hamster</p>	 <p>Gerbil</p>
 <p>Turtle</p>	 <p>Lizard</p>	 <p>Guinea pig</p>	

Learning to Live With Your Foster Family

35 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To understand the adjustments that foster children and foster parents have to make
- ✓ To prepare for different situations that may arise while living with a foster family



Materials

- Be Who You Are: Refugee Youth in the United States* (DVD)
- Television and DVD player or laptop, projector, and screen
- Role-Play Cards, cut out (see samples, p. 121; listed in order of importance)
- Optional: paper, one piece per participant
- Optional: drawing implements, to accompany the optional paper
- Optional: Learning to Live With Your Foster Family worksheet, one per participant (see sample, p. 123)



Presentation

In foster families, both foster parents and foster children have to adjust to a new situation. Everyone will have to work together and try to get along.

Activity


Tell participants that although the DVD they are about to watch does not deal specifically with foster care or foster families, it gives an idea of what family life in the United States might be like. View *Be Who You Are: Refugee Youth in the United States*.

Put participants into pairs or small groups and distribute Role-Play Cards. Note that each role-play scenario has two or more roles as indicated on the cards. Have participants read the role card, discuss the role-play, and assign the roles to members of the group. Participants may create additional roles as needed. Give participants 10 minutes to prepare their role-plays based on what they know and expect and on what they saw on the DVD. Then bring the entire group back together and have groups present their role-plays. Discuss them as necessary.


When working with a smaller group of participants or with a group reluctant to do role-plays, choose one or two of the role-play topics (which are listed in order of relevance and importance). Distribute drawing implements and paper, and have participants draw a cartoon of the situation and how it might play out. Discuss the completed cartoon strips and ask if there are different ways to deal with the topic.

Reflection

- ? How did you handle conflict in your family?
- ? How do you think your foster family will handle conflict?
- ? In what ways will improving your English help you get along with your foster family?
- ? Which rules at home did you find easy to accept? Which ones were harder to accept?

 Expansions and Variations

- ∞ Distribute the Learning to Live With Your Foster Family worksheet and writing implements to participants before viewing the DVD. Instruct participants to check off the pictures as they see them on the DVD. This worksheet can be used for talking points during the remainder of this activity.
- ∞ Inform participants that sometimes a foster parent may need a break and that this is not because the foster child did anything wrong. Participants should also know that there are times when a foster home placement just does not work out, and when this happens, it may not be the fault of the child. Finally, tell participants that if they are having challenges with their foster family, they should first try to discuss the matter with the family. If problems continue, they should discuss the issue with a caseworker or someone at the resettlement agency.
- ∞ Create role-plays focusing on foster family–child communication. Two examples include “You have decided to let your foster parents know something that is important to you (e.g., a change in food or rules)” and “Your foster parents want to meet the parents of your new friends.”

 Additional Resources

- ★ For more information on legal guardianship, visit Bridging Refugee Youth and Children’s Services’ Guardianship Summary Sheet at <http://www.brycs.org/documents/upload/GSHIPSUM.pdf>.

Learning English

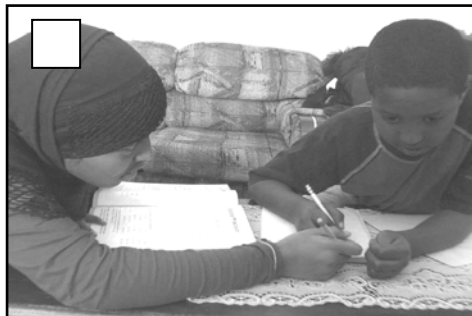
adjustment	decision	help
legal guardian	recreational activities	to respect
responsibilities	stress	

Role-Play Cards (Training Material)

<p><u>Role-Play 1</u></p> <p>Roles: refugee foster child, foster parent</p> <p>The foster parent gives the foster child a curfew (a time to be home), but the child does not think this is necessary and goes to a tutoring session instead of arriving home on time. The foster parent is very upset. Act out how the child and the foster parent might work together to create rules for the child.</p>	<p><u>Role-Play 2</u></p> <p>Roles: foster child, teacher, foster parent</p> <p>The foster parent gives the foster child some new chores to do around the house and wants the child to attend family dinners every night. The child is having trouble understanding the teacher's homework assignment, so the teacher suggests the child go to tutoring sessions after school. The child is feeling overwhelmed by the new responsibilities at home and at school. Act out how the child can find a solution to this situation.</p>
<p><u>Role-Play 3</u></p> <p>Roles: foster child, foster parent, foster sibling</p> <p>The foster child is feeling nervous about moving into the foster family's home. On the first night, the foster family tells the child that they are excited to have the child join their family, but they are also feeling worried and scared about communicating well with her or him. Act out how this conversation might take place.</p>	<p><u>Role-Play 4</u></p> <p>Roles: male foster child, foster mother</p> <p>The foster mother tells the foster child that he needs to come straight home after school every day. But the boy feels he does not need to listen to a woman, and plays soccer with friends before returning home. His foster mother is very angry. Act out how the boy and his foster mother might find a solution to this situation.</p>
<p><u>Role-Play 5</u></p> <p>Roles: two sibling refugees, foster parent</p> <p>The two siblings often talk to each other in their own language instead of English at home. Because they speak English all day at school, they are happy to have the chance to speak their own language at home. But the foster parent is uncomfortable not understanding what they are saying. Act out how everyone can find a solution to this situation.</p>	<p><u>Role-Play 6</u></p> <p>Roles: foster child, foster parent, foster sibling</p> <p>The foster child often uses some of the foster sibling's toys without asking. One day the foster parent tells the foster child that she or he needs to get permission from the foster sibling before using the toys. Act out how the foster child, the parent, and the sibling can find a solution to this situation.</p>

Unit 3: Family Life DVD Worksheet
Learning to Live With Your Foster Family

Directions: As you watch the DVD, look for the images below. Put a check (✓) in the box when you see them.



Changing Roles

30
minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To explore the potential roles of members of a foster family
- ✓ To prepare for potential challenges facing members of a foster family
- ✓ To better understand new relationships in the foster family
- ✓ To explore the refugee child's thoughts and feelings about the upcoming changes



Materials

- New Roles Game board, one per group (see sample, p. 135)
- Changing Roles Spinner (see sample, p. 127) or die, one per group
- Role Cards, cut out, one set per group (see samples, p. 129)
- Question Cards, cut out, one set per group (see samples, p. 131)
- Thoughts and Feelings Cards, cut out, one set per group (see samples, p. 133)
- Playing pieces, one per participant (small stones or pieces of different colored paper can be used as playing pieces)



Presentation

You will be joining a new family and will most likely play a different role in your foster family than you did in your biological family in the past. This role may also change as time goes by.

Activity

Distribute game boards, spinner (or dice), all three card sets, and playing pieces to participants in groups of two to five. Note that there are three kinds of cards (Question Cards, Role Cards, and Thoughts and Feelings Cards) and three corresponding types of spaces on the boards.

Players choose their playing pieces and take turns rolling a die or spinning the spinner. Players move their playing pieces the number of spaces shown on the die in any direction that they choose. When a player lands on a space, another participant takes a card from the corresponding stack of cards and reads the question or statement. The player answers the question or responds to the statement. If the answer is considered acceptable (by the trainer and/or other participants), the player keeps the card and it is the next participant's turn. If the answer is not accepted, the card is returned to the bottom of the corresponding stack of cards, and it is the next participant's turn.

The first player to collect eight cards wins the game.

When working with a smaller or younger group of participants, the trainer should play the game with the participants, working with them to arrive at appropriate answers.

Reflection

- ? What do you think the new roles of your new foster family will be?
- ? How do you feel about these roles?
- ? How do you feel about being a foster child?

- ? What name do you want your foster family and caseworker to use to introduce you to people?
- ? What efforts will you make to work with your foster family?

❖ **Expansions and Variations**

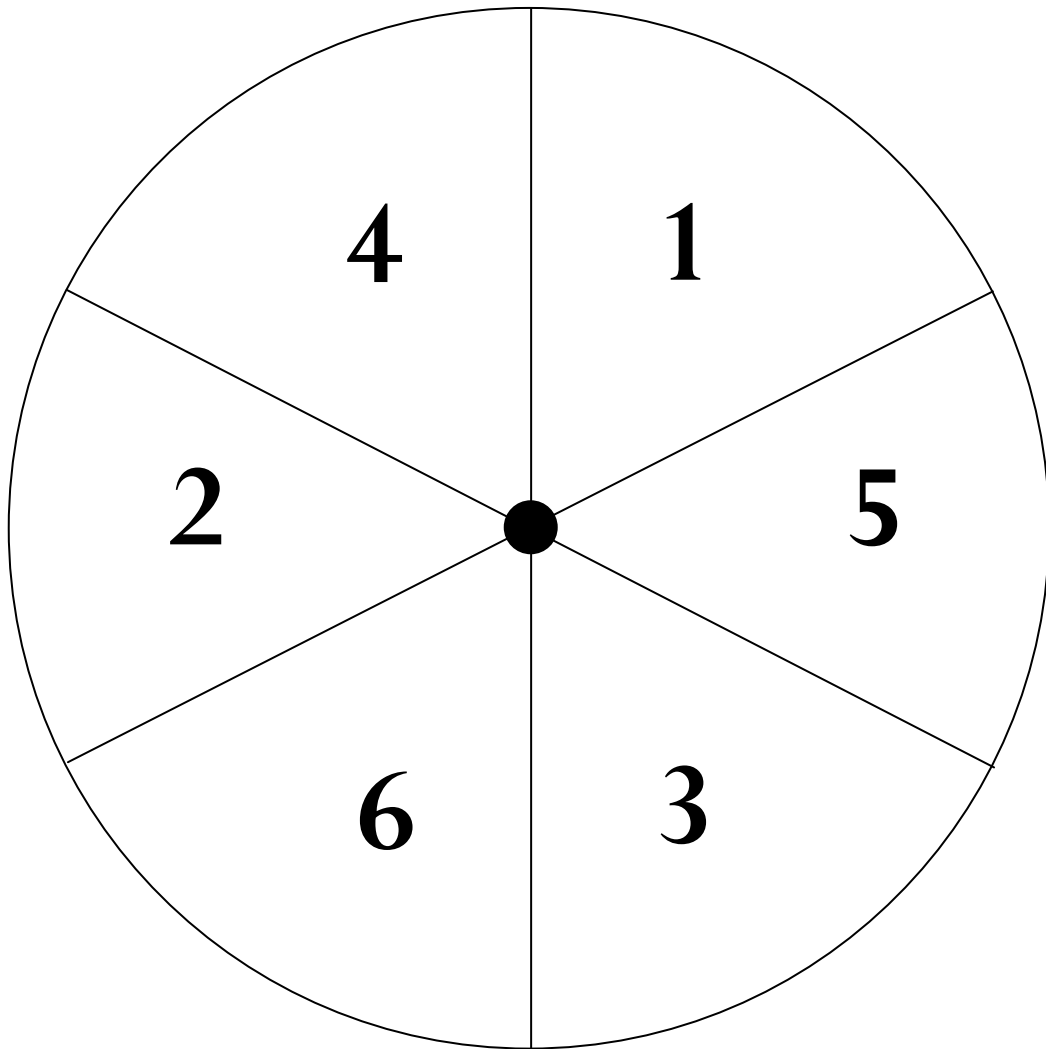
- ∞ Write additional questions on the blank cards provided.
- ∞ Have a small prize for the game winner, or have the game continue until all cards have been responded to satisfactorily.
- ∞ Present participants with real-life stories written by refugees as case studies. In small groups, have participants discuss what they would do if placed in these situations, how they would feel, and how they will start preparing themselves emotionally for their upcoming experiences. Suggested Web sites are <http://www.cybercambodia.com/dachs/stories/sou.html>, <http://please-help-burma.blogspot.com/2008/05/southfield-woman-makes-safe-place-for.html>, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A35095-2003Dec27.html>, <http://www.bethany.org/A55798/bethanyWWW.nsf/0/0D1F9E66B07D5C9C85256DDE005DB096>, <http://immigrantsinusa.blogspot.com/2008/07/phila-summer-program-helps-refugees.html>, and <http://their-own-words.org/stories/victoria.htm>.

Learning English











answer	aunt	child
game	grandparent	independent
kid	relationship	role
uncle		

Changing Roles Spinner (Training Material)











Attach the arrow at the bottom of this page to the center of the spinner with a small pin or stick.
Whatever number the pointing end of the arrow is aimed closest to is the number spun.













Role Cards (Training Material)

<p>What role will your new grandparents play in your foster family?</p> 	<p>What role will your biological relatives play in your life in the United States?</p> 
<p>What role will your new aunts and uncles play?</p> 	<p>What role do you think older people play in families in the United States?</p> 
<p>What new challenges might your foster siblings be facing?</p> 	<p>How will you make the change from being on your own and independent to being a foster child who has to follow someone else's rules?</p> 
<p>In your biological family, what do you and your siblings do when you are angry with each other? How might this change with your foster siblings?</p> 	<p>What new challenges might your foster parents be facing?</p> 
	

Question Cards (Training Material)

<p>By what name do you want your foster family and caseworker to call you?</p> 	<p>Do you think it will be hard or easy to make friends in the United States?</p> 
<p>What do you consider your relationship with your foster family to be?</p> 	<p>What do you want to call your foster parents? (Mom and Dad, Auntie and Uncle, by their first names, etc.)</p> 
<p>What challenges might you face in your foster family?</p> 	<p>How do you want your foster parents to introduce you to people? Do you want them to introduce you as their son/daughter or their foster son/daughter or something else?</p> 
<p>How do you want your caseworker to introduce you to other people?</p> 	
	

Thoughts and Feelings Cards (Training Material)

<p>How would you feel about being introduced as a foster child?</p> 	<p>How do you feel about becoming a part of a new community in the United States?</p> 
<p>How will you feel about not being independent?</p> 	<p>How will you feel about being considered a child in the United States?</p> 
<p>How will you feel about not being the head of the household?</p> 	<p>What will you do when you feel stress in your foster family's home? What will you do to relax?</p> 
<p>How will you feel about being older or younger than the other kids at school?</p> 	
	

New Roles Game

The game board is a large circle divided into 24 segments. A central circle contains the word "START". The segments contain icons: a group of people holding hands (Roles), a question mark (Questions), and a head with puzzle pieces and a baby (Thoughts and Feelings). Several segments contain photographs of diverse people: a group of four young people, a group of five young people, a group of four young people.

Key

- = Roles
- = Questions
- = Thoughts and Feelings

Religious Roles

30 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To allow participants to discuss the role of religion in their lives
- ✓ To understand the support that religion and other traditional beliefs can provide
- ✓ To better understand religious diversity and religious freedom in the United States



Materials

- Flipchart paper
- Markers
- Tape
- Religious Roles worksheet, one per participant (see sample, p. 139)
- Writing implements, one per participant
- A New Day: Refugee Families in the United States* (DVD)
- Television and DVD player or laptop, projector, and screen



Presentation

Religion exists in many different forms in the United States. People have the freedom to go to their own place of worship or to not worship at all. Some families in the United States practice religion, and some do not. Those who practice religion do so in many different ways. For example, some families pray at mealtimes and others do not. This action is important to some families but not to others.

It is important to respect the religious beliefs of others. It is also important for you to learn about these beliefs. Understanding people's religions will help you understand their attitudes and behavior.



Activity

Instruct participants to define *religion* and explain its purpose. Write these ideas on flipchart paper. Ask participants what role religion plays in their own lives and why it is or is not important to them. Write these thoughts on flipchart paper and discuss as necessary. Tell participants that their religious and traditional beliefs may be a very important support for them upon resettlement in the United States.

Distribute Religious Roles worksheets and writing implements to participants. Instruct participants to check off the pictures on the worksheet as they see them on the DVD. View the "School Life/Learning English" scene of *A New Day: Refugee Families in the United States*.

Reflection

- ? What are some challenges that Nadio faced in terms of her religion?
- ? What are some challenges that you may face?
- ? What are some of the positive things about your religion? How does it help you?
- ? What things do you think you might have in common with refugee children who have different beliefs from you?
- ? How are you feeling about the role of religion in people's lives?



Additional Resources

- ★ The following Web sites can give additional information:
<http://www.uri.org/kids/world.htm> and <http://www.religionfacts.com/>.

Learning English

beliefs

practice

right

freedom

pray

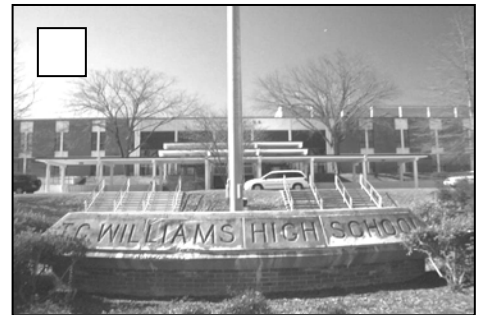
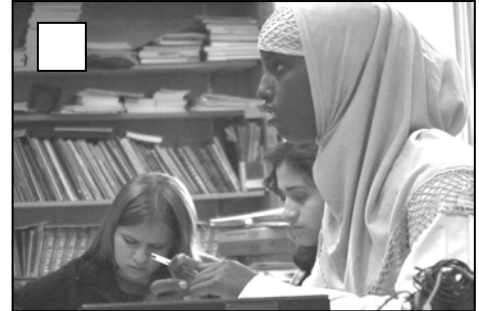
traditional

place of worship

religion

Unit 3: Family Life DVD Worksheet
Religious Roles

Directions: As you watch the DVD, look for the images below. Put a check (✓) in the box when you see them.



Siblings

30 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To understand the different types of siblings an unaccompanied refugee minor may encounter
- ✓ To explore feelings about sharing a bedroom, space, and belongings
- ✓ To consider the challenges of getting along with new siblings
- ✓ To consider ways to resolve conflict among siblings



Materials

- Role-Play Cards, cut out (see samples, p. 143)
- Optional: paper, one piece per participant
- Optional: drawing implements, to accompany the optional paper



Presentation

In your new foster home, you may have siblings. These siblings may be your foster parents' biological children or they may be other foster children. The other foster children could be a part of the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program, and they may be from your ethnic group or country.

Activity

Distribute Role-Play Cards to pairs or small groups. Note that each role-play has two or more roles as indicated on the cards. Have participants read the role card, discuss the role-play, and assign the roles to members of the group. Participants may create additional roles as needed. Give participants about 10 minutes to prepare the role-plays, and then bring the entire group together. Have groups perform their role-plays and discuss as necessary.

When working with a smaller group of participants or with a group reluctant to engage in role-plays, choose two to three of the more relevant role-plays to discuss with participants, or distribute paper and drawing implements and encourage participants to draw pictures representing what they would do in those situations.

Reflection

- ? What do you think will be the most positive thing about having new siblings?
- ? What do you think will be the most challenging?
- ? How are you feeling about entering your new foster home?
- ? How do you think learning English will be beneficial to you in communicating with your siblings?
- ? What are your biggest concerns about your new siblings?
- ? What are you most excited about?

Learning English

country

language

gender

responsible

homesick

sibling

Role-Play Cards (Training Material)

<p><u>Role-Play 1</u></p> <p>Roles: refugee child, foster sibling of the same gender</p> <p>In the foster home, the refugee child shares a bedroom with a foster sibling of the same gender. The refugee is used to living with many people and sharing things and has no problem sharing her or his belongings with the foster sibling. But the foster sibling does not want to share with the refugee. For instance, when the refugee asks to borrow a shirt, the answer is no. Act out how the refugee and the sibling can find a resolution to this situation.</p>	<p><u>Role-Play 2</u></p> <p>Roles: younger refugee child, foster parent, older foster sibling (biological child of the foster parent)</p> <p>The refugee child has an older foster sibling who is the biological child of the foster parent. The foster sibling has a lot more clothing and toys than the refugee. The foster sibling also has more freedom than the refugee to spend time with friends and go to after-school activities. Act out how everyone can find a solution to this situation.</p>
<p><u>Role-Play 3</u></p> <p>Roles: refugee child, foster sibling</p> <p>The refugee child has been feeling homesick and anxious. This has been causing her or him to start arguments with the foster sibling over small things, such as who sits in the bigger chair in the living room. The foster sibling does not understand why the refugee is so upset about these things. Act out how the refugee and the foster sibling can find a solution to this situation.</p>	<p><u>Role-Play 4</u></p> <p>Roles: older refugee, younger biological brother, caseworker</p> <p>The older refugee lives with foster parents and a biological brother. The older refugee takes care of the younger brother because in the refugee's culture, that is what older siblings do. The older refugee cooks and cleans and does homework for the younger brother. The caseworker tells the older refugee that the younger brother needs to learn to be an independent person, so the older refugee needs to stop doing so much for him. Act out how the older refugee, the younger brother, and the caseworker might find a solution to the situation.</p>

Unit 4: Education

Topic Overview for the Trainer

This section provides an overview of the U.S. education system with respect to unaccompanied refugee minors. Most of the information applies to all refugee youth.

Education in the United States is free and required by law for all children between the ages of 6 and 16. Additionally, all schools are required to offer English as a second language (ESL) assistance to children who need this service.

Most children in foster care go to public school. Schools differ in their educational offerings and resources, but most classes at public schools are conducted in English. Although refugee minors may find that they attend school with other children from the same country or who speak the same language, most of their classmates will speak English and will probably be U.S. citizens. U.S. schools can be very diverse, with students and teachers from many different countries and cultures. This mix of races, ethnicities, cultures, and religious beliefs can be both exciting and frightening for those who are not used to it.






Some unaccompanied refugee minors entering the program have missed years of schooling because of situations in their home countries or countries of asylum. It is important that they develop the motivation to learn English and go to school, so that they can achieve a good life in the United States. Some school districts offer summer school options, which can help prepare these children for the upcoming school year.

Although school is the priority for youth in the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program, some participants may legally be able to work, depending on the state they are in and their age. The number of hours they work may be limited, depending on their age and school obligations, and the refugee youth will need permission to work from the foster parents and sometimes the school.







Youth who have participated in the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program for several years may be required to work, especially if they have already obtained their high school diploma or general equivalency diploma (GED). The amount that a refugee youth works depends on the individual's educational plans and options and on state laws. Many young people in the United States work part-time while working on higher education degrees.

The following chart gives a brief overview of the activities in Unit 4. The first activity provides an overview of the topic and contains the most important information. It is recommended that this activity be provided in all CO trainings for unaccompanied refugee minors, with additional activities covered as time permits.

On Their Way
Unit 4: Education

Unit 4: Education	Time						Page
Education: The Basics	30 min		✓	✓	✓	✓	147
Education: Case Study	30 min	✓	✓	✓	✓		155
A Day at School	25 min	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	159
Educational and Cultural Differences	25 min	✓	✓		✓		165
Inside a Backpack	15 min	✓	✓	✓	✓		171
Group Collaboration	25 min	✓	✓	✓	✓		177
School Roles	30 min	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	183

KEY

<i>Icon</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Icon</i>	<i>Description</i>
	Knowledge		Expansions for <i>Story of Me</i>
	Skills		Variations for poster(s)
	Attitudes		Transferable to youth CO (with adaptations)

Education: The Basics

30 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To provide an overview of education in the United States as it relates to those in the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program
- ✓ To recognize that school is the priority for unaccompanied refugee minors
- ✓ To better understand the educational challenges that these children may face
- ✓ To understand alternative types of education in the United States



Materials

- ☐ Fact Sheets on Education in the United States (see samples, p. 149)
- ☐ Assorted art supplies: markers, blank paper, writing implements, colored paper, glue, adhesive tape, scissors, and so on
- ☐ Flipchart paper



Presentation



Your priority while in the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program is to get an education. An education will increase your opportunities for a good life in the United States. It will also help you improve your English. English is very important in the United States. Without good English skills, you will face many challenges in the United States.

Activity

Put participants into pairs or small groups. Distribute one Fact Sheet (cut the Fact Sheets apart before the session begins), a piece of flipchart paper, and assorted art supplies to each group. The group's task is to visually present the information from its Fact Sheet, through use of pictures or drawings.

Give groups 10–15 minutes to complete the task. Bring the entire group together and have each group present its visual representations of the Fact Sheet.

When working with a younger or less literate group of participants, the trainer should be prepared to read the Fact Sheets aloud to groups before participants begin working.

Reflection

- ? What does the statement “school is your priority” mean?
- ? How do you succeed in school in the United States?
- ? Why might you have to repeat a school year in the United States?
- ? What is one of the main barriers to obtaining a high school diploma?
- ? What are some alternatives to high school in the United States?
- ? If you are sick and cannot go to school, what must your foster parents do?
- ? When would be the best time for you to get a part-time job?

❖ Expansions and Variations

- ∞ When working with a smaller group of participants, have one copy of all Fact Sheets for every person in the session, including the trainer and interpreter (if there is one). Take turns reading the sentences out loud to the group. After each Fact Sheet has been read aloud, ask participants to explain the meanings in the Fact Sheets in their own words.
- ∞ Lead a small-group discussion on the Fact Sheets.
- ∞ Have participants practice key school-related words: *education, learn, college, interests, talents, goals, jobs, library, gymnasium, athletic fields, playground, cafeteria, computer labs, swimming pool, science labs, weight rooms, study hall, ESL (English as a second language), backpack, crayons, pencils, pens, sneakers, lunch, locker, notebook, sports, clubs, organization, homework.*
- ∞ If participants are creating a *Story of Me* (see p. 5 in the introduction to this manual for more details) during CO, refer participants to the Fact Sheet pages in their books. Encourage participants to complete these boxes during the group discussions.
- ∞ Teach participants how to use a translation dictionary, as well as a regular dictionary.

Learning English

alternatives	benefits	calendar
diploma	expenses	free
full-time	holidays	homework
opportunity	part-time	priority
school guidance counselor	tuition waiver	

Fact Sheets on Education in the United States (Training Material)

Fact Sheet 1: School Is Your Priority

Your priority in the United States is to attend school full time and get a good education. During this time, you do not have to be self-sufficient. You do not have to pay rent or other living expenses. Getting an education is a great opportunity, and in the United States it is free!

The school year usually starts in August or September and ends in June. You will start school as soon as you arrive in the United States, unless you arrive during summer vacation (June, July, and early August).

You succeed in school by attending class and doing your homework. If you do not understand your homework or class work, you should ask your teachers for help.

After several years in the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program, you may be expected to work, especially if you have finished high school or obtained your general equivalency diploma (GED). The amount you work will depend on your educational plans and options, as well as state requirements for independent living benefits. Many youth in the United States work part time while working on higher education degrees.

A refugee youth who would like to attend a state college may be able to get a special benefit called a *tuition waiver*. A tuition waiver allows a student to go to college for free. This benefit could continue through age 25.

Fact Sheet 2: Starting Over

Even if you have completed high school in your own country, you may have to go to school again in the United States if you cannot show that you finished high school before. That is why it is important to try to bring school records with you to the United States.

School in the United States usually starts in August or September. In most states, if you enter after October or November, you may have to repeat the school year the next year. But repeating a grade can be good for you. You will understand your subjects better and get better grades. It is important for you to do your best whatever grade you are in.

Students who are older than their classmates in the United States may feel embarrassed or alone. These are normal feelings. If you continue to have these feelings, you should talk about them with an adult you trust. The person could be a foster parent, a school guidance counselor, or a caseworker.

Fact Sheet 3: Schooling Alternatives

In some states you cannot enroll in high school after age 18, while in other states the age limits are extended. For students who are too old for high school or who cannot attend school for any other reason, many areas offer alternatives to high school. One of these alternatives is the general equivalency diploma (GED) program. In this program, you study high school subjects on your own or with a tutor. Then you take a test. If you pass it, you get a high school diploma. There are also vocational and skills training programs for students who want to work after high school instead of going to college.

You may be able to study in the GED or vocational training program and stay enrolled in the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program. Whatever program you study in, you will need good English and you will need to study hard.

These alternatives are available only in some areas, and it is important to discuss your choices and what is best for you with your caseworker.

Fact Sheet 4: School Attendance

Different schools have different holidays and holiday breaks. You will find out your school's calendar when you arrive. Usually you will have about 2 weeks off at the end of December, 1 week off in the spring, and 2–3 months off in the summer. Most schools have special summer school classes for students who need extra help.

If you are sick and cannot go to school, your foster parent or guardian must call the school that morning and tell someone in the school office that you will not be in school that day. You will be responsible for any schoolwork you miss while you are out sick.

All children under 16 years of age must attend school in the United States. Some students "cut" class (miss class without a good reason). These students are breaking the law and are hurting their chances to get a good education.

Fact Sheet 5: Working Options

In the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program, school is your priority and you are not expected to work. If you want to get a good job and become self-sufficient, the best thing you can do is to get a good education first.

Even though education is your priority, you may be able to work part-time, depending on your age and the laws in your state. If you had a job in your own country or in the refugee camp, you might not be able to do the same kind of work in the United States because you may not have enough English or job skills training.

In the summertime, when you are not in school, you may be able to work and earn money. Working during the summer is easier for students because they do not have to do schoolwork.

After several years in the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program, you may be expected to work, especially if you have finished high school or obtained your general equivalency diploma (GED). The amount of work you do will depend on your educational plans and options and on state laws. Many youth in the United States work part time while working on higher education degrees.

Education: Case Study

30 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To learn more about the education system in the United States as it relates to the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program
- ✓ To identify real-life educational situations and issues that unaccompanied refugee minors have encountered
- ✓ To discuss solutions to educational problems these youth may encounter



Materials

- ☐ Case study (see sample, p. 157; change names as appropriate to help participants relate to the situation), one copy per participant
- ☐ Prepared flipchart with reflection questions listed (see samples, p. 155)
- ☐ Markers
- ☐ Tape



Presentation

Refugee youth in the United States face different issues and have different concerns about education than their peers. This activity will help you identify some of these issues and concerns. Through a case study, you will learn about some educational challenges a refugee faced in the United States. Together, we will work through some possible solutions to his challenges. Thinking about similar challenges you may face in the United States may help you make good decisions and avoid some of the problems discussed in the case study.

This case study is based on the actual experiences of unaccompanied refugee minors. The names, locations, and other information have been changed, but the case study shows the real-life issues that these youth face in the United States.

Activity

Put participants into groups of two to four and distribute the case study. Have participants read the case study, answering the questions that have been inserted in it along the way. When they have finished, ask the small groups to answer the final reflection questions on the prepared flipchart.

Bring the large group together and ask for a spokesperson from each small group to summarize the main points from the small-group discussion. Discuss further as necessary.

When working with younger or less literate participants, the trainer can read the case study aloud to the group and then lead a large-group discussion based on the reflection questions.

Reflection

- ? What are the main issues presented in this case study? How did Ki handle these issues? How would you handle these issues?
- ? What steps could Ki have taken to avoid some of these issues ahead of time?
- ? What are some of the resources or supports Ki used? How did he use them? What other resources or supports might be available?

Learning English

choices

English language classes

local

classes

enroll

skills

college education

language

supported

Education: Case Study (Handout)

Ki is 18 years old. He arrived in the United States from Malaysia 1 year ago. He lives with his foster family. Ki did not speak any English when he arrived, but he was determined to get a college education in the United States.

Ki met his case manager, Marcus, the day after his arrival. But their first meeting was challenging, because Ki spoke very little Burmese, the language that the interpreter spoke. Soon Ki was able to meet other members from his ethnic group who understood his first language and who could assist him with translating. Ki was able to express his desire to learn English and get a college education.

Ki arrived in the United States with a stomach problem. He was very sick for his first 2 months and could not go to school. Although he got good medical treatment, by the time he was well enough to go to school, he had turned 18 and was too old to enroll in any of the public high schools in his area. Ki was very disappointed not to be in high school as he had dreamed.

What challenges has Ki encountered so far? What would you do? Who would you go to for help?

Marcus helped Ki enroll in some English language classes at the local college during the day and at an adult education center at night. Ki soon realized that these classes were good for him. He was with other students who were too old to attend high school, and he found he was able to make new friends. The daytime classes in math, history, and science at the college helped him with his English reading and writing skills. In night classes at the adult education center, he was able to practice English speaking skills. Ki also bought a Karen-English dictionary and began to visit the public libraries in the city to use the Internet and to learn more about his school subjects.

How is Ki following his educational goals? What are the pros and cons to an education plan like his?

One year later, Ki is feeling frustrated. Although he speaks English well, his reading and writing skills are not great. There are four levels in his English program, and he is in level 3. It will take him 8 more months to complete the program. Once he has finished the program, his English should be good enough for college. Ki is also taking a class to study for the test for the general equivalency diploma (GED). He plans to take the test next year, and if he passes it, he will apply to be a full-time student at the college. Ki is proud of his progress and is excited about his educational opportunities. He is glad that he and Marcus worked together to come up with alternatives to a high school education and that his foster family, new friends, and English teachers have supported his choices.

What are Ki's challenges now? What is he doing about them? What will some of his obstacles be? What would you do to overcome these obstacles?

A Day at School

25 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To explore a typical day at a U.S. high school



Materials

- ☐ Timeline Chart, one per participant (see sample, p. 163)
- ☐ Writing implements, one per participant
- ☐ *Be Who You Are: Refugee Youth in the United States* (DVD)
- ☐ Television and DVD player or laptop, projector, and screen



Presentation

Your school day in the United States may be very different from your past experiences in school. You will be taking many subjects, and you will be studying them in English.



Activity

Distribute Timeline Chart and writing implements to participants and have them complete (by writing or drawing pictures) the “Current day” portion.



Tell participants about English as a second language (ESL) classes. Tell them that ESL class is a special English class for students who speak other languages. All schools in the United States are required by law to offer ESL classes if there is a need for them within the school. In the United States, many students in ESL classes are Spanish speaking, and refugee youth may find that there is no one else in their ESL class who is from their country or who speaks their language.

View *Be Who You Are: Refugee Youth in the United States*.

Put participants into pairs or small groups, and have the groups discuss the DVD and complete the “Day in the United States.” portion of the Timeline Chart based on what they saw on the DVD. Discuss as necessary with the entire group.

When working with a smaller or younger group of participants, the trainer may find it more effective to actively participate in the brainstorming and discussion parts of this activity plan.

Reflection

- ? How are you feeling about school in the United States?
- ? What changes do you think will be challenging?
- ? What differences do you think will be easier?
- ? How do you feel about classes being conducted mainly in English?
- ? What are you worried about in terms of school in the United States?
- ? What are you looking forward to?

❖ Expansions and Variations

- ∞ Simulate the school day. Create a classroom with desks and chairs, an area for a hallway, and a lunchroom. Include as much of the following activities as possible using whatever material is available: taking a bus; passing through metal detectors (and/or by security officers) to enter the school building; following a schedule; changing classrooms and teachers; responding to roll call; raising hands to ask or answer questions; requesting a hall pass (to use the bathroom or visit the nurse's office); responding to a bell signifying the end of class; using lockers to change books between classes; attending nonacademic classes (e.g., physical education, art, and music); checking out books from the library; finding someone (e.g., classmate, guidance counselor, teacher, or school nurse) to help with a problem; and eating lunch in the cafeteria.
- ∞ Do a simulation of the lunchroom. Use the simulation to practice and discuss the following topics: free or reduced-price lunches; purchased versus brought lunches; common foods in a school cafeteria; the lunch line (how to go through it quickly and make food choices); seating (find an empty seat a quickly, find someone to sit with); the physical setup (large, open, loud space); and self clean-up.
- ∞ Ask participants to think about their ideal classroom. What does it look like? What are the teachers and the students like? How do the teachers teach? How do the teachers interact with the students, and how do the students interact with each other? Put participants into pairs or small groups, and have the groups share their ideas. Combine pairs or small groups into a larger group, and distribute flipchart paper, markers, magazines, and glue. Ask the groups to create an ideal classroom.
- ∞ Have participants practice key words to use in emergency situations: *fire, safety, dangerous, fire drill, lockdown, emergency, no, police, firefighter, evacuate, weapon, against the law.*
- ∞ Have participants practice key words for learning and studying: *study, listen, textbook, raise hand, quiet, classroom, rules, map, country, discipline, practice, report card, grade, test, quiz, pop quiz, score, multiple choice, true-or-false questions, answer key, essay, midterm, final, help, assignment, globe.*
- ∞ Do a study skills workshop with participants. Some good Web resources on study skills are <http://www.ucc.vt.edu/stdyhlp.html>, <http://www.infoplease.com/homework/studyskills1.html>, <http://depts.washington.edu/counsels/services/workshops/workshoptips.html>, and <http://www.usask.ca/ulc/?q=node/54> (see “Study Skills Resources” in right-hand column).
- ∞ If participants are creating a *Story of Me* (see p. 5 in the introduction to this manual for more details) during CO, refer participants to the Timeline Chart in their books.

📖 Additional Resources

- ✦ *Welcome to Our Schools* (DVD) (Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees, Utica, NY; in collaboration with Bethlehem Central School District, Delmar, NY; Utica City School District; Cavalli & Associates; and Working Pictures, Inc.) allows participants to see what a real U.S. school looks like. Show a section of the DVD that is age-appropriate for your students, then ask them to discuss what they think a U.S. school is like, based on what they have seen.

Learning English afternoon night	evening timeline	morning typical day
--	---------------------	------------------------

Timeline Chart (Handout)

	Morning		Afternoon		Evening		Night	
	Earlier	Later	Earlier	Later	Earlier	Later	Earlier	Later
Current day								
Day in the United States								

Educational and Cultural Differences

25 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To prepare unaccompanied refugee minors for the educational changes they are about to encounter



Materials

- Two signs: one that reads “True” and the other “False”
- Tape
- Decision Statements (see samples, p. 167; listed in order of importance)
- Optional: Diverse Youth in the United States Collage (see sample, p. 169)



Presentation

U.S. schools may be different from the schools in your country in many ways.

Activity

Hang the two signs on opposite sides of the room. Clear all furniture out of the way. Inform participants that you are going to read a statement about life in the United States. They must decide if it is true or false. If the statement is true, participants stand near the True sign; if it is false, they stand near the False sign.

Read the Decision Statements one by one to participants. For each statement, give participants an opportunity to think about the meaning of the statement and then make a decision. After participants are standing under the signs, discuss the statement and the participants’ reasons before moving on to the next statement.

Reflection

- ? How will you be disciplined in a U.S. school? How will you know how to behave?
- ? Why will learning English be important?
- ? What does *coed* mean? How do you feel about having coed classes?
- ? How are you feeling about the topics discussed during this session?
- ? How are you feeling about starting school in general?

Expansions and Variations

- ∞ Show the Diverse Youth in the United States Collage (p. 169) to participants and ask participants to determine which of the children were born in the United States and which were not. The point is that it is difficult if not impossible to determine which students were born in the United States and which were not.
- ∞ In a variation of this activity developed by the International Rescue Committee administered Overseas Processing Entity in Southeast Asia, participants watch the *Welcome to Our Schools* DVD. Then they sit in a circle and roll a ball from one participant to another. When the ball reaches a participant, the trainer reads a Decision

Statement. The participant responds “true” or “false” and the decision is discussed. This activity also serves to evaluate what the participants have understood in the DVD.

- ∞ Define the words *stereotype* and *generalization* and discuss. In terms of national, ethnic, or racial groups, generalizations are statements that describe behavior that often apply to many but not all members of the group. Stereotypes result when we overgeneralize and attribute the actions and behavior of some people in a group to the whole group. Stereotypes are damaging because they lead to distorted perceptions and judgments. We can make generalizations about cultural groups, but we must be careful not to assume that the generalizations are true for everyone within a culture.
- ∞ Use quotes from Bridging Refugee Youth and Children’s Services’ *Bridging Refugee Youth and Children’s Services Spring 2008 Spotlight: Welcoming and Orienting Newcomer Students to U.S. Schools*, found at http://www.brycs.org/documents/upload/brycs_spotspring2008-2.pdf. Ask participants how they would feel if placed in these situations and what they would say.
- ∞ Have participants practice key words expressing the emotional and psychological side of cultural adjustment at school: *nervous, stress, relax, worry, tease, cry, confide, harass, cope, patience, and trust*.
- ∞ Have participants practice using a daily planner in their CO classes.



Additional Resources

- ✦ The U.S. Department of Education’s Web site provides basic information about the U.S. education system:
<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ous/international/usnei/us/edlite-index.html>.

Learning English

change
guidance counselor

commitment
illegal

cultural
life

Decision Statements (Training Material)

- Almost all of your classes will be conducted in English.
- When you first start school, you will have a lot of friends in your classes right away.
- School is a full-time commitment in the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program.
- At first it may be hard to understand what your teacher and other students are saying to you.
- U.S. students do not like students from other countries.
- School in the United States will be like school in the refugee camps or in your home country.
- It is important to take classes that will help improve your English.
- It is illegal for a teacher to hit a student in the United States.
- There will be guidance counselors at your new school.
- U.S. students talk back to their teachers.
- You will only do work by yourself; you will never work as a part of a group or a team.
- If you cannot do your homework, someone else can do it for you.
- You will have to purchase all of your own textbooks.
- It may be challenging to sit in a classroom all day.
- U.S. schools can be very large and have a lot of students.

Inside a Backpack

15 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To become familiar with school backpacks
- ✓ To understand uses of common school supplies in the United States
- ✓ To better understand what school is like in the United States



Materials

- ☐ Students Carrying Backpacks pictures (see samples, p. 175)
- ☐ A backpack with common school items packed inside (see Sample Backpack List, p. 173)
- ☐ Paper



Presentation

One thing that most U.S. students have is a backpack. This is a bag that students usually wear on their backs and that contains books and other basic school supplies. Backpacks make it easier for students to carry their supplies to and from school, and to keep necessary items with them throughout the school day and at home. Sometimes students will put their backpacks or some of the contents of their backpacks into a locker. A locker is a kind of box, usually made of metal, where a student can store her or his things so the student does not have to carry everything around with her or him at all times.



Activity

Show participants pictures of U.S. students wearing backpacks. Ask participants to describe how they would wear a backpack. Bring out the sample backpack. Ask a volunteer to put the backpack on properly, as shown in the pictures. Have other participants assist the volunteer.

Ask the participants to sit down. Place the backpack on a table or chair in the center of the room. Ask a volunteer to approach the backpack, unzip a pocket, and remove an item. With the help of other participants, the volunteer identifies the item and explains its purpose and then, if possible, uses the item correctly. For instance, if the item is a pen, the volunteer writes with it; if it is a pair of scissors, the volunteer cuts something with it; or if it is a calculator, the volunteer adds two numbers. When finished, the volunteer replaces the item and sits down, and another volunteer goes through the exercise. Continue with a few more volunteers, and then make the backpack available during the next break.

Reflection

- ? Have you ever seen or used a backpack before?
- ? What can you compare a backpack to?
- ? Have you ever seen or used some of the items found in the backpack? If so, which ones?
- ? Which of the items in the backpack were most unfamiliar? Did any seem difficult to use?
- ? What item in the backpack will you want to use the most in the United States?

❖ **Expansions and Variations**

- ∞ Include some other common items in the backpack, such as a binder, books (both textbooks and other kinds of books), correction fluid, loose-leaf paper, an atlas, a periodic table, tissues, a padlock, sneakers, and exercise clothes (shorts and a T-shirt).
- ∞ If there is time, start the activity by showing the DVD *Be Who You Are: Refugee Youth in the United States*, and have participants identify the students carrying backpacks.

Learning English

backpacks

books

to carry

locker

necessary items

pocket

school supplies

use

Sample Backpack List (Training Material)

- Calculator
- Mechanical pencil
- Pen
- Pencil
- Post-it notes (yellow in color)
- Staple remover
- Stapler
- Tape
- Colored pencils
- Crayons
- Index cards
- Pocket dictionary
- Folders (one with graph paper; one empty)
- Geometry set containing the following:
 - Compass
 - Ruler
 - Protractor
 - Pencil
 - Eraser
 - Pencil sharpener
 - 45° triangle
 - 60° triangle
- Notebook (with class schedule planner in front cover and conversion tables in back cover)
- Pencil box containing the following:
 - Erasers (block eraser and erasers to go on the end of pencils)
 - Highlighter
 - Staples (for the stapler)
 - Scissors
 - Paper clips (large and small)
 - Pen
 - Pencils
 - Mechanical pencils
 - Glue stick
 - Pencil sharpener
- Planner

Students Carrying Backpacks (Training Material)



Group Collaboration

25 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To practice teamwork and sharing
- ✓ To solve problems as a group



Materials

- ☐ “Bricks” (plastic cubes, small rocks, squares of paper, or pieces of candy), 32 per group of four participants
- ☐ Die or Group Collaboration Spinner (see sample, p. 181), one per group
- ☐ Player Profiles, one set per group (see samples, p. 179)
- ☐ Scissors, one pair per group



Presentation

Is working alone always the best way to succeed? Or is it sometimes better to work with others?



Activity

Divide participants into groups of four. (*Note to trainer:* This activity will work only in groups of four; if there is a group of three, the trainer can participate as the fourth.) Pass out 32 bricks, a die/spinner, one set of Player Profiles, and a pair of scissors to each group. The groups should keep the bricks and the die/spinner in a pile in the center of their table. The group should cut the Player Profiles and distribute one to each of the four group members.

Tell participants that the object of the game is to have each member of their group complete a wall that is four bricks long and two bricks high (or 8 bricks total) as quickly as possible.

Participants must pick up bricks according to their Player Profiles, *and all group members must finish their walls at the same time to win*. If participants pick up all 32 bricks but do not finish all four walls at the same time, they should start over. After they have begun to understand the game, groups can add new rules to the game (without changing the old ones).


As participants play the game, the trainer should move from group to group to monitor progress. After about 5 minutes, depending on how participants are doing, stop the game and have participants discuss what is working and what is not going well. Remind participants that the groups can add new rules to their game if they wish to do so. As the trainer, suggest that they think about ways to work together so they can finish at the same time and win the game.

Note to trainer: The Player Profiles ensure that two players gain two bricks on each spin. One way for players to pick up all 32 bricks at the same time is to add a rule that says that players can share their bricks with other members of the group. This would allow the two players who pick up the four bricks on each spin to give one brick apiece to the other two players. In this way, everyone will finish at the same time.

When working with a younger group of participants, the trainer may find it more effective to actively participate in facilitation and discussion throughout the game.

 Reflection

- ? What was the hardest part of finding a solution to the problem?
- ? What were the differences between players?
- ? What did players have in common?
- ? If you were to do this activity with other children in the United States, what language would you use? What would you say to them?
- ? What does this teach you about group work?
- ? How are you feeling about participating in group work?
- ? What do you think is the biggest difference between individual work and group work?

 Expansions and Variations

- ∞ Have participants watch the *Welcome to Our Schools* DVD (Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees, Utica, NY; in collaboration with Bethlehem Central School District, Delmar, NY; Utica City School District; Cavalli & Associates; and Working Pictures, Inc.) as well as *Be Who You Are: Refugee Youth in the United States* (www.cal.org/co/publications/anewday.html; produced by the Cultural Orientation Resource Center). Following the DVDs, discuss what high school in the United States looks like and how participants may be working together with others in groups in school in the United States.

Learning English

compromise

group

problem

rules

share

solution

solve problems

teamwork

turn

Player Profiles (Handout)

Player 1

Every time an even number is rolled or spun, pick up two bricks. If an odd number is rolled or spun, do not pick up any bricks.

Player 2

Every time an odd number is rolled or spun, pick up two bricks. If an even number is rolled or spun, do not pick up any bricks.

Player 3

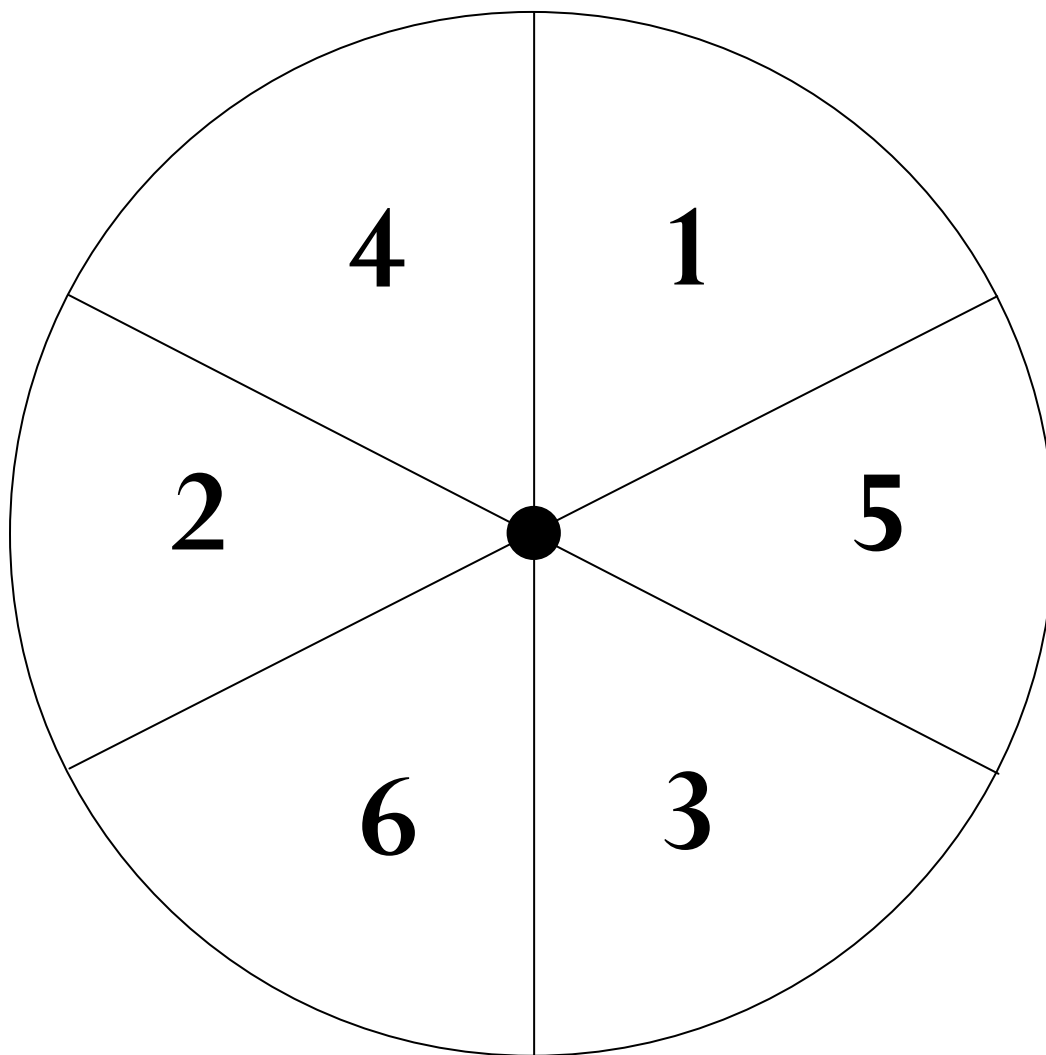
Every time 1, 2, or 3 is rolled or spun, pick up two bricks. If 4, 5, or 6 is rolled or spun, do not pick up any bricks.

Player 4

Every time 4, 5, or 6 is rolled or spun, pick up two bricks. If 1, 2, or 3 is rolled or spun, do not pick up any bricks.

Group Collaboration Spinner (Training Material)

*Attach the arrow at the bottom of this page to the center of the spinner with a small pin or stick.
Whatever number the pointing end of the arrow is aimed closest to is the number spun.*



School Roles

30 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To understand the roles of adults at school and the support they provide to students
- ✓ To learn the different titles used for adults in the United States



Materials

- ☐ Prepared flipchart with School Roles Chart (see sample, p. 187)
- ☐ Tape
- ☐ Markers
- ☐ Sample Completed School Roles Chart (see sample, p. 189)
- ☐ Sample School Roles (see sample, p. 189)
- ☐ U.S. Titles for Adults (see sample, p. 185)



Presentation

In U.S. schools, adults play different roles to make sure school is a safe, friendly, and healthy place.



Activity

Ask participants what the word *role* means. One possible definition is “a role is the main thing you do in your job. For example, the role of a teacher is to teach.”



Hang the School Roles Chart in the front of the room. With the entire group, brainstorm ideas about the two questions on the chart to complete the blank squares (refer to Sample School Roles and the Sample Completed School Roles Chart), beginning with participants’ former school and ending with the U.S. school. Familiarize participants with the following: *principal, teacher, counselor, social worker, bus driver, custodian, cafeteria staff, librarian, school nurse, crossing guard, coach, translator, and student*. Include titles (Mr., Mrs., Miss, and Ms.) with names. Refer to U.S. Titles for Adults if needed.



When working with a smaller or younger group of participants, the trainer may find it more effective to actively participate in the brainstorming part of this activity.

Reflection

- ? Who played the most important role at your former school?
- ? Who was most important to you?
- ? Who will the adults be in your new school in the United States? What will their roles be?
- ? Who do you think will be the most important adult to you?
- ? How are you feeling about school in the United States?

Expansions and Variations

- ∞ Have participants identify the assistance they might need at school and who in their new school will be able to provide it. Do this by giving participants a situation that they need help with: “You are unhappy about the grade you received,” “Someone is bullying you,” “You fell down and hurt yourself,” or “You need help with one of your subjects.” Ask participants who they should seek help from at the school.

- ∞ If there is not time to address the topics from this activity plan during CO, consider creating a poster with U.S. Titles for Adults and hanging it up in the room for participants to learn from.
- ∞ If participants are creating a *Story of Me* (see p. 5 in the introduction to this manual for more details) during CO, have them use Common Titles for Adults in the United States. Titles for Adults and the School Roles Chart in their books. While the group is completing the chart on flipchart paper, participants fill in their own.

Learning English

former

role

title

U.S. Titles for Adults (Training Material)

Mr.	This is the title used before a man's last name. It is pronounced "mister."
Miss	This title is used for a woman and implies that she is not married. It is pronounced the way it is written.
Mrs.	This title is used before a woman's last name and implies that she is married. It is pronounced "missus."
Ms.	This title is used before the last name of a woman who is married or single. It is a safe title to use if you do not know if a woman is married or single. It is pronounced "miz."

School Roles Chart (Training Material)

	<i>Who are they?</i>	<i>What do they do?</i>
Your former school		
Your new school in the United States		

Sample Completed School Roles Chart (Training Material)

School Roles Chart (Training Material)		
	Who are they?	What do they do?
Your former school		
Your new school in the United States	Principal, Ms. Chang teacher, Mr. Martinez student, Mohammed	oversees school happenings and events; manages staff, students, and communities educates and supports students and works with staff to enhance education, as well as parents attends school to learn to be a better student and citizen, and advances in education levels to become a self-sufficient individual

Sample School Roles (Training Material)

Individual	Role
Principal	Manages the school, oversees school happenings and events, manages staff
Teacher	Teaches students and works with other staff to improve education
Guidance counselor	Helps students make decisions about their studies and helps them with personal problems; also guides students academically
Bus driver	Drives the school buses that bring students to school and take them home
Custodian	Cleans the school and keeps things in good condition
Cafeteria staff	Prepares and serves food to staff and students
Librarian	Manages the library; makes sure that the library has the material that staff and students need
School nurse	Treats students who have minor illnesses
Translator/interpreter	In schools with students who do not speak English, makes sure that staff and students understand each other
Coach	Trains athletes, runs sports teams, and teaches physical education
Student	Attends school to learn what she or he needs to know to be a good citizen and succeed in school or in the workplace.
Crossing guard	Helps students cross the street safely
Vice (or assistant) principal	Helps the principal, usually handling disciplinary issues; assists the principal with other matters

Unit 5: Cultural Adjustment

Topic Overview for the Trainer

This section provides an overview of the cultural adjustment issues that unaccompanied refugee minors face upon entering the United States. Most of the information applies to all refugee youth.

Cultural adjustment takes many forms, and young people often have a particularly challenging time with the adjustment process. Self-understanding is very helpful in making the transition to life in the United States. The activities in this section are designed to help participants explore who they are and how they will explain themselves to others, and to realize that they will need to find a healthy balance between the old culture and the new. The unit includes life skills activities as well as activities related to the children’s physical and emotional well-being.

The following chart gives a brief overview of the activities in Unit 5. The first activity provides an overview of the topic and contains the most important information. It is recommended that this activity be provided in all CO trainings for unaccompanied refugee minors, with additional activities covered as time permits.

Unit 5: Cultural Adjustment	Time							Page
Cultural Adjustment: The Basics	30 min	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		193
Cultural Adjustment: Case Study	30 min	✓	✓	✓	✓			199
Health: New Foods	45 min	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	205
Dealing With Culture Shock	30 min	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		227
Home and Community: Fitting In	25 min	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		235
Home and Community: Appliances and Electronics	25 min	✓	✓	✓	✓			241
Time and Planning	20 min	✓	✓	✓	✓			249

KEY

<i>Icon</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Icon</i>	<i>Description</i>
	Knowledge		Expansions for <i>Story of Me</i>
	Skills		Variations for poster(s)
	Attitudes		Transferable to youth CO (with adaptations)

Cultural Adjustment: The Basics

30 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To provide an overview of cultural adjustment issues that unaccompanied refugee minors face in the United States
- ✓ To explore ways of being bicultural
- ✓ To better understand the need for flexibility
- ✓ To better understand U.S. ideas about hygiene



Materials

- A New Day: Refugee Families in the United States* (DVD)
- Television and DVD player or laptop, projector, and screen
- Flipchart paper
- Markers
- Paper, one piece per participant
- Writing implements, one per participant
- Optional: Cultural Adjustment: The Basics worksheet, one per participant (see sample, p. 197)



Presentation

As you are getting ready to go to the United States, you may hear many different things about U.S. life. Some of them may be accurate and some of them may be inaccurate. The main purpose of CO is to give you accurate information.

When you move to a new place, one of the biggest challenges is balancing the culture and customs of the country you have left with the culture and customs of the country you are moving to. Being patient and flexible will be very important. The United States is very diverse, and you will find many different cultures and ways of doing things there. This may be confusing, but it also means that you will be able to keep a lot of your own customs at the same time you are learning new ways of doing things.

In this activity, we are going to look at U.S. ideas about hygiene. These ideas may be different from those in your home country or country of asylum. Most people in the United States take a bath or a shower every day, and brush their teeth twice a day, in the morning and before going to bed. People in the United States think it is very important to stay clean, without any body odor.

If you are not familiar with running water, your family will teach you how to use a toilet, shower, and washing machine. In the United States, people eat with forks, knives, and spoons, and your family will also show you how to use them.

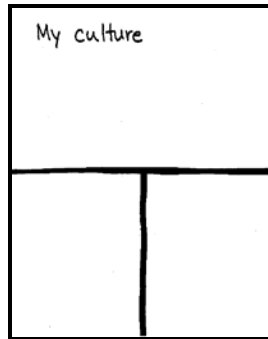
Activity

View the “School Life/Learning English” scene of *A New Day: Refugee Families in the United States*.

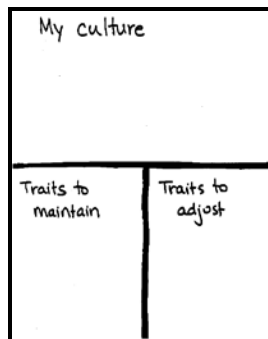
Distribute flipchart paper and markers to pairs or small groups of participants. Ask participants to generate a list (in words or pictures) that describes their cultural practices. They might include types of food and dress, religious customs, festivals, habits, forms of hygiene, language, and ways of speaking.

Have the small groups present their lists to the entire group; then hang these lists in the front of the room.

Next, distribute paper and writing implements to participants. Tell participants to fold their piece of paper in half twice. On the top half, participants use the compiled flipchart lists to write words or draw pictures that describe the culture they come from.



On the bottom half, participants put in one quadrant the traditional traits they would like to keep in the United States and put in the other quadrant the traits they would be willing to change or give up. The traits in both quadrants should include things listed on the top half of the paper, under “My culture.”



Invite participants to share their culture pages with the entire group.

When working with a smaller or younger group of participants, the trainer may find it more effective to take a more active role in the group work section of this activity plan to assist in the brainstorming process.

Reflection

- ? Have you ever been in a situation before where you had to change your culture?
- ? How would it feel to lose a part of your culture?
- ? Why may it be challenging to find a good balance between the two cultures?
- ? In what ways do you think flexibility and patience will help you in the United States?
- ? What methods of U.S. hygiene are different from those you are used to?
- ? What parts of your culture and traditions will you try to keep in the United States?
- ? What parts of your culture and traditions are you willing to change in the United States? Why are you willing to change these?
- ? How might you balance cultures? Give examples.

❖ Expansions and Variations

- ∞ Distribute Cultural Adjustment: The Basics worksheets (p. 197) and writing implements to participants before viewing the DVD. Have participants check off the pictures as they see them on the DVD. Their choices can be used as talking points during the remainder of this activity.
- ∞ Have participants practice problem-solving skills. Ideas for activities can be found on these Web sites: http://www.ehow.com/how_2120954_teach-problem-solving-skills.html and http://curriculalessons.suite101.com/article.cfm/problem_solving_lesson_plan.
- ∞ Have participants practice decision-making skills. Ideas for activities can be found on these Web sites: <http://www.business-analysis-made-easy.com/Decision-Making-Model-In-Five-Steps.html> and <http://www.parenttrust.org/uploads/pdf/Tips/decisionmaking.pdf>.
- ∞ Lead a discussion on behaviors in the home culture that may not be understood or may be considered inappropriate in the United States. These could include spitting, chewing betel nut, urinating in public, blowing your nose on the ground, same-sex holding of hands, and avoiding eye contact.
- ∞ If participants are creating a *Story of Me* (see p. 5 in the introduction to this manual for more details) during CO, refer participants to the My Culture chart in their books.
- ∞ Ask participants what they have learned about life in the United States based on the CO they have received so far and what they have heard on the same topics from outside sources. Have participants identify what might be true and what might be myth. The trainer may find the DVD *Be Who You Are: Refugee Youth in the United States* useful for this discussion.

Learning English

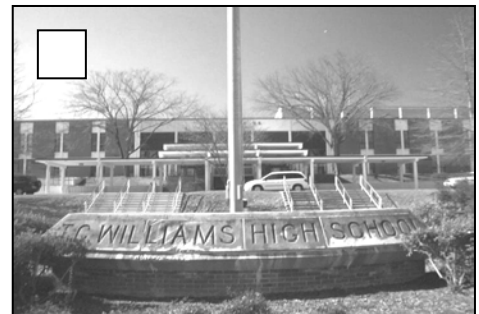
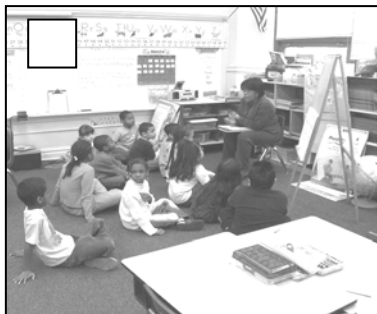
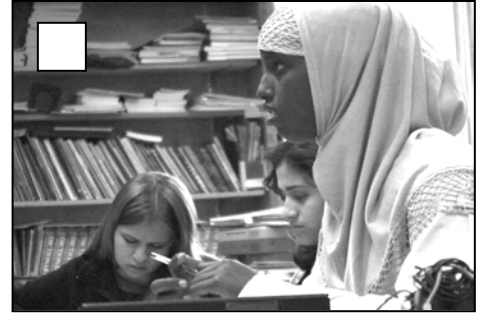
balance
flexible
tradition

change
patient

culture
represent

Unit 5: Cultural Adjustment DVD Worksheet
Cultural Adjustment: The Basics

Directions: As you watch the DVD, look for the images below. Put a check (✓) in the box when you see them.



Cultural Adjustment: Case Study

30 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To learn more about cultural adjustment issues in the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program and in the United States
- ✓ To identify real-life situations and issues that unaccompanied refugee minors have encountered regarding cultural adjustment
- ✓ To discuss potential solutions to some problems these youth may encounter regarding cultural adjustment



Materials

- Case study (see sample, p. 201; change names as appropriate to help participants relate to the situation), one copy per participant
- Prepared flipchart with reflection questions listed (see samples, p. 200)
- Markers
- Tape



Presentation

Refugee youth in the United States face different issues and have different concerns about the new country and culture they are living in. This activity will help you identify some of these issues and concerns. Through a case study, you will learn about the adjustment challenges that a refugee girl faced. Together, we will work through some possible solutions to her challenges. Thinking about challenges you may face in the United States may help you make good decisions and avoid some of the problems discussed in the case study.

This case study is based on the actual experiences of unaccompanied refugee minors. The names, locations, and other information have been changed, but the case study shows the real-life issues that these youth face in the United States.

Activity

Put participants into groups of two to four and distribute the case study. Have participants read the case study, answering the questions that have been inserted in it along the way. When they have finished, ask the small groups to answer the final reflection questions on the prepared flipchart.

Bring the large group together and ask for a spokesperson from each small group to summarize the main points of the small-group discussion. Discuss further as necessary.

When working with younger or less literate participants, the trainer can read the case study aloud to the group and then lead a large-group discussion about the reflection questions.

 Reflection

- ? What are the main issues presented in this case study? How did Malika handle these issues? How would you handle these issues?
- ? What steps could Malika have taken to avoid some of these issues ahead of time?
- ? What are some of the resources or supports Malika used? How did she use them? What other resources or supports might be available?

Learning English

current

festival

good friends

greet

make friends

past

traditional

understand

younger

Cultural Adjustment: Case Study (Handout)

Malika came to the United States from a refugee camp in Kenya when she was 16. She had lived in the refugee camp for 6 years with her aunt, uncle, and four younger cousins. She also had many good friends in the camp, and she left all of them behind when she came to the United States. Malika entered the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program because her aunt and uncle told her that it would allow her to get a good education and take care of her family in the future.

Malika's foster family was very kind, and she enjoyed the company of her younger foster brother. Malika started school shortly after she arrived in the United States, but she found it very difficult to follow the English used in her classes. She tried to make friends to improve her English. But it was hard to study when she was always worrying about her aunt and uncle and cousins. There was no work in the camps and they never had enough money, so Malika started working part-time after school to send money to them. But working and attending school was difficult. Because of her job, Malika did not have enough time to study for her classes.

What is happening? What challenges is Malika facing right now? What would you do if you were Malika?

Over time, Malika made a few good friends in her classes. But she often felt that they did not really understand how she felt about her family in Kenya or the challenges she had faced in the past. They were very nice and kind, but Malika did not always feel she could talk to them about her important family issues. Her foster family also listened, but Malika felt that they could not really understand her life in Kenya and Sudan. She felt cut off from her past and her culture.

During one of her visits with her case manager, Talle, Malika brought up the divide she felt between her current life in the United States and her past life in Kenya and Sudan. She talked about how the people in her life now were very kind and supportive, but they did not fully understand some of her concerns and past experiences.

Why does Malika feel cut off? Who did she turn to for help? What are other types of support? How might Malika try to help her new friends understand her past and her culture?

Talle suggested Malika meet some other children who lived in the area who had also lived in refugee camps in and around Kenya. Talle said that there were many others like Malika, although they were not part of the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program. Talle told Malika that there was an East African festival every other month on a Saturday afternoon and that this would be a good way for Malika to meet other refugee children from her part of the world. Malika agreed that this was something to try. Malika left the meeting feeling much better and excited about the chance to make new friends.

Two Saturdays later, Malika's foster mother drove her to the festival. Talle had arranged for Malika to meet up with Salah, a girl who was also from a refugee camp outside Nairobi. Salah was standing outside the gate waiting for Malika. Malika said goodbye to her foster mother, who would pick her up in 3 hours, and got out of the car to greet Salah. Salah gave Malika a big hug and took hold of her hand, walking her through the gates. Malika

could smell the familiar smells of grilled meats and vegetables and hear live Kenyan music playing. Malika smiled to herself as the two girls approached Salah's parent's booth. There they had a traditional lunch, and then they walked around to meet some of Salah's friends. They greeted Malika warmly. Malika told herself that the next time, she would bring her foster family and friends with her so that they could understand her culture better.

Where did Malika go? What happened when she got there? How might Malika balance her foster family, her friends from school, and the new friends she met at the festival?

Health: New Foods

45 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To identify common mealtimes in the United States
- ✓ To learn about different foods and the potential effects of new foods on the body
- ✓ To consider the value of trying new things
- ✓ To better understand the food pyramid and the importance of eating healthy food



Materials

- Eating Chart, one per participant (see sample, p. 209)
- Writing implements, one per participant
- Food Pyramid, one per participant (see sample, p. 211)
- Prepared flipchart with an enlarged Food Pyramid (see sample, p. 211)
- Flipchart paper
- Markers
- Tape
- Food Pictures, cut out (see samples, p. 213; laminated would be ideal)
- Food Groups List (see sample, p. 221)
- Sample Completed Food Pyramid (see sample, p. 221)
- Optional: magazines and newspapers
- Optional: scissors, to accompany the optional magazines and newspapers
- Optional: Health Vocabulary pictures, cut out (see samples, p. 223)



Presentation

You will see and try new and different foods in the United States. There may be a grocery store or market near you that sells foods from your country or part of the world, and there may be restaurants near your new home that serve food that is familiar to you. But in your foster family, you may be eating foods you have never tried before, and they may smell and look strange to you. At first, these new foods may upset your stomach, but don't worry: Your body will get used to the new foods. The important thing is to not be afraid to try new foods.

One thing you may want to do before you leave for the United States is learn how to cook the food you are used to. Then whenever you want to eat food from your country, you can cook it. And you can share it with your foster family.

Most people in the United States eat a meal called breakfast in the morning, lunch in the afternoon, and dinner in the evening. Different families eat their meals at different times, but people usually eat breakfast a short time after they wake up. Most people eat lunch between 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m., and dinner between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. Sometimes people have a small meal, called a snack, between meals.

Activity

Distribute the Eating Charts and writing implements to participants. Have them fill in the boxes with the names of the meal eaten at that time. Ask participants what a typical breakfast, lunch, and dinner look like.

Distribute copies of the blank Food Pyramid to participants. Inform participants that healthy eating is very important to a lot of people in the United States, and this is one of the most




important ways to stay healthy and not get sick. Tell participants that this pyramid divides foods into seven food groups (water, carbohydrates, vegetables, fruits, dairy, protein, and fats) and shows how much of each food an individual should eat each day. The bigger the space, the more servings a person should have from the food group. For instance, the water and carbohydrates spaces are the biggest, so an individual should have more water and carbohydrates than protein or dairy. The space for fats is smallest, so a person should eat the least amount of food from this group.

Distribute Food Pictures to participants. Lead a brainstorming session to discuss the different foods that would fit into each of the food groups shown on the Food Pyramid, and record these on flipchart paper. Use both the English word for the food and, if necessary, a translation of the word into a language that participants understand. Refer to the Food Groups List for brainstorming assistance. As foods are listed, have participants tape their Food Pictures onto both the enlarged Food Pyramid and their own blank Food Pyramid. Include foods common in the United States as well as foods with which participants are familiar. Refer to the Sample Completed Food Pyramid to see what healthy eating might look like.

When working with a smaller or younger group of participants, distribute magazines, newspapers, and scissors. Have participants find pictures of different foods to include in the Food Pyramid or create their own smaller food pyramid.

 Reflection

- ? Why do you think people in the United States care about the food they eat?
- ? How do you feel about eating healthy food? Is it important to you? Why or why not?
- ? How are you feeling about eating new and different foods?
- ? Do you think you will try to share your foods with your foster family?

 Expansions and Variations

- ∞ Provide participants with some common foods found in the United States to taste. Include variations of a common breakfast (cereal, pancakes), lunch (sandwich), and dinner (lasagna, chicken with potatoes). Discuss the differences between meals and foods in the participants' home country or country of asylum and those in the United States. Inform participants that sometimes breakfast and lunch are combined into brunch.
- ∞ Have participants create a healthy eating menu for a day or a week, following the amounts recommended by the food pyramid. Share some cafeteria menus with participants from a typical U.S. school. Some samples can be found at the following Web sites: http://www.fcps.edu/fs/food/food_at_school/, <http://www.rcs.k12.va.us/menu/monthly.shtml>, <http://www.buffalo.k12.ok.us/WeeklyMenu.html>, <http://www.henrico.k12.va.us/parents/lunchmenus.html>, and <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/foodserv/menus/cafemenus.shtml>.
- ∞ In CO in the United States, take participants to a grocery store and explore the different foods available and their uses, or have participants create a menu of what they currently eat and then explore ways to change that menu to start healthier eating habits.

- ∞ If there is not time to address healthy eating habits during CO, consider putting up a food pyramid poster (see sample, p. 221) to encourage participants to learn more about it. Some additional samples with pictures are available on these Web sites: http://www.oakhills.k12.oh.us/ohlsd08_09/District/departments/Food%20Service/Food%20Pyramid.JPG and http://library.thinkquest.org/CR0210621/food_pyramid.gif.
- ∞ Have participants practice key health words using the Health Vocabulary pictures (see samples, p. 223) following this activity as cue cards for the words *healthy, food, clean, shampoo, toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, deodorant, razor, exercise, breakfast, lunch, dinner, cleanup, boots, hat, jacket, gloves, scarf, and Band-Aid*.
- ∞ If participants are creating a *Story of Me* (see p. 5 in the introduction to this manual for more details) during CO, refer participants to the Eating Chart and Food Pyramid in their books.






Additional Resources

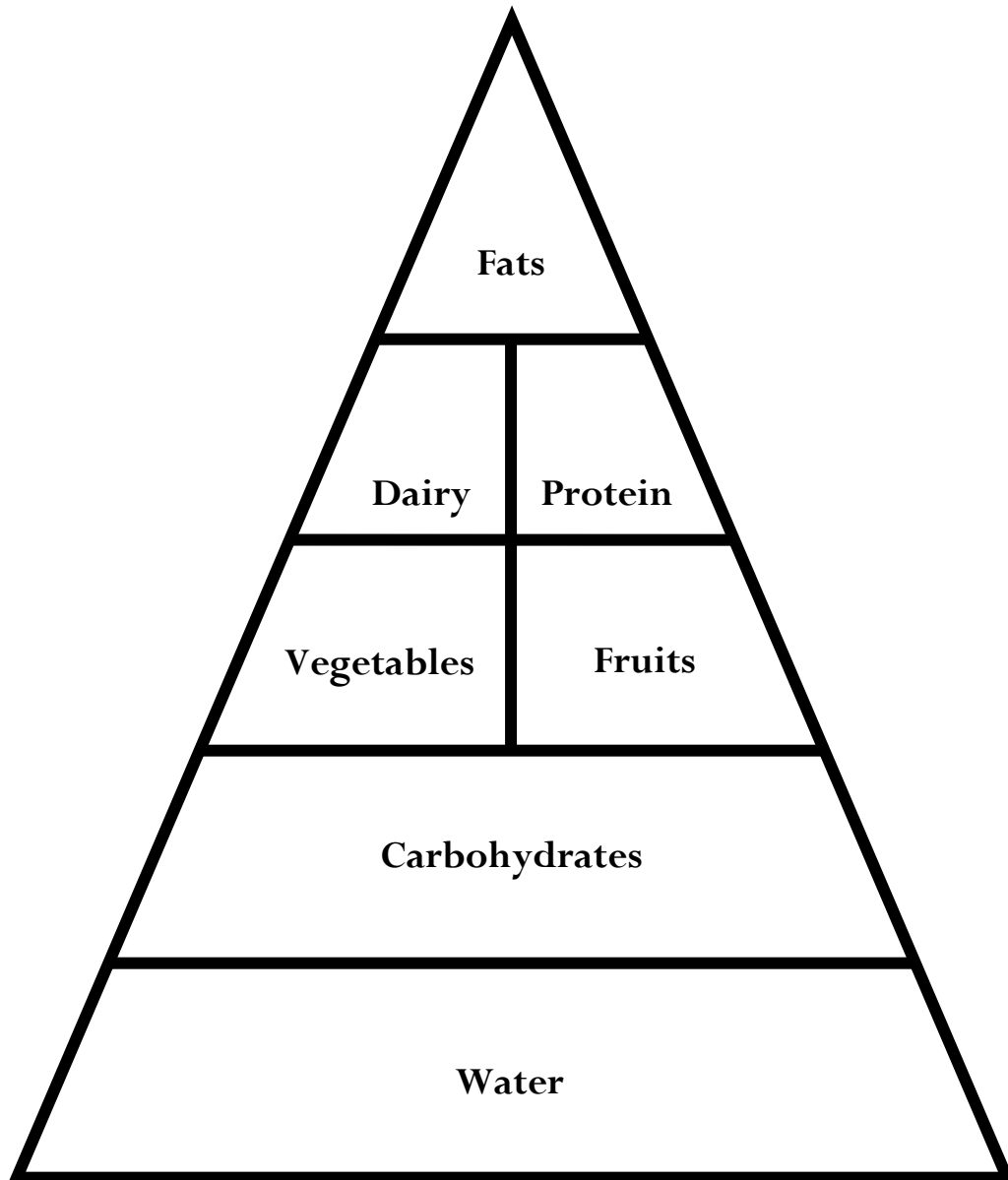
- ✦ The U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI) (<http://www.refugees.org/>) provides information on healthy eating habits and nutrition at <http://www.refugees.org/nutritiontoolkit> and also through the Cultural Orientation Resource Center’s resource materials (<http://www.culturalorientation.net>). See in particular USCRI’s “Healthy Eating, Healthy Living in the United States: A Nutrition Education Flip Chart.”

Learning English		
breakfast	cook	dinner
food	grocery store or market	healthy
lunch	meal	restaurant
snack		






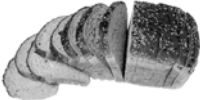






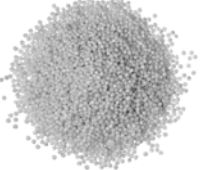









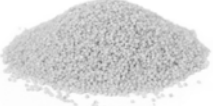
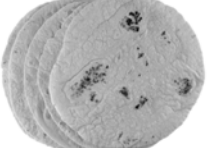




Eating Chart (Handout)





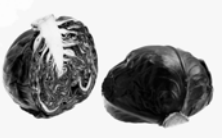



















		
Morning	Afternoon	Evening


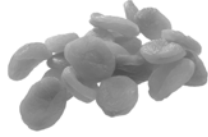
















Food Pyramid (Handout)



















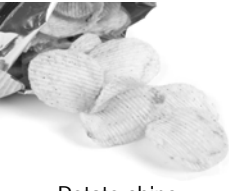


Food Pictures (Training Material)

Water	 Water	 Water	 Water	 Water	
Carbohydrates and grains (6 servings per day)	 Amaranth	 Bread	 Cereal	 Cornbread	
	 Couscous	 Crackers	 French fries	 Grits	
	 Millet	 Muesli	 Noodles	 Oatmeal	
	 Pasta	 Pitas	 Popcorn	 Pretzels	
	 Quinoa	 Rice	 Sorghum	 Tortillas	
	Dairy (3 servings per day)	 Cheese	 Ice cream	 Milk	 Pudding

Vegetables (3 servings per day)				
	Artichoke	Asparagus	Beets	Broccoli
				
	Cabbage	Carrots	Cauliflower	Celery
				
	Corn	Cucumber	Eggplant	Greens
				
Mushrooms	Okra	Onions	Peas	
				
Pepper	Potatoes	Pumpkin	Spinach	
				
Squash	String beans	Tomatoes	Zucchini	

Fruits (2 servings per day)	 Apples	 Apricots	 Avocados	 Bananas
	 Berries	 Grapefruit	 Grapes	 Kiwi
	 Lemons	 Limes	 Mangoes	 Melons
	 Oranges	 Papaya	 Peaches	 Pear
	 Pineapple	 Plums		

Protein (2 servings per day)	 Beans	 Beef	 Eggs	 Fish
	 Game	 Liver	 Meats	 Nuts
	 Peas	 Poultry	 Soy	 Tofu
Fats/oils (use sparingly)	 Beef fat	 Butter	 Candy	 Margarine
	 Oil	 Pork fat	 Potato chips	

Food Groups List (Training Material)

Carbohydrates and grains (six servings per day): amaranth, bread, cereal, cornbread, couscous, crackers, french fries, grits, millet, muesli, noodles, oatmeal, pasta, pita, popcorn, pretzels, quinoa, rice, sorghum, tortillas

Dairy (three servings per day): cheese, ice cream, milk, pudding, yogurt

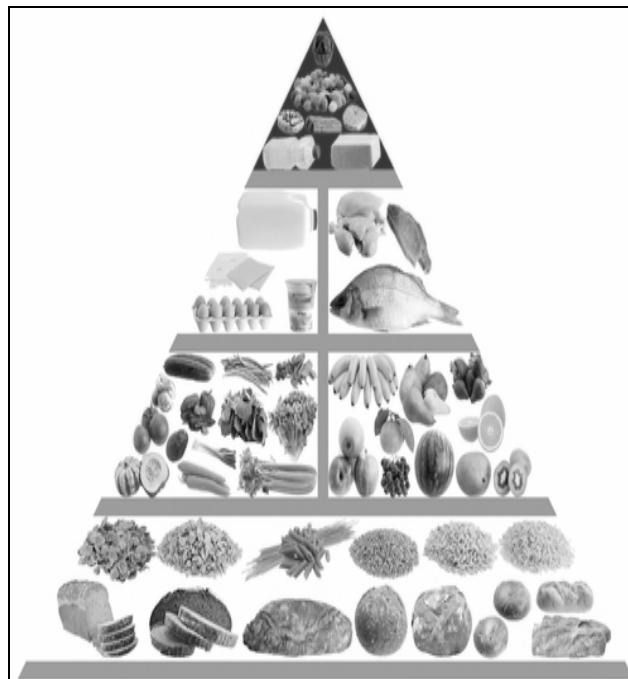
Fats/oils (use small amounts): beef fat, butter, candy, chicken fat, margarine, oil, pork fat, potato chips, shortening

Fruits (two servings per day): apples, apricots, avocados, bananas, berries, grapefruit, grapes, kiwi, lemons, limes, mangoes, melons, oranges, papayas, peaches, pears, pineapples, plums

Protein (two servings per day): beans, beef, eggs, fish, liver, meats, nuts, peas, pork, poultry, soy, tofu

Vegetables (three servings per day): artichokes, asparagus, beets, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, corn, cucumber, eggplant, greens, mushrooms, okra, onions, peas, peppers, potatoes, pumpkins, spinach, squash, sprouts, string beans, tomatoes, zucchini

Sample Completed Food Pyramid (Training Material)



(Additional Web site samples included in the Expansions and Variations section of the activity plan.)

Health Vocabulary (Training Material)

 <p>Healthy bodies</p>	 <p>Healthy food</p>	 <p>Getting clean in the shower</p>
 <p>Using shampoo to wash hair</p>	 <p>Toothbrush (to brush teeth)</p>	 <p>Toothpaste (on the toothbrush)</p>
 <p>Band-Aids go over cuts to keep them clean</p>	 <p>Razor</p>	 <p>Soap</p>

 <p>Deodorant</p>	 <p>Getting exercise is good for a healthy body</p>	 <p>Cleaning up</p>
 <p>Winter jacket</p>	 <p>Winter hat</p>	 <p>Scarf</p>
 <p>Winter boots</p>	 <p>Gloves</p>	

Dealing With Culture Shock

30 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To better understand culture shock
- ✓ To learn about being proactive in the United States



Materials

- Blank paper, one piece per participant
- Drawing implements (markers, crayons, or colored pencils), two per participant
- Sample Shapes, cut out (see samples, p. 231), two per participant
- Prepared flipchart with U-Curve of Culture Shock (see sample, p. 233)
- Flipchart paper
- Markers
- Tape
- Optional: paper, one piece per participant



Presentation

Culture shock is a very normal thing for people when they move to a new place, even if it is just a new town or city in the same country. But people are often surprised by culture shock. They often feel that they are ready for the changes, and they do not expect to have such negative feelings. Even though culture shock is normal, it can be uncomfortable. It is important to recognize your negative feelings, but you should also try to move beyond them toward your goals.



Activity

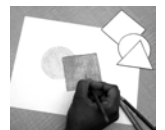
Distribute paper, drawing implements, and Sample Shapes to small groups of participants. Instruct each participant to choose one shape and one drawing implement. Participants place the cut-out shape on their paper and trace it with the drawing implement.



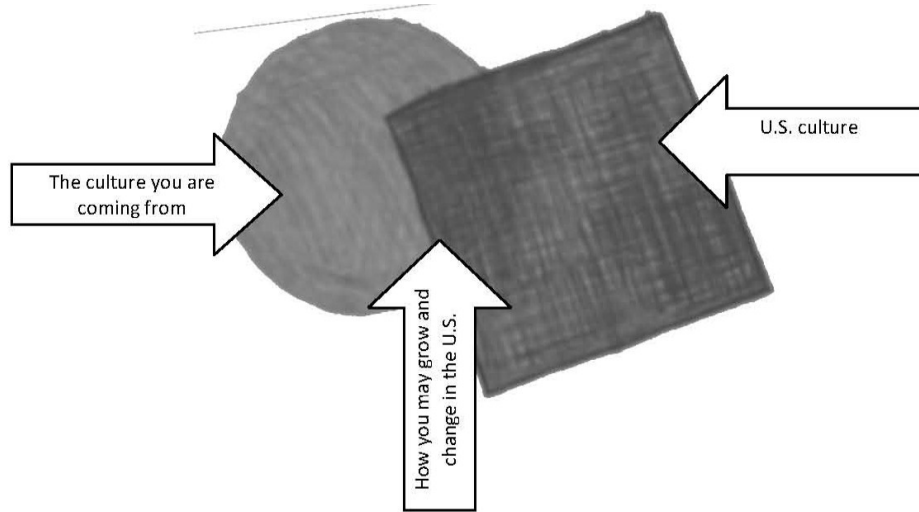
Instruct participants to choose another shape and a different-color drawing implement. Participants place this shape on their paper, but this time it must partly overlap the first outlined shape. It can overlap a lot or a little. When the second shape overlaps the first outlined shape, participants trace the second shape's outline on their paper.



Participants then color in each shape, fully, with the same drawing implement they used to trace the outline of the shape. The two colors should overlap, creating a third color, a combination of the two colors.



Tell participants that the first shape represents the culture they grew up in or are coming from, while the second shape represents the culture of the United States (see sample below). The area in the middle, the third color, represents their new culture in the United States, a combination of the home and U.S. cultures. Point out a few people's colored shapes, and note how one can have just a little overlap between the two cultures, while another can have a lot of overlap. Explain that this may change over time, that participants can redraw their shapes as time passes (figuratively speaking). Discuss as necessary.



Hang the U-Curve of Culture Shock flipchart.

Tell participants that when they first move to the United States, they will probably be in their honeymoon period where everything is new and exciting. (Point out this stage on the curve, and explain the term *honeymoon*.) After a time, they may start to miss their home: their family, friends, food, and other parts of their culture, and things in the new culture may begin to bother them. When this happens, they will be in the stage of culture shock. (Point out this stage on the curve.)

Have participants brainstorm things they might miss about the home culture and things that might bother them about life in the United States. These might include family and friends, food, not being able to work anymore, frustration with learning English, and adapting to a new school or family environment. Write these on flipchart paper. Then discuss the third stage of the U-Curve of Culture Shock (adjustment), when things usually get easier, as the person gets used to the new culture and becomes accustomed to it. Finally, address mastery, the fourth and final stage of culture shock, where the individual experiences comfort in their new culture.

Tell participants that people in the United States like to be proactive. Explain the term: “When you are proactive, you don’t wait for a problem to happen and then act; you take steps to make sure the problem does not happen.” Explain that people who are proactive are self-motivated: they don’t wait for others to tell them what to do; they see for themselves what needs to be done and they do it.

Ask participants how they can be proactive and self-motivated in their adjustment to school. Some ideas include seeking help with schoolwork, introducing yourself to potential new friends, and getting involved in school clubs or organizations. Write participant ideas on flipchart paper.

When working with a younger group of participants, distribute paper and drawing implements. Have participants draw pictures of changes they might experience in the United States and things from the home culture they may miss, as well as pictures of themselves being proactive and self-motivated (e.g., talking to their teacher about a problem at school). When working with a smaller group of participants, the trainer may find it more effective to take a more active role in the brainstorming part of this activity.

● Reflection

- ? How will you be aware of culture shock?
- ? How will you be proactive in dealing with culture shock?
- ? Who will you talk with about your culture shock?
- ? Why is being proactive important?

❖ Expansions and Variations

- ∞ If creating a *Story of Me* (see p. 5 in the introduction to this manual for more details) during CO, refer participants to the Shapes of Culture page and the U-Curve of Culture Shock in their books. Encourage participants to visit the U-Curve chart weekly upon resettlement, and mark where they feel they are on the U-curve for that week. Explain that it is very normal to feel that you are at times moving backwards on the curve.
- ∞ In an activity developed by the International Rescue Committee administered Overseas Processing Entity in Southeast Asia, participants list 10 things they would like to do once they arrive in the United States. Using this information, the trainer then leads participants in a discussion about some of the things they might do during their initial adjustment stage.

Learning English

adjustment

culture shock

feelings

goals

honeymoon

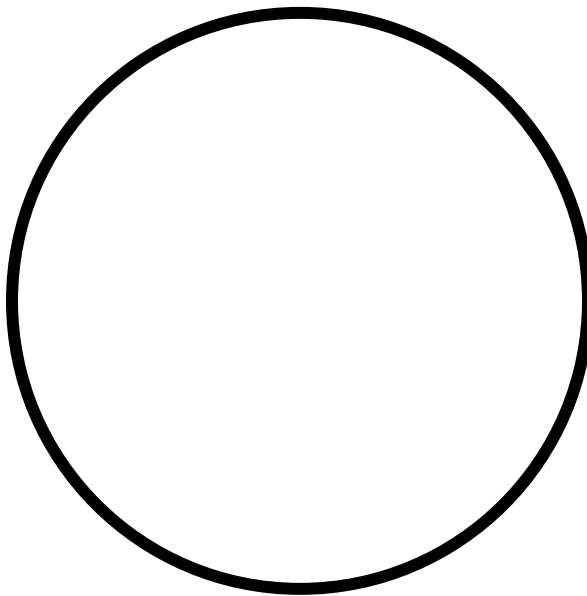
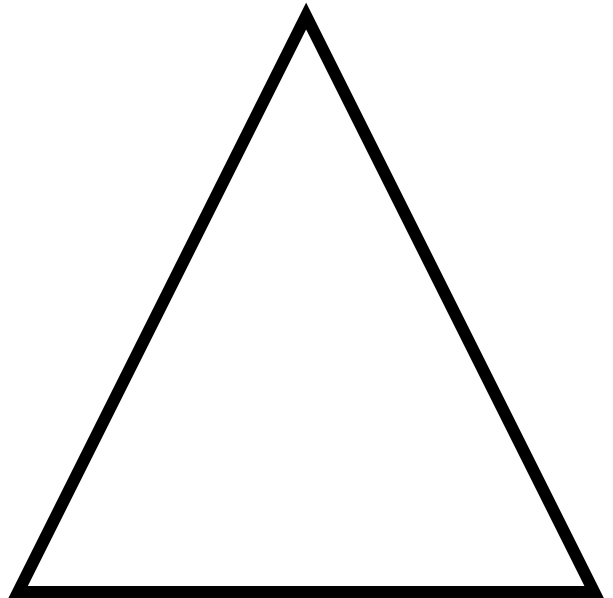
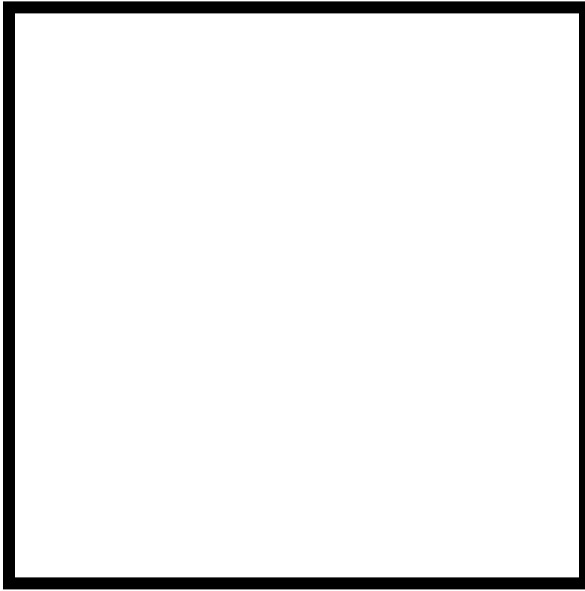
normal

proactive

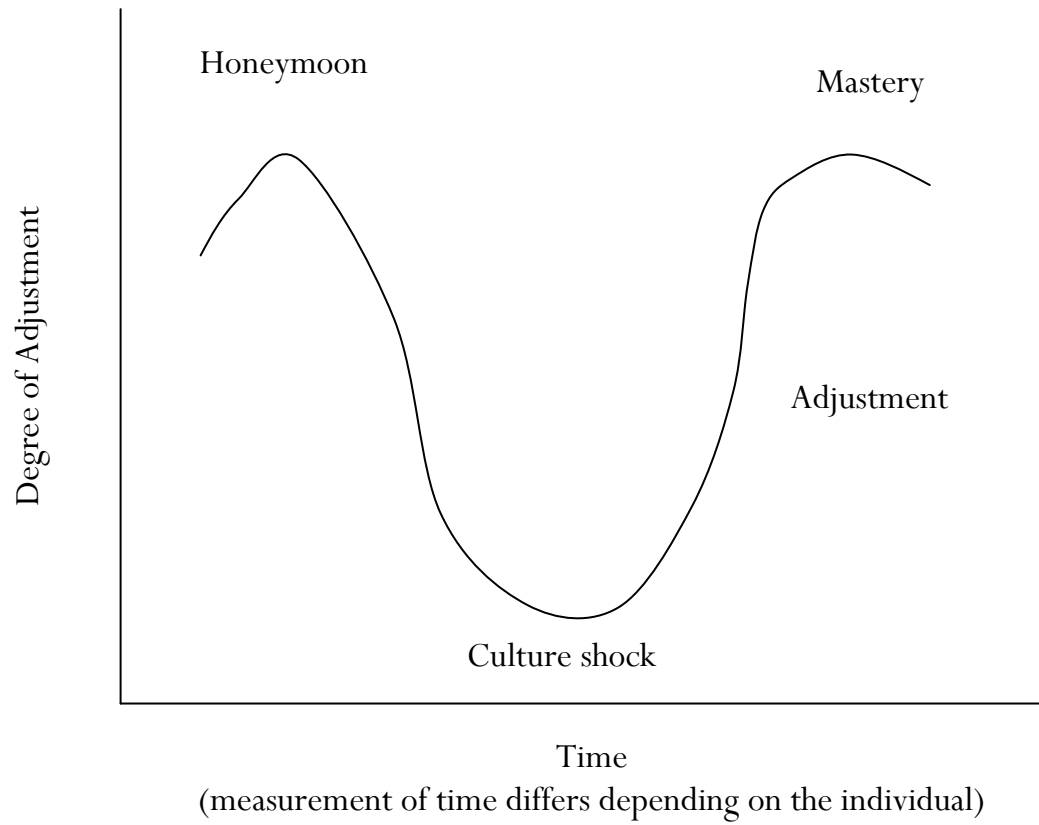
self-motivated

uncomfortable

Sample Shapes (Training Material)



U-Curve of Culture Shock (Training Material)



Home and Community: Fitting In

25 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To explore unaccompanied refugee minors' comfort levels with many of the changes they will face in the United States
- ✓ To consider feelings of alienation, loneliness, and not fitting in, and how entering the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program affects the lives of the individual



Materials

- ☐ Two signs: one that reads “Very Strong” and the other “Very Weak”
- ☐ Tape
- ☐ Spectrum Statements (see samples, p. 237)
- ☐ Optional: Home and Community: Fitting In worksheet (see sample, p. 239)



Presentation

You will face many changes in the United States, and you will have different feelings about them. You will feel very strongly about some of them and you will not feel strongly at all about others. In some cases, you may feel somewhat strongly about the changes. In this activity, we are going to look at the range, or spectrum, of feelings that you have about the changes you will face in the United States.



Activity

Hang the two signs on opposite sides of the room. Move all furniture between these signs out of the way. Explain to participants that you have created a spectrum: At one end are very strong feelings, and at the other end are very weak feelings. Tell participants that you will read a statement and they must decide how strongly they feel about the statement. If their feelings are very strong, they should stand at the “Very Strong” end of the spectrum; if their feelings are very weak, they should stand at the other end; and if their feelings are neither very strong nor very weak, they should stand somewhere in between.

Read the Spectrum Statements one by one to participants. For each statement, give participants time to decide where they will stand on the spectrum. Discuss why participants feel strongly or do not feel strongly about the statement before moving on to the next statement.

Reflection

- ? Which statements surprised you the most?
- ? Which statements surprised you the least?
- ? In what ways might improving your English help you adjust to the changes you will face?
- ? How are you feeling about moving to the United States?

Expansions and Variations

- ∞ If participants are creating a *Story of Me* (see p. 5 of the Introduction of this manual for more details) during CO, refer participants to the Spectrum Chart in their books. Participants indicate where they stood on the spectrum for the activity statements.

On Their Way

Unit 5: Cultural Adjustment

- ∞ When working with very literate participants, and in an effort to conserve time, make use of the Spectrum Statements worksheet and/or the Spectrum Chart (see samples included). Participants indicate where they stood on the spectrum for the activity statements.
- ∞ In CO in the United States, define and discuss appropriate dress, rape, date rape, and child support. Note that child support is the responsibility of both parents.

Learning English

comfort

expensive

feel strong or weak

fit in

loneliness

peer pressure

spend money wisely

Spectrum Statements (Training Material)

- Many things, such as food and clothing, may be more expensive in the United States.
- I will need to learn how to budget and spend my money wisely.
- I am able to say no to things I do not want to do.
- I do not like to ask others for help.
- I want to return to my home country to live one day.
- The Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program in the United States will help me become an "American."
- I worry about pressure from my family at home. They need so much and think I will be making money.
- I may never return to my home country or country of asylum.
- I might be the only person in my school or community who speaks my language or who is from my country.
- I worry about how people of different races get along in the United States.
- I can think of three ways to handle pressure or feelings of stress at school or from friends.
- People in the United States will know very little about my country or culture.

Unit 5: Cultural Adjustment DVD Worksheet
Home and Community: Fitting In

Directions: Read each statement below. Decide how you feel about the statement on the spectrum from "Very weak" (1) to "Very strong" (5). Put a check (✓) in the box that accurately portrays how you feel about the statement.

	Very weak				Very strong
1. I am able to say no to things I do not want to do.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I can think of three ways to handle pressure or feelings of stress at school.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Many things such as food or clothing may be more expensive in the United States.	1	2	3	4	5
4. The Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program in the United States will help me become an "American."	1	2	3	4	5
5. I might be the only person in my school or community who speaks my language or who is from my country.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I will need to learn how to budget and spend my money wisely.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I do not like asking others for help.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I worry about how people of different races get along in the United States.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I worry about pressure from my family at home. They need so much and think I will be making money.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I may never return to my home country or country of asylum.	1	2	3	4	5
11. People in the United States may know very little about my country or culture.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I want to return to my home country to live one day.	1	2	3	4	5

Home and Community: Appliances and Electronics

25 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To identify common appliances in U.S. homes
- ✓ To understand the purpose of these appliances
- ✓ To practice English skills relating to U.S. home appliances



Materials

- ☐ Flipchart paper
- ☐ Tape
- ☐ Common U.S. Appliance Cards, cut out (see samples, p. 243)
- ☐ Markers



Presentation

Many houses in the United States have appliances and electronic devices that you may not have used before. Many of these appliances are used to make housework easier. The electronic devices help people communicate with each other. It will be useful for you to learn what the appliances are and how to use the ones that you may find in your new home.



Activity

Hang a piece of flipchart paper in the front of the room. Explain that one volunteer participant will receive a card with the name, picture, and purpose of a common U.S. appliance. The volunteer will then have to draw the U.S. appliance, and other participants must try to guess what the appliance does. Tell participants that the volunteer cannot say anything or write any letters on the flipchart paper. The first person to guess the use of the appliance keeps the original card the volunteer was given. Whoever has the most cards at the end of the game wins.

Ask for one volunteer to start the game. Bring the volunteer to the front of the classroom and give her or him a Common U.S. Appliance Card. Ensure all participants follow the rules; if rules are not followed, the volunteer must start over with a new card. Once the purpose of an appliance is correctly guessed, give the proper name of the appliance (both in English and in the participants' native language[s] if possible) and its purpose. The participant who guesses the name of the appliance draws the next card. Continue until all cards are drawn.

Reflection

- ? What is the strangest appliance you learned about today, and what does it do?
- ? What do you think will be the most helpful appliance?
- ? Which appliance do you think you will use most often?
- ? How are you feeling about the use of these new appliances?

Expansions and Variations

- ∞ When working with a smaller group of participants, hand out copies of the three pages of Common U.S. Appliance Cards and have participants write in the translation of the name of each appliance while discussing its use.

On Their Way

Unit 5: Cultural Adjustment

- ∞ In CO in the United States, discuss the concept of “reduce, reuse, recycle.” For more information on this idea, visit the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences’ Web site at <http://kids.niehs.nih.gov/recycle.htm>.
- ∞ Do an activity on communication devices. Discuss phone cards and calling home; appropriate use of and safety on the Internet; telephone skills, telemarketers, and appropriate times to make and receive calls; and mail, junk mail, and the postal system in the United States.

Learning English

appliance

devices

electronic

electronics

game

rule

Common U.S. Appliance Cards (Training Material)

Washing machine
Translation: _____

Use: to wash clothing

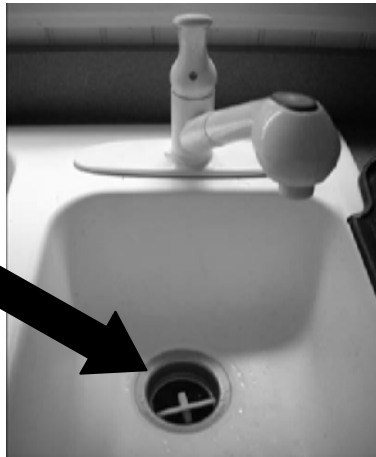


Dryer

Translation: _____
Use: to dry clothing after it is washed

Garbage disposal
Translation: _____

Use: to get rid of food scraps; a kitchen appliance found in a sink



Air conditioner

Translation: _____
Use: to cool the temperature of an indoor space



Kitchen sink

Translation: _____
Use: to wash dishes, etc., in the kitchen



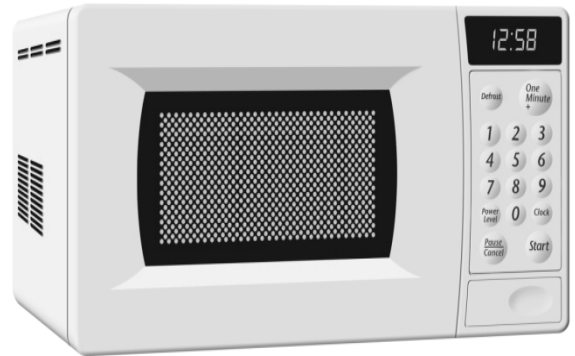
Bathroom sink

Translation: _____
Use: to wash in the bathroom

Shower

Translation: _____

Use: to wash the body



Microwave

Translation: _____

Use: to warm food

Cell phone

Translation: _____

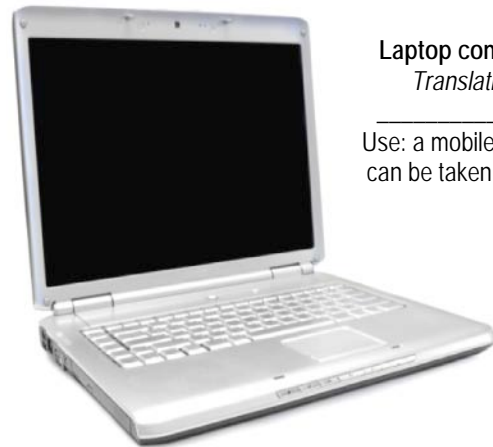
Use: to communicate with others both inside and outside the home



Laptop computer

Translation: _____

Use: a mobile computer; can be taken anywhere



Stove

Translation: _____

Use: to cook food over a contained open fire, often on top of an oven



Oven

Translation: _____

Use: to bake or roast foods in a compartment, often below a stove





Desktop computer

Translation: _____

Use: for word processing, Internet access, and other computer-related uses



Dishwasher

Translation: _____

Use: to wash larger amounts of dishes at once

*Photo courtesy of
Shannon L. Russell*

Time and Planning

20 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To gain a basic understanding of the importance of time in the United States
- ✓ To understand the need in the United States to be on time for school, work, and appointments
- ✓ To think about how to be on time and plan ahead



Materials

- Role-Play Cards, cut out (see samples, p. 251)
- Optional: paper, one piece per participant
- Optional: drawing implements, to accompany the optional paper



Presentation

Being on time in the United States is very important, especially for school, work, and appointments. If you are supposed to be somewhere at 8:00, people think it is better and more responsible if you arrive by 7:55. In the United States, the general rule is to be early rather than late. Regular attendance at school and staying at school throughout the entire school day are also very important.

It is also important to plan ahead for your appointments. For example, if you need to see a doctor, you need to first call and make an appointment. If for some reason you cannot attend the appointment, then you need to call and cancel it. If you cannot arrive on time, you should call and say that you are going to be late.

Activity

Put participants into pairs or small groups and distribute Role-Play Cards. Note that each role-play scenario has two or more roles as indicated on the cards. Have participants read the role card, discuss the role-play, and assign the roles to members of the group. Participants may create additional roles as needed. Give participants about 10 minutes to prepare the role-plays, and then bring the entire group together. Have groups perform their role-plays, and discuss as necessary.

When working with a smaller group of participants or with a group reluctant to engage in role-plays, distribute paper and drawing implements. Encourage participants to draw pictures representing what they would do if faced with the situation described in two to three of the role-plays.

Reflection

- ? What could the refugee youth have done differently in these situations to have avoided the situation?
- ? What is important to remember about the way people in the United States deal with time?
- ? In what situations is being on time very important?

On Their Way

Unit 5: Cultural Adjustment

- ? In what way does planning ahead have to do with time?
- ? How will you make sure you are on time for school, work, and appointments?
- ? How will understanding English help you be on time and plan ahead?

✦ Expansions and Variations

- ∞ Have participants practice key words relating to punctuality and planning: *late, planner, alarm clock, calendar, holiday, vacation, plan, assignment, schedule, attendance, detention, and suspension.*
- ∞ Do an activity on planning that requires participants to use a day planner.

Learning English

appointment

attendance

cancel

late

on time

plan ahead

responsible

time

Role-Play Cards (Training Material)

<p><u>Role-Play 1</u></p> <p>Roles: refugee child, receptionist at doctor's office</p> <p>The refugee child is on a bus going to a doctor's appointment. The bus is stuck in traffic. The child realizes the bus will arrive later than the appointment at the doctor's office. What can the child do?</p>	<p><u>Role-Play 2</u></p> <p>Roles: refugee child, history teacher</p> <p>The refugee child's last class of the day is history. After class, the student goes to a math tutoring session, which has helped to improve the student's math grades. At the end of history class one day, the history teacher asks the student to stay after class to discuss a recent test. But this will make the student late for the math tutoring session. What can she or he do?</p>
<p><u>Role-Play 3</u></p> <p>Roles: refugee child, foster parent, soccer coach</p> <p>At breakfast, the refugee child tells the foster parent that the child will be home after soccer practice by 6:00 p.m. for dinner. Now it is 5:45 p.m. and soccer practice is not over. There is no way that the child can be home by 6:00. What can the child do?</p>	<p><u>Role-Play 4</u></p> <p>Roles: refugee child, foster parent</p> <p>The refugee child made plans to meet friends and watch a movie. The foster parent gives the child permission to do this, as long as the child finishes household chores before leaving. It is almost time for the movie, and the child has not finished the chores. What can she or he do?</p>

Unit 6: Social Interactions

Topic Overview for the Trainer







This section looks at unaccompanied refugee minors' social interactions and relationships. Most of the material applies to all refugee youth.

To succeed in the United States, refugee minors need to form positive and healthy relationships at home, at school, and at work. As they explore ways to make friends, participants consider the importance of role models and positive friendships and learn about cross-cultural communication, communication strategies, and nonverbal communication.

The following chart gives a brief overview of the activities in Unit 6. The first activity provides an overview of the topic and contains the most important information. It is recommended that this activity be provided in all CO trainings for unaccompanied refugee minors, with additional activities covered as time permits.

Unit 6: Social Interactions	Time							Page
Social Interactions: The Basics	25 min	✓	✓	✓		✓		255
Social Interactions: Case Study	30 min	✓	✓	✓	✓			259
Role Models	25 min	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		265
Communicating a Positive Environment	25 min	✓	✓	✓	✓			267
Listening Skills	20 min	✓	✓	✓	✓			269
Nonverbal Communication	35 min	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	271

KEY

<i>Icon</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Icon</i>	<i>Description</i>
	Knowledge		Expansions for <i>Story of Me</i>
	Skills		Variations for poster(s)
	Attitudes		Transferable to youth CO (with adaptations)

Social Interactions: The Basics

25 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To provide an overview of social interactions in the United States
- ✓ To explore possible feelings of isolation
- ✓ To brainstorm ways to make friends
- ✓ To better understand how friendships develop



Materials

- ☐ Critical Incident Cards, cut out (see samples, p. 257)
- ☐ Optional: paper, one piece per participant
- ☐ Optional: drawing implements, to accompany the optional paper



Presentation

You may be very lonely and sad when you first move to the United States. You may have to leave friends you made before you came to the United States, and it may seem hard to make friends when you first arrive. It can take a long time to make friends in a new country. Some refugee youth have found it helpful to meet other young refugees who have already gone through the adjustments they are going through. Learning English will also help you meet other people and make friends.

Some of the first people you meet in the United States will be your caseworker at the resettlement agency and your foster family. You will also meet people your own age at school, in your community, and through the resettlement agency. These people will provide support to you in different ways.



Activity

Put participants into pairs or small groups. Distribute a Critical Incident Card to each group. Participants read the critical incident described, discuss the situation, and explain what they would do to solve it by answering the questions on the card.

Bring the large group together and ask for a spokesperson from each small group to summarize the discussion from that group.

When working with a smaller, younger, or less literate group of participants, the trainer may find it more effective to read the critical incidents aloud to participants and take an active role in the discussion. The trainer can also distribute paper and drawing implements and have participants draw pictures about the critical incidents.

Reflection

- ? Why are friends important?
- ? How do you best build positive friendships?
- ? In what ways might your involvement with your resettlement agency enhance your friendships?
- ? Why are interactions with your foster family important?

- ? How will learning English enhance your friendships and relationships in the United States?

❖ Expansions and Variations

- ∞ Have participants brainstorm how they can make friends. Some ideas include attending events at the resettlement agency and at school, getting involved in extracurricular activities at school, participating in peer tutoring, and meeting kids from other countries.
- ∞ Have participants practice greeting and departure skills, saying please and thank you, and using polite questions instead of demands (e.g., “Would you please drive me home?” instead of “Drive me home.”). Encourage participants to practice these skills throughout CO training.
- ∞ Have participants practice key words relating to friendship: *friends*, *smile*, *playground*, *recess*, *tolerance*, and *communicate*.
- ∞ If participants are creating a *Story of Me* (see p. 5 in the introduction to this manual for more details) during CO, refer participants to the Social Interactions page in their books, where they can write about or draw ways they can make friends in the United States.

Learning English

community

a good friend

meet

support

friendship

lonely

peers

frustrated

making fun of

sad

Critical Incident Cards (Training Material)

<p><u>Critical Incident Card 1</u></p> <p>After about 3 months in the United States, you are starting to feel settled in your new home and comfortable with your foster family. Your foster family seems to be feeling the same way. But you sometimes feel frustrated with the rules you must follow at home, such as coming home for dinner every evening after you are through with school. Who do you talk to about this? What are some differences between your culture and the U.S. culture regarding family structure and rules?</p>	<p><u>Critical Incident Card 2</u></p> <p>Some of your classmates have been making fun of your accent and your lack of English language skills. What do you do? How do you feel? How can you make yourself more comfortable and explain how you are feeling to your new classmates?</p>
<p><u>Critical Incident Card 3</u></p> <p>You have made a lot of friends at your new school. You heard it might be challenging to make friends in the United States, so you are happy with the friends you have. But you are starting to feel that even though you have friends, you have not been able to get really close to them. How do you feel about this? Why do you think this is? What differences do you notice between your culture and the U.S. culture regarding friendship and socializing?</p>	<p><u>Critical Incident Card 4</u></p> <p>Some of your classmates at your new school have been making fun of your clothing and saying that you smell bad. One of your classmates invites you to join her or his group of friends. These students are known to fight, skip school, and talk back to their teachers, but finally you have been asked to join a group. What do you do? What do you think would happen if you joined this group?</p>
<p><u>Critical Incident Card 5</u></p> <p>You have become friends with one of your classmates at school. Often you get ice cream together after school or practice. One day, you go to your friend's house to visit. Your friend is surprised to see you and does not invite you inside. "I'm sorry," your friend says. "I'm busy. I'll see you at school tomorrow." What do you do? How do you feel? Why did your friend react this way? What are some of the differences between your culture and U.S. culture regarding socializing and friendship?</p>	

Social Interactions: Case Study

30 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To learn more about social interactions in the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program and in the United States
- ✓ To identify real-life situations and issues that unaccompanied refugee minors have encountered in their social interactions in the United States
- ✓ To discuss potential solutions to some problems these youth may encounter in their social interactions



Materials

- ☐ Case study (see sample, p. 261; change names as appropriate to help participants relate to the situation), one copy per participant
- ☐ Prepared flipchart with reflection questions listed (see samples, p. 260)
- ☐ Markers
- ☐ Tape



Presentation

Refugee youth in the United States face different issues and have different concerns about social interactions and friendship. This activity will help you identify some of these issues and concerns. Through a case study, you will learn about the challenges a refugee girl from Burma faced as she tried to make friends in her new community. Together, we will work through some possible solutions to her challenges. Thinking about similar challenges you may face in the United States may help you make good decisions and avoid some of the problems discussed in the case study.

This case study is based on the actual experiences of unaccompanied refugee minors. The names, locations, and other information have been changed, but the case study shows the real-life issues that these youth face in the United States.

Activity

Put participants into groups of two to four and distribute the case study. Have participants read the case study, answering the questions that have been inserted in it along the way. When they have finished, ask the small groups to answer the final reflection questions on the prepared flipchart.

Bring the large group together and ask for a spokesperson from each small group to summarize the main points from the small-group discussion. Discuss further as necessary.

When working with younger or less literate participants, the trainer can read the case study aloud to the group and then lead a large-group discussion of the reflection questions.

 Reflection

- ? What are the main issues presented in this case study? How did Saw Thein handle these issues? How would you handle these issues?
- ? What steps could have been taken to avoid some of these issues ahead of time?
- ? What are some of the resources or supports that Saw Thein used? How did she use them? What other resources or supports might be available?

Learning English

advice

compliment

options

after-school activity

confident

participate

communicate

disappointed

Social Interactions: Case Study (Handout)

Saw Thein came to the United States from Burma in June, when she was 15 years old. She missed her family and friends in Burma and Malaysia a lot, but she was very happy with her foster mother and her two younger foster sisters. Like Saw Thein, they were from Burma.

Saw Thein's case manager, Melea, introduced her to other children her age from Burma who had also resettled in the area. Saw Thein enjoyed meeting these children. Many of them understood her native language, and all of them spoke Burmese. She spent a lot of time that summer participating in activities organized by the resettlement agency and became very good friends with the other children from Burma. She felt she was creating friendships with children who had more experience in the United States and could teach her about U.S. customs and behavior.

Where has Saw Thein made friends so far?

But when school started in September, Saw Thein found herself in classes with children she had never met before. She was the only student in all her classes who spoke her language, and she did not feel her English was good enough for her to communicate in that language. Saw Thein tried to see her Burmese friends from the summer as often as possible, but as the school year went on they got busier. Many participated in after-school activities such as sports teams, the school newspaper, and art club. Saw Thein began spending more and more time at home with her foster family, studying for her classes and learning English alone.

By the end of October, Saw Thein had not made any friends at school. She missed her friends from the summer and her friends in Burma and Malaysia. One evening, Saw Thein's foster mother suggested she participate in an after-school activity. The next day Saw Thein met with Mr. Stevens, her school guidance counselor. He gave her a list of after-school activities and talked with her about some of her options. He told her that she should come back and see him if she was unhappy or needed help or advice. He also told her that he thought her English was very good. That evening, Saw Thein and her foster mother looked over the list and Saw Thein chose two activities: geography club, because she thought it would be interesting, and photography club, because she had never tried photography before.

A few weeks later, Saw Thein had attended both clubs three times and still was feeling lonely. Her foster mother suggested she go back to talk with Mr. Stevens.

What happened to Saw Thein's friends from the summer? Why do you think Saw Thein has not made any friends at school? What do you think she could do to make more friends?

Saw Thein and Mr. Stevens had a meeting 3 days later. She told Mr. Stevens that she had joined the two after-school clubs but still had not made any friends. Mr. Stevens suggested that Saw Thein set a goal: to make two new friends by the end of December. Saw Thein and Mr. Stevens thought about some ways she could make new friends. One of these was to listen to what someone had to say, and another was to compliment someone on something the person had said in class or a photo she or he had brought to photography club.

The next day, Saw Thein began looking for ways to do what Mr. Stevens had suggested. A week later, she and a girl named Maria walked home together from photography club since they lived in the same neighborhood. The following weekend Saw Thein and Maria met at the mall to walk around, and a week after that they walked home from photography club together again. Before the December school holiday, Saw Thein met with Mr. Stevens and reported that she had made a new friend. She was disappointed that she had not met her goal of two friends, but she also learned that it took a lot of time to develop good, positive friendships. So she decided she was happy that she had made one friend, and she felt much more confident that she would make more friends in the future.

What are some of the challenges Saw Thein faced in making new friends? What are some other ways Saw Thein could make new friends?

Role Models

25 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To define the term *role model*
- ✓ To identify role models and the characteristics of positive role models
- ✓ To consider how these characteristics apply to friends



Materials

- ☐ Flipchart paper
- ☐ Markers
- ☐ Tape



Presentation

It is important to have role models to guide you. A role model could be a parent, a teacher, a coach, a friend, or someone else you admire.



Activity

Have participants define the term *role model*. Write the brainstormed words and phrases on flipchart paper. Use those words to write a one-sentence definition. It might be “A role model is someone who serves as an example, whose behavior or actions you would like to imitate.”



Put participants into pairs or small groups and distribute flipchart paper and markers to each group. Each group member should identify one of her or his role models and share this with group members. Participants might identify an individual (a family member, a teacher, a leader, a sports hero), an entire profession (teachers, doctors, athletes), or others. Groups discuss the characteristics that they admire in their role models and draw on flipchart paper what these characteristics would look like. For instance, a person who is a good listener might have big ears, a person who is warm and friendly could have a big heart, and a person who represents her or his country well might be holding a map of the country.

Bring the entire group together and have a spokesperson from each small group share the characteristics of that group’s ideal role model with the group. Ask participants how these attributes might be helpful in identifying good friends.

When working with younger participants, the trainer may find it more effective to take an active role in the brainstorming part of this activity. This will help participants come up with ideas for role models, and then participants can identify individual characteristics.

Reflection

- ? Why are role models important?
- ? What characteristics does your role model have?
- ? How might these characteristics relate to good friends?
- ? How can you be a good friend?
- ? What kind of things do you look for in a friend?
- ? How will learning English help you make good friends in the United States?

❖ Expansions and Variations

- ∞ With a smaller group of participants, have participants work together in one group to create their ideal role model and friend on flipchart paper.
- ∞ In a variation of this activity, the Church World Service administered Overseas Processing Entity in Sub-Saharan Africa asks participants to consider how they can be role models.
- ∞ Discuss peer pressure, bullying, gangs, choices, and boundaries. What do these words mean? What will they mean in the United States? Tell participants that, if something is important or offensive to them, it is okay to stand up for themselves. They do not have to accept abuse from others. Encourage participants to brainstorm people they can talk to if they are being threatened, are being bullied, or are receiving negative peer pressure. Some child-friendly resources can be found at <http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/kids/>.
- ∞ Have participants create collages using magazines and art materials to represent what friendship means to them.
- ∞ Have participants print pictures of their home country and/or country of asylum to share with their new friends This will help participants describe their background experiences to their new friends in the United States.
- ∞ If participants are creating a *Story of Me* (see p. 5 in the introduction to this manual for more details) during CO, refer participants to the page entitled “Characteristics of Role Models and Good Friends” in their books. Participants use this page during the activity when drawing these characteristics.

Learning English

admire
positive

characteristic
role model

good friend

Communicating a Positive Environment

25 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To discuss and practice positive communication skills
- ✓ To discuss feelings about communicating with others



Materials

- ☐ Pieces of paper (blank or lined, depending on the group), one per participant
- ☐ Writing implements, one per participant
- ☐ Optional: drawing implements



Presentation

Being positive allows you to adjust more easily to new situations and can help you be happier, more flexible, and able to make friends better.



Activity

This activity is best done toward the end of CO, when participants know each other better and are more comfortable and familiar with one another.

Participants sit in a circle, with chairs and perhaps desks (depending on the preferences of the group). Distribute paper and writing implements to participants. Participants write their names on the paper. Explain that they will pass the pieces of paper in a clockwise motion during this activity. Walk clockwise around the inside of the circle so participants understand the direction. Have participants pass their piece of paper to the person sitting to their left. The recipients look at the name on the top of the paper and write something positive or something they admire about that person somewhere on the paper. Writers can choose to write their names or leave the comment anonymously. Then they pass the piece of paper to the person sitting to their left.

This will continue until all participants have written something positive on each person's piece of paper. Return each piece of paper to the person whose name is on it. Give participants some time to read through the comments on their piece of paper. Invite participants to share one or two comments.

When working with a younger group of participants, distribute drawing implements and paper. Instead of asking participants to write positive things on each individual's paper, encourage them to draw small, positive pictures of their peers.

Reflection

- ? How did you feel about looking at the piece of paper with comments on it?
- ? How do you think others felt?
- ? How can learning English help your communication skills in the United States?
- ? How can you help others to feel good about themselves in the future?
- ? What does this activity tell you about friendship?

❖ **Expansions and Variations**

- ∞ Have participants play a game of show-and-tell. For homework before the session, ask participants to bring in an object that is either special to them or that represents them in some way. Tell participants ahead of time that they should be prepared to share their object with others. The trainer should also participate in this activity. Have participants go around the room. They must show their object and tell why it is special to them or why it represents them. This is a nice way to encourage participants to share more about themselves and is good practice for when they move somewhere new.

Learning English

admire

encourage

flexible

positive

Listening Skills

20 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To better understand the importance of listening skills in communication



Presentation

To make friends, you need to be able to communicate well. And to communicate well, you need to listen.



Activity

Participants stand arm's length apart, facing the trainer. Explain that this activity is called Simon Says and is a game that children in the United States play. In this game, the trainer will give a command, such as "Touch your head" or "Close your eyes." If the trainer says "Simon says" before giving the command, participants must follow the command. But if the trainer does not say "Simon says," participants should not follow the direction. If a participant fails to follow the rules, she or he must sit down. The last person standing gets to be the next "Simon."



Give commands, sometimes using "Simon says" and sometimes not. Instruct participants to sit down if they are not following the rules. Commands should be for simple physical movements (e.g., "Touch your head," "Close your eyes," and "Turn around").



Reflection

- ? What was most challenging during this activity?
- ? Did the activity get easier or more challenging as time went on? Why?
- ? What can you say about communication strategies based on this activity?
- ? Why will understanding English be important for your listening skills in the United States?
- ? What part of this activity do you think will be important when you move to the United States?



Expansions and Variations

- ∞ Another effective listening game, which is also very common in the United States, is called Telephone, found on the Cultural Orientation Resource Center Web site (http://www.cal.org/co/overseas/toolkit/tools_for_trainers/index.html, "Encouraging Refugees to Check for Understanding: The Telephone Game," courtesy of Jewish Family Service of San Diego and the International Organization for Migration administered Overseas Processing Entity in Southeast Asia). This activity can also be used to show the need for extended personal space in the United States, especially when standing in line.

Learning English

communication

listen

follow

instruction

Nonverbal Communication

35 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To define nonverbal communication and better understand its role
- ✓ To explore forms of nonverbal communication used in the United States



Materials

- ☐ Flipchart paper
- ☐ Markers
- ☐ Tape
- ☐ Nonverbal Communication Cards, cut out (see samples, p. 273; the trainer should focus on examples of nonverbal communication that carry no meaning or a very different meaning for participants)
- ☐ Optional: Emotions Faces (see samples, p. 277)



Presentation



We do not have to talk to communicate. We can communicate without saying a word. But how we do this, how we communicate without saying anything, is different in different cultures.



Activity

Ask participants to define *nonverbal communication*. Write the definition on flipchart paper. One simple definition might be “communicating without words.” Ask participants to brainstorm different forms of nonverbal communication, and record these on the flipchart. Tell participants that nonverbal communication in the United States may be very different from nonverbal communication in their home country or country of asylum, and that they will need to understand these new forms of communication to know what is happening around them. But just as it takes time to learn new words in a language, so it takes time to learn new forms of nonverbal communication.



Put participants into pairs or small groups. Distribute one or two Nonverbal Communication Cards to each group. Instruct the groups to create a role-play that shows how a form of nonverbal communication can carry different meanings in two different cultures. The role-plays should demonstrate the potential for nonverbal miscommunication.

Bring the large group together and have participants perform the role-plays.

When working with a smaller group of participants, the trainer may find it more effective to take a more active role in the brainstorming part of this activity.

Reflection

- ? How would you define *nonverbal communication*?
- ? Why is it important to understand nonverbal communication?
- ? Why does nonverbal communication become confusing?
- ? What are some differences between nonverbal communication in your home country or country of asylum and the United States?

- ? Based on this activity, what would you consider important to remember about nonverbal communication in the United States?
- ? What are some methods you could use to help you better understand the nonverbal communication that is happening around you?

❖ **Expansions and Variations**

- ∞ When working with a group reluctant to engage in role-plays, have participants draw pictures showing the differences in forms of nonverbal communication between their culture and the United States. In a variation of this activity, the Church World Service administered Overseas Processing Entity in Sub-Saharan Africa trainers make faces and have participants identify the emotion the trainer is trying to convey.
- ∞ If participants are creating a *Story of Me* (see p. 5 in the introduction to this manual for more details) during CO, refer participants to the Emotions Faces page in their books.
- ∞ Have participants identify different emotions (e.g., happy, sad, angry, shy, scared, excited, embarrassed, and lonely). Record these on the flipchart and have each participant draw a face on the flipchart paper that depicts one of the emotions.
- ∞ If there is not time to address nonverbal communication during CO, consider making the Emotions Faces (see sample, p. 277) into a poster with this question at the top: “How are you feeling today?”

Learning English

age
hug
polite

eye contact
nonverbal communication
talk

gender
personal space
wave

Nonverbal Communication Cards (Training Material)

<p><i>Description of behavior</i> With index finger sticking out of a clenched fist and palm facing the person making the gesture, curling and uncurling the finger</p>	<p><i>Purpose or meaning of this in the United States</i> Used to ask someone to come to you</p>
<p><i>Description of behavior</i> Passing an object with one hand (either the right or left)</p>	<p><i>Purpose or meaning of this in the United States</i> Used to give an object to another person</p>
<p><i>Description of behavior</i> Hugging</p>	<p><i>Purpose or meaning of this in the United States</i> Used when greeting or saying goodbye to a close friend or relative</p>
<p><i>Description of behavior</i> Keeping a distance between people</p>	<p><i>Purpose or meaning of this in the United States</i> Used to show respect</p>
<p><i>Description of behavior</i> Making eye contact, with anyone, regardless of age, gender, or status</p>	<p><i>Purpose or meaning of this in the United States</i> Used to show respect; indicates that the person is listening</p>
<p><i>Description of behavior</i> Patting someone on the head</p>	<p><i>Purpose or meaning of this in the United States</i> Used to show affection, often by an older person for a young child</p>
<p><i>Description of behavior</i> Patting someone on the shoulder or back</p>	<p><i>Purpose or meaning of this in the United States</i> Used to show affection or to congratulate</p>

<p><i>Description of behavior</i> Shaking hands, with anyone, regardless of age, gender, or status</p>	<p><i>Purpose or meaning of this in the United States</i> Used to show respect, especially when meeting someone new</p>
<p><i>Description of behavior</i> Raising your middle finger out of a closed fist</p>	<p><i>Purpose or meaning of this in the United States</i> Used to insult; an extremely rude gesture</p>
<p><i>Description of behavior</i> Smiling</p>	<p><i>Purpose or meaning of this in the United States</i> Used to show friendliness and respect</p>
<p><i>Description of behavior</i> Standing in line or in a queue</p>	<p><i>Purpose or meaning of this in the United States</i> Used in banks, post offices, and other public places to wait for assistance</p>
<p><i>Description of behavior</i> Waving the hand with an open palm</p>	<p><i>Purpose or meaning of this in the United States</i> Used to greet or say goodbye</p>
<p><i>Description of behavior</i> With palm facing outward, opening and closing the hand</p>	<p><i>Purpose or meaning of this in the United States</i> Used to greet or say goodbye</p>
<p><i>Description of behavior</i> Moving the index finger in a circle near the ear</p>	<p><i>Purpose or meaning of this in the United States</i> Used to say "That person is crazy"</p>

Emotions Faces (Training Material)



Angry



Bored



Confused



Curious



Excited



Fine



Happy



Impatient



Insulted



Nervous



Proud



Sad



Scared



Surprised



Thankful



Worried

Unit 7: Rights and Laws

Topic Overview for the Trainer

This section provides an overview of U.S. rights, freedoms, and laws as they relate to unaccompanied refugee minors. Most of the material applies to all refugee youth.

To participate in the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program, youth must follow several government regulations:

- They must attend school.
- They may not stay overnight without a foster parent present. This means that an unaccompanied refugee minor is not allowed to spend the night at a friend's homes unless the friend is also in foster care.
- They are not allowed to travel out of state without a foster parent or caseworker. After the youth turns 18, out-of-state travel can be considered with the guardian's consent.
- When refugee minors leave the house, they must always tell the foster parents where they are going, and they must come home on time.

Refugee foster care includes a comprehensive set of services and financial supports that help children in their resettlement, educational development, and preparation for independence. Services seek to help these youth find a balance between the culture they bring with them and the culture they find in the United States. Services include the following:

- Intensive case management by social workers
- Assistance in adjusting immigration status
- Educational support, including English language training, college counseling, and career counseling and training
- Health, mental health, and legal services
- Indirect financial support for housing, food, clothing, and other necessities
- Mentoring and life skills training, particularly in the areas of budgeting, housing, health and sexuality, food preparation, social and legal systems, transportation, education, and community resources)
- Opportunities to participate in cultural, recreational, and religious activities
- Support for social integration

Unaccompanied refugee minors are free to practice the religion of their choice or to not practice a religion at all. Foster families vary greatly in their religious beliefs and practices. Some participate in religious activities regularly, some may attend worship services only for social or cultural purposes, and some may not attend services at all. Foster families and social workers help those interested in practicing a religion to find a place of worship of their choice.


Every unaccompanied refugee minor has a caseworker who supports the youth in her or his adjustment to the United States. Caseworkers are required to meet frequently with their refugee clients, with the frequency depending on the situation, the state, and the child. These meetings may occur more frequently at the beginning of the caseworker–client relationship. Two lead voluntary agencies work with the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement to assist unaccompanied refugee minors: Lutheran

On Their Way







Unit 7: Rights and Laws

Immigration Refugee Services and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Additional resources on refugee youth are available from Bridging Refugee Youth and Children’s Services at <http://www.brycs.org>.

The following chart gives a brief overview of the activities in Unit 7. The first activity provides an overview of the topic and contains the most important information. It is recommended that this activity be provided in all CO trainings for unaccompanied refugee minors, with additional activities covered as time permits.

Unit 7: Rights and Laws	Time							Page
Rights and Laws: The Basics	25 min	✓	✓	✓	✓			281
Rights and Laws: Case Study	30 min	✓	✓	✓	✓			287
Age Changes	25 min	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	293
The Law	40 min	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	297
Rules and Discipline	20 min		✓	✓	✓	✓		301
Needs and Wants	25 min	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		305

KEY

<i>Icon</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Icon</i>	<i>Description</i>
	Knowledge		Expansions for <i>Story of Me</i>
	Skills		Variations for poster(s)
	Attitudes		Transferable to youth CO (with adaptations)

Rights and Laws: The Basics

25 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To provide an overview of U.S. laws and rights in the United States as they apply to unaccompanied refugee minors
- ✓ To explore family court and legal ages in the United States
- ✓ To understand basic laws, safety, and freedoms in the United States
- ✓ To better understand unaccompanied refugee minors' immigration status



Materials

- Laptop, projector, and screen
- Internet access
- Prepared Important Ages in the United States flipchart (see sample, p. 283)
- Tape
- U.S. Law Handout, one per participant (see sample, p. 285)



Presentation

Freedom is a very important part of the U.S. Constitution. But freedom does not mean you can do anything you want. There are many laws in the United States, and they say what you can and cannot do. Some of these laws are for minors—people who are under a certain age. In the United States, you may be able to do things that you could not do in your home country or country of asylum, but there also may be things you cannot do in the United States that you could do before. So you may have more freedom in some areas but less freedom in others.

One of the first things you will have to do in the United States is go to family court.



Activity

View the 14-minute clip “What Happens When I Go to Immigration Court?” at <http://www.hklaw.com/content/CST/ImmigrationCourt/English/index.htm>. Before viewing the clip, explain to participants that in the United States they will be going to family court rather than immigration court, as is shown in this video, but that family court will be similar in many ways to the court shown in the video.

Put participants into pairs or small groups, and ask the groups to discuss their thoughts on the video and their feelings about going to family court.


Hang the prepared flipchart in the front of the room. Bring the entire group together and discuss the important ages with participants.

For homework, distribute U.S. Law Handouts to participants. Encourage participants to read the handout and return for the next CO session with any questions.

When working with a smaller or younger group of participants, the trainer might find it more effective to take a more active role in the brainstorming part of this activity.

 **Reflection**

- ? How will your freedoms in the United States be different from the freedoms you now have?
- ? How do U.S. laws compare with the laws you are used to?
- ? Why do you think safety is considered to be a part of freedom in the United States?
- ? How do you feel about going to family court?
- ? What are the important age changes to remember in the United States, and how are they important for you?

 **Expansions and Variations**

- ∞ If participants are creating a *Story of Me* (see p. 5 in the introduction to this manual for more details) during CO, refer participants to the Important Ages in the United States information and the Important U.S. Laws for Youth in their books.

Learning English

adult	break the law	citizenship
Constitution	court	family court
freedom	green card	laws
legally	protect	safe
trusted adult	visa	

Important Ages in the United States (Training Material)

- Between the ages of 14 and 19 (depending on the state), individuals can take tests to get a driver's license.
- Age 18 is considered the age a person legally becomes an adult in the United States. This is the age when a person can do certain things, such as vote and join the military. But a person cannot legally drink alcohol at 18.
- At 21, a person can legally drink alcohol in the United States.
- Individuals in the United States can legally attend public school (kindergarten through 12th grade) until the ages of 19–22, depending on the state.

U.S. Law (Handout)

- Your resettlement agency will tell you who in your community can help support and protect you.
- Some laws are the same in every state in the United States, and some laws are different in different states.
- U.S. law says that children under a certain age cannot work. There are visas that allow those over a certain age to work before they become adults.
- There are laws about dating between minors and adults.
- The penalty for breaking certain laws can be very serious. For example, if you get into a fight and hurt somebody or if you drive while drinking alcohol, you can go to jail. These kinds of laws and penalties are different in different states.
- You have the right and the freedom to practice your religious beliefs in any way that is safe for you and others around you.
- As a refugee, after 1 year in the United States you can begin your application for a green card. This process is called applying for lawful permanent residence (LPR) status.
- After you have a green card for 5 years, you can apply for U.S. citizenship.
- In the United States, the police are there to help you and should be regarded as safe, trusted adults when assistance is needed.
- If you get in trouble with the law, you should always be honest with your lawyer about your immigration status so the lawyer will be best able to assist you.
- If you are a male, as soon as you turn 18 you must register with the Selective Service through the Selective Service System at an official U.S. post office. You will need to show this registration when you apply for citizenship. If you do not have it because you did not register, you might not be able to become a citizen.

Rights and Laws: Case Study

30 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To learn more about rights and laws in the United States as they apply to unaccompanied refugee minors
- ✓ To identify real-life situations and issues these youth may have faced regarding rights and laws in the United States
- ✓ To discuss potential solutions to some problems refugee minors may face regarding rights and laws in the United States



Materials

- Case study (see sample, p. 289; change names as appropriate to help participants relate), one copy per participant
- Prepared flipchart with reflection questions listed (see samples, p. 288)
- Markers
- Tape



Presentation

Refugee youth may face different issues and have different concerns about rights and laws in the United States. This activity will help you identify some of these issues and concerns. Through a case study, you will learn about the challenges a refugee child faced because he did not understand U.S. laws. Together, we will work through some possible solutions to his challenges. Thinking about similar challenges you may face in the United States may help you make good decisions and avoid some of the problems discussed in the case study.

This case study is based on the experiences of unaccompanied refugee minors. Although the names, locations, and other information have been changed, the case study presents the real-life issues that these youth face in the United States.



Activity

Put participants into groups of two to four and distribute case studies. Have participants read the case study, answering the questions that have been inserted in it along the way. When they have finished, ask the small groups to answer the final reflection questions on the prepared flipchart.

Bring the large group together and ask for a spokesperson from each small group to summarize the main points of the small-group discussion. Discuss further as necessary.

When working with younger or less literate participants, the trainer can read the case study aloud to the group and then lead a large-group discussion of the reflection questions.

 Reflection

- ? What are the main issues presented in this case study? How did Kabila handle these issues? How would you handle these issues?
- ? What steps could Kabila have taken to avoid some of these issues ahead of time?
- ? What are some of the resources or supports Kabila used? How did he use them? What other resources or supports might be available?

Learning English

assault
fresh start
ordered
turned him down

counseling session
judge
politely

fooling around
matured
push

Rights and Laws: Case Study (Handout)

Kabila is a 15-year-old refugee boy who came unaccompanied to the United States 1½ years ago. He lives with his foster family: his foster parents, a younger brother, and an older sister. He arrived in the United States in the summer and entered ninth grade at the local public high school when it started in September.

Kabila made friends very quickly. Many of them were English-speaking kids who had grown up in the area. These friendships made learning English easier. He saw his school guidance counselor once a week to talk about how he was adjusting and what help he might need for class. Because of Kabila's good English skills, his guidance counselor recommended that he take regular classes for math, science, and social studies. Kabila enjoyed these classes because he was able to meet students outside the English language learning classes.

Kabila quickly became friends with Jack, who was in his science class. They would often talk before class started and sometimes joke around and push each other. One morning, while they were pushing each other around the room before class, their teacher, the science teacher, walked in. The science teacher was very upset by what he saw and took Kabila and Jack to the vice principal's office. According to school rules, pushing was considered assault. The vice principal told the boys that they would need to attend a special meeting on what actions should be taken.

Why is Kabila in trouble? What could he have done differently in this situation? What do you think will happen?

The following week, Kabila went to the meeting with his foster parents, his guidance counselor, Jack and Jack's father, the science teacher, the vice principal, and his case manager from the resettlement agency. The vice principal and science teacher led a discussion on what happened and what the boys should do now. Jack and Kabila explained that they were just fooling around and did not mean to hurt each other. The science teacher told the boys that even though they were just playing around, they could have hurt themselves or other students or damaged school property, especially in the science laboratory, where there was a lot of expensive equipment.

During this discussion, Kabila's foster parents and Jack's father tried to make sure that Kabila and Jack understood what they had done wrong. All the adults decided that the boys had learned their lesson and hoped that they would not make the same mistake again. The boys were told to apologize to the school officials in the room and to clean the science lab together every Tuesday for the next month.

What happened? Would this be considered a problem where you are from? How should Kabila make up for this mistake? What would you do?

A month later, Kabila met Mollie, a girl in his social studies class. He thought Mollie was very funny and pretty and enjoyed having class with her. Kabila's friends suggested that he offer to walk Mollie home from school one day. She politely turned him down. The next day Kabila asked again, and Mollie said no. The following week, Kabila asked if he could sit next to her at lunch, and she again said no. A day later, Kabila sat down next to Mollie in the school cafeteria, and she got up and moved to a different table. This upset Kabila, so when he saw her again later that day in the hallway, he pushed Mollie against the wall and demanded to know why she did not want to sit with him at lunch. She ran away from him down the hall.

The next morning, Kabila was called out of homeroom to the vice principal's office. He was surprised to see his foster mother sitting in the office, along with Mollie, her mother, and a school security officer. Mollie and her mother were very upset by the incident and did not feel that an apology was enough of a punishment for Kabila. A few weeks later, Kabila had to go to court to testify in front of the judge with his foster father and his case manager. The judge ordered him to attend weekly counseling sessions for 3 months. He said he hoped this would help Kabila understand how serious the issue was and that in the future Kabila would make better, more mature decisions when things did not go his way.

This happened near the end of Kabila's first year at school in the United States. He finished his classes and got good grades in his classes. During the summer break, Kabila's foster parents and his case manager wanted to discuss sending Kabila to another school for a fresh start.

Why was Kabila in trouble again? Instead of pushing Mollie, how could he have handled things differently? What are some of the pros and cons of Kabila staying at the same school versus transferring to a new school? What would you do if you were Kabila? Whom would you talk to?

Age Changes

25 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To understand age limitations on freedoms in the United States
- ✓ To discuss the need to give accurate birth dates
- ✓ To discuss age limitations on public education in the United States
- ✓ To share feelings about age changes



Materials

- Age Change Statements (see samples, p. 295)
- Optional: paper, one piece per participant
- Optional: drawing implements, to accompany the optional paper



Presentation

In the United States, there are laws to protect children and adolescents, as well as adults. As people in the United States get older, the laws that apply to them change. It is important to know the laws that apply to you and how they change as you get older. It is also important to remember that laws are different in each state. The laws discussed in this activity are laws that exist in all states in the United States.



Activity

Have participants get into pairs or small groups. Read the Age Change Statements one by one to participants. After each statement, ask participants to share what they think about the statement, how they feel about it, and if they and their partner(s) have any questions about the statement. Then move on to the next statement. Discuss as necessary.

When working with younger participants, distribute drawing implements and paper. Read the Age Change Statements to participants and have them draw pictures about how the statements make them feel. Encourage participants to share their pictures with the group.



Reflection

- ? How are you feeling about these age changes?
- ? How do you feel about the differences in age changes between states in the United States?
- ? How do you think understanding English better will help you understand U.S. laws?
- ? Which age changes do you think you will enjoy the least?
- ? Which age changes do you think you will enjoy the most?

Expansions and Variations

- ∞ If there is not time to discuss U.S. age changes during CO, consider putting a poster up in the room of the Age Change Statements.
- ∞ If participants are creating a *Story of Me* (see p. 5 in the introduction to this manual for more details) during CO, refer participants to the Age Change Statements in their books. Participants can write translations or draw pictures in the space provided.



Additional Resources

- ✦ Bridging Refugee Youth and Children’s Services (<http://www.brycs.org>) has produced a tool called “The Birthdates of Refugee Children and the Impact on Grade Placement,” which can be found at <http://www.brycs.org/documents/upload/ageandgradeFAQ-3.pdf>. This collection of frequently asked questions and responses addresses such topics as why documented ages may be incorrect, who should be involved in age assessment and grade placement, what questions to ask a child’s family, and what the consequences of changing a child’s documented age may be.

Learning English

birthday

college or university

driver’s license

freedom

good decision

limit

responsibility

Age Change Statements (Training Material)

- You may participate in the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program until you are 21 or 22, depending on the state where you live.
- At age 18, you are considered an adult in the United States and have adult responsibilities.
- Sometimes children in refugee camps are recorded as older than they really are. But you cannot stay in U.S. schools past a certain age, so it is very important to give your age accurately.
- Once you are an adult, you must take legal responsibility for your actions.
- At age 21, you can legally drink alcohol, but you should make good decisions if you choose to drink.
- In the United States, you can get a driver's license between the ages of 14 and 19, depending on the state.
- You may only be able to stay in public high schools until you are 21 or 22, depending on the state.
- Many young adults in the United States go to community colleges or other colleges or universities.

The Law

40 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To understand the role of U.S. law enforcement officials and to realize that these officials should not be feared
- ✓ To be aware that laws differ by state, and to identify people in the community who can give accurate information about the laws of a particular state
- ✓ To understand the consequences of breaking laws in the United States



Materials

- ☐ Lunch-sized paper bags, one per participant
- ☐ Art supplies (markers, glue, colored paper, tape, glitter, googly eyes, yarn, etc.)
- ☐ Law Statements, one copy per participant (see sample, p. 299)



Presentation

Laws in the United States may be very different from those you are used to. You also need to know that in the United States different states have different laws. It is important to identify places in your community where you can get accurate information about the laws of the state you live in.

One resource for getting accurate information about state laws is the police. Police officers are there to help you and should not be feared.



Activity

Distribute one paper bag and art supplies to each participant to make a hand puppet. The trainer should also make a puppet.


Distribute copies of the Law Statements to participants. Participants take turns having their puppets read the statements. Allow the puppets to ask questions and discuss the statements. Using the puppet, the trainer should ask questions to ensure participant understanding.

When working with younger or less literate participants, the trainer should use a puppet to read a statement from the Law Statements sheet aloud and have the participants use their puppets to discuss the meaning of the individual law, before moving on to the next statement.


Reflection

- ? What is important to remember about police and other law enforcement officials in the United States?
- ? Are all laws the same in all states in the United States?
- ? Who will be able to help you learn the laws of your state?
- ? How will an understanding of English help you understand U.S. laws?
- ? What are some of your rights in the United States?
- ? How are you feeling about having these rights?



 **Expansions and Variations**

- ∞ Discuss the pros and cons of driving in the United States. Be sure to inform participants about the additional costs of driving. These include the car, insurance, gas, driver's education classes, repair and maintenance, vehicle registration, tolls, and traffic tickets.
- ∞ If there is not time to discuss U.S. laws during CO, consider putting a poster up in the room of the Law Statements.
- ∞ If participants are creating a *Story of Me* (see p. 5 in the introduction to this manual for more details) during CO, refer participants to the Important Law Statements for Youth in the U.S. in their books. Participants can write translations or draw pictures in the space provided.

 **Additional Resources**

- ✦ Good information on U.S. laws is available for children at <http://lib.law.washington.edu/ref/lawforkids.html>, <http://www.lawforkids.org/>, <http://www.in.gov/cji/2618.htm>, and <http://www.youthrights.org/>.
- ✦ More information on the Selective Service System is available at <http://www.sss.gov>.

Learning English

consequence
law
right

curfew
legal counsel

to help
to protect

Law Statements (Handout)

- Police and other law enforcement officials are there to help and protect you and should not be feared.
- Different states in the United States have different laws.
- U.S. law says that children under a certain age cannot work. There are visas that allow those over a certain age to work before becoming an adult.
- Some cities and towns have curfews for minors.
- The penalty for breaking certain laws can be very serious. For example, if you get into a fight and hurt somebody or if you drive while drinking alcohol, you could go to jail. These kinds of laws and penalties are different in different states.
- If you have a legal problem, you have the right to a lawyer to help you.
- You have the right and the freedom to practice your religious beliefs in any way that is safe for you and others around you.
- All children in the United States are required to stay in school until they are at least 16 years old.
- As a refugee, after 1 year in the United States you can begin your application for a green card. This process is called changing your lawful permanent residence (LPR) status.
- It is important not to lie about your immigration status and not to sign any papers without checking with someone (like a lawyer) who can tell you what you are signing.
- If you are a male, as soon as you turn 18 you must register with the Selective Service at an official U.S. post office. You will need to show this registration when you apply for citizenship. If you do not have it because you did not register, you might not be able to become a citizen.
- You have the right to drive after a certain age. In the United States, many see driving as a sign of independence, and both boys and girls have the opportunity to learn how to drive.

Rules and Discipline

20 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To explore forms of U.S. discipline
- ✓ To understand rules in the foster home and the importance of following these rules
- ✓ To discuss the difference between discipline and abuse
- ✓ To better understand the laws of U.S. foster care, especially as they relate to the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program



Materials

- ☐ Prepared flipchart with Rules and Discipline Chart (see sample, p. 303)
- ☐ Tape
- ☐ Extra flipchart paper
- ☐ Markers



Presentation



In the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program, there are certain rules that by law must be followed. For instance, you cannot spend the night in a house where there is no foster parent, and you cannot travel out of the state you live in without permission from the program's resettlement agency. In addition to these special rules for unaccompanied refugee minors, you need to follow the rules that all kids in the United States are expected to follow.

Rules are put in place by the program or your foster family to protect you. Although you may have faced many challenges on your own, life in the United States will be new to you.

Activity

Hang the Rules and Discipline Chart in the front of the room. Have participants brainstorm some of the "Rules for kids" with which they are familiar. Write these on the chart in the "Home country/country of asylum" row.

Then ask participants to think of some new rules that they might have to follow when living with a foster family in the United States, and list these in the "United States" row. Some ideas include not drinking alcohol or using drugs, not staying out late, TV and telephone use limitations, bedtime, time to arrive home after school, chores around the house, and keeping the foster family informed of where you are and whom you are with. Ask participants to consider this question: "Why might these rules be important to your family?"


Ask participants what the current forms of discipline are for not following the rules, and list these under "Discipline" in the "Home country/country of asylum" row. Tell participants that in the United States it is illegal to hurt a child. Ask participants to brainstorm what some other forms of discipline may be in the United States, and record these on the chart in the appropriate box. Some ideas might be sending children to their rooms, taking away privileges (television, telephone, etc.), and spanking (as long as it is not too severe).

Tell participants that discipline is different in each family but abusive discipline is illegal. Tell participants that abuse is any punishment that injures a child. Abuse also includes touching private parts of another person against that person's will.

When working with a smaller group of participants, the trainer may find it more effective to take a more active role in the brainstorming part of this activity.

 **Reflection**

- ? How are you feeling about the new rules you will have to follow in the United States?
- ? Do you think it will be hard to follow these rules?
- ? Why do you think rules might be important to your family?
- ? What do you think about the way that parents discipline their children in the United States?
- ? What will be challenging about the new rules and punishments? What will be easy?

 **Expansions and Variations**

- ∞ If participants are creating a *Story of Me* (see p. 5 in the introduction to this manual for more details) during CO, refer participants to the Rules and Discipline Chart in their books. While the group is completing the chart on flipchart paper, participants can fill in their own charts.

Learning English

abusive

appropriate

discipline

follow the rules

kid

rule

spend the night

Rules and Discipline Chart (Training Material)

	<i>Rules for kids</i>	<i>Discipline</i>
Home country/ country/ of asylum		
United States		

Needs and Wants

25 minutes



Objectives

- ✓ To explore the freedom in the United States to make choices and decisions
- ✓ To understand the difference between needs and wants
- ✓ To identify appropriate needs and wants in the United States



Materials

- ☐ Two prepared flipcharts, one titled “Needs” and the other “Wants”
- ☐ Tape
- ☐ Flipchart paper
- ☐ Markers



Presentation

You will have a lot of freedom to make your own choices and decisions in the United States. You will have freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and, after you turn 18, the freedom to vote. At the same time, if you have been on your own recently, you may lose some of your old freedoms when you enter the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program.



It is important to follow rules, laws, and the good advice of others so that you can make smart choices and continue to enjoy the freedoms of life in the United States.



Activity

Hang the two prepared flipcharts in the front of the room. Tell participants that it is important to understand the difference between needs and wants. Ask participants to brainstorm some of their anticipated needs and wants in the United States, and write or have participants draw these on the appropriate pieces of flipchart paper. In talking about needs and wants, have participants focus on behavior (e.g., to go places without telling their foster parents) rather than things. This will allow the trainer to talk about rules and laws as well as about financial choices. Discuss as necessary.

When working with a smaller group of participants, the trainer may find it more effective to take a more active role in the brainstorming part of this activity.

Reflection

- ? What are the differences between wants and needs?
- ? What do you think you will really need in the United States?
- ? What do you think you will really want?
- ? How are you feeling now about the difference between wants and needs?
- ? What will you do if there is a conflict between you and your foster parents over rules?

✦ Expansions and Variations

- ∞ If participants are creating a *Story of Me* (see p. 5 in the introduction to this manual for more details) during CO, refer participants to the Needs and Wants page in their books. That page is divided into two columns, one labeled “Needs” and the other “Wants.” While the group is completing the flipcharts, participants can complete their charts.

📖 Additional Resources

- ★ Tell participants that, for some of them, having a bicycle may be an option. Discuss bicycle safety, wearing helmets, and so on. For additional information, refer to <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/CPS/newtips/pages/Tip8.htm>.

Learning English

choice	decision	to follow rules
independent	need	priority
vote	want	

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