

WELCOME TO OUR SCHOOLS



BUREAU OF REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT ASSISTANCE

**NEW YORK STATE OFFICE
OF TEMPORARY AND DISABILITY ASSISTANCE**

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The Refugee School Impact Grant (RSIG) *Welcome to our Schools*, which includes Refugee Academy and Mini-Academy Curricula, Parent and Professional Development Programs, a Guide to Academic Coaches, a Guide to the Videos, and the videos *Refugee Student Interviews*, *Refugee Parent Interviews*, *A Day in Elementary School*, *A Day in Middle School* and *A Day in High School*, was developed by the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, Bureau of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance (OTDA/BRIA).

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WELCOME TO OUR SCHOOLS

INTRODUCTION

Refugee: *one who flees in search of refuge or asylum, as in times of war, political oppression, or religious persecution*

The refugee children in schools in the United States have fled their native countries from all over the globe. Many have experienced violence, have moved frequently, or have settled in refugee camps, living without essential resources, health care, or education. They arrive in America displaced from their homelands, expected to acclimate to a culture that is often radically different from what they have known.

The experience of displacement is one of the most significant traumas and losses that refugees of all ages can face. The lack of stability and safety, the constant disruptions, and the sometimes prolonged deprivation exact their toll on each family member. For children, it puts them at profound developmental risk, often impairing cognitive abilities as well as emotional, academic, or behavioral functioning.

Yet when refugee children arrive in the United States, if they are between the ages of 5 and 21, they are enrolled in an American school and expected to quickly adjust to their new way of living. Suddenly they are riding school buses; navigating school hallways, cafeterias, and locker rooms; sitting in classrooms; and trying to manage a new language, schoolwork, friendships, and after-school activities. The experience can be frightening, sometimes exhilarating, and overwhelming for even the most resilient children.

The *Welcome to Our Schools* program, developed by the Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance of the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA), is designed to ease the transition of refugee children into the elementary and secondary schools of New York State, and to empower their parents to be effective partners in the education of their children.

How to Use the *Welcome to Our Schools* Program

The *Welcome to Our Schools* program contains curricula and instructional materials to be used in a student Refugee Academy, Mini-Academies, and parent and professional development programs. Instructors and Academic Coaches are encouraged to use the contents of the curriculum as a guide, tailoring the instructional activities to match the needs, concerns, and experiences of the refugee students.

The *Welcome to Our Schools Refugee Academy Curriculum*, consisting of 16 Instructional Modules, can stand alone, or can be integrated into existing educational programs. Instructors should review the Modules and select the materials that would be most relevant to the refugee students who have enrolled in their school system, and most useful when designing lesson plans and classroom activities.

The Modules contain objectives, vocabulary words, classroom activities, journal topics, suggested follow-up activities, DVDs, and handouts. They can be used in any order, although it is advisable to introduce the curriculum with *Module 1: American Schools* and *Module 2: Making Friends*.

Instructors should combine the Modules with activities that have worked successfully in the past and with new activities that have been developed to respond to the needs and interests of the students. The selection of Modules should always be based on the best means of helping refugee students acclimate to their new American schools.

Videos

The *Refugee Academy Curriculum* comes with videos that can be used at any time during the Academy. Instructions for using the videos are contained in the modules and in the **Guide to the Videos**.

VIDEO TRANSLATIONS

There are six DVDs, translated into over 15 different languages.

Each DVD has all five videos:

- A Day in Elementary School
- A Day in Middle School
- A Day in High School
- Refugee Student Interviews
- Refugee Parent Interviews

The instructor will have to determine the best way to show the videos, depending upon the languages spoken by the students, the equipment available, and the number of Academic Coaches and translators.

Children's Books

There are children's picture books that can be used at any time during the Refugee Academy. The books can be used at all grade levels and can be translated verbally, read aloud in English, or just enjoyed by looking at the pictures.

Instructors are advised to become familiar with the books so that the stories can be integrated into classroom activities when it seems most appropriate. The messages of the story books are all related to adapting to school in America, and the pictures are self-explanatory. Even older students will identify with the main characters and appreciate the themes of building confidence and developing comfort in an American school.

Read the books aloud to the class when the students need some quiet time, or when the class discussion seems to match the content of the book. The Modules do not specify when the books should be read aloud. The instructors can determine when it's time to share a story.



- *One Green Apple* (by Eve Bunting)
- *The Bus for Us* (by Suzanne Bloom)
- *Teachers* (by Tami Deedrick)
- *My New School* (by Kirsten Hall)
- *I'm New Here* (by Bud Howlett)
- *The Color of Home* (By Marry Hoffman)
- *My Name is Yoon* (by Helen Recorvits)
- *Say Something* (by Peggy Moss)



BACKGROUND FOR INSTRUCTORS

Although instructors may have experience working with refugee families that are settling in the United States, it is essential that during the Refugee Academy the instructors view the world of *school* through the eyes of refugee children. A new school is difficult enough for American students who know the system. Refugee children have to juggle multiple concerns as they try to adjust to schools that are fast-moving, well-established in their routines, and challenging to anyone who is new to the system.

Refugee children are vulnerable, both academically and socially. Once resettled in the United States, their ability to successfully navigate the school experience is dependent upon a number of factors such as age, culture, coping strategies, parental support, degree of interrupted schooling, and reception by the host community. The children may be living with new “families” who are relatives they never met before. They may be living with host families or guardians who are responsible for their care.

Some children have been exposed to extended violence in war zones and refugee camps while others have witnessed war-related events or death of family and community members. Studies of refugee children in a school environment find that exposure to war and persecution can result in significant delays in academic achievement. Depression, aggressive behavior, immaturity and physical ailments such as headaches and stomachaches are found to be common in the refugee school-aged population. All of these interfere significantly with the learning process. The students need attentive school staff, extra individual attention, and intensive support to tackle not only the academic concerns, but the social, emotional, material and health concerns as well.



Parental/guardian involvement in school is strongly associated with positive outcomes in academic performance and school behavior. In the case of refugee children, adjustment can be eased through parental involvement. Such involvement includes: creating a time and place at home to do homework; monitoring homework; encouraging and facilitating school attendance; alerting the school to problems or issues as they arise which may affect their child’s performance or behavior; managing health care of the student; staying informed of student progress and grades; monitoring quality of school services; and communicating with teachers, including participation in parent/teacher conferences and the school Open House.

But many factors inhibit parental involvement in their child’s education life. First, language serves as a major barrier. Refugee parents are unable to comprehend the telephone call that reports the child is absent from school (or is sick and needs to go home). They cannot understand notes sent home from the teacher. The homework is incomprehensible. They may be unaware of school events. Many do not participate in

important parent/teacher conferences because of their inability to understand English, or because of their discomfort around teachers and other authority figures. Furthermore, parents are often unaware of community resources or unable to access them, and need an advocate who can help them find ways to meet their own needs.

In addition, refugee parents lack understanding about the workings of American school systems and may find the institution and the educational process intimidating. They are unfamiliar with New York State education law, rights and responsibilities, and obligations. They are not aware of the range of opportunities in schools, including academic, extra-curricular, and vocational programs. Mandatory school attendance may be a brand new concept, and they may have little understanding of the school's expectations of them as partners in the education of their children.

At the same time, American schools are not usually linguistically or culturally equipped to meet the special needs of refugee children. The schools struggle with language barriers and lack of information about the cultural background and history of the students. While most schools welcome refugee children, they are often anxious about communicating with the refugee children and their families. Teachers find that strategies, policies and expectations that accommodate the needs of their current students do not always work well for refugee children. School districts do not usually have the resources and are not set up to provide intensive orientation or to tailor curriculum and educational services to the specific and varying needs (academic, language, behavioral, cognitive) of the refugee student population. Schools find age-appropriate grade level placement challenging for students who lack a background of formal schooling or who have experienced significant interruptions in their education. Refugee children are often left on their own to master a new language, decipher expectations, and figure out how the American school system functions.

Recognizing the backgrounds of the refugee students, the Bureau of Refugee and Immigration Affairs has created a *Welcome to Our Schools* program that consistently emphasizes three themes in the Refugee Academy curriculum:



- **Expose students to all aspects of the American educational program so that they are familiar with how education works in their new country.**
- **Encourage students to take advantage of the multiple benefits of an American education.**
- **Reassure students that they will successfully adjust to their new schools.**

Instructors in the Refugee Academy should never assume that refugee students, no matter what their age and background, have basic knowledge about what school is like in America. For example the following scenario is typical of an American elementary classroom and the perspective of a refugee student:

In a recent fourth grade class, the teacher announced that it was time for recess. The students moved quickly to grab their jackets, hats, and gloves, and put on their boots. Then they lined up, talking excitedly, and headed outside to play.



A new refugee student sat in her seat, afraid to move. She had just come from living in a series of villages, where “school” was the occasional gathering of children with very strict adults who punished them if they spoke. Classes were often disrupted by violence or the urgent need to escape to a refugee camp or hiding place. She often fled with the clothes on her back and no shoes, holding tightly to the hand of her older sister.

She did not know what recess was, and had no idea where the students were going and if they would ever come back. She could not understand why the students were talking so loudly, risking corporal punishment from the teacher. She watched as the children piled on layers of unfamiliar clothing and then willingly went out into the cold. She watched out the window as they ran laughing around the playground and then settled in groups that played with balls and ropes.



The teacher asked her if she would rather color than go outside, and handed her a box of crayons.

She did not know what it meant to “color” and did not know what to do with the “crayons.” It was all so confusing and discouraging when everyone else seemed to know exactly what to do.

For refugee students, deficits in *basic* knowledge and experience can have a profound affect on learning and skill development. Instructors in the Refugee Academy should always keep in mind that most of the refugee students, even those who have experienced forms of education in their native countries, are “brand new” at learning in school.

NEVER ASSUME THAT REFUGEE STUDENTS:

- Know what they are supposed to do with a crayon, pencil, scissors, glue, or paintbrush.
- Will be willing to store their backpacks in a locker, out of sight.
- Know that when they get on a bus they will be able to come back home.
- Have seen a picture book.

- Understand that a clean body includes clean clothes.
- Understand that every day the entire body should be clean.
- Desire to “fit in” by abandoning their traditional culture.
- Are convinced that the teacher will be nice and helpful, and not hurt or threaten them.
- Are comfortable wearing shoes, underwear, socks, and other unfamiliar clothing.
- Are living in healthy, sanitary conditions, now that they are no longer in their native countries.



- Are smiling and nodding because they understand teachers, not because they have learned that a smile and a nod pleases teachers.
- Have used rest room facilities, let alone public rest rooms with multiple stalls.



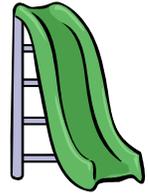
- Understand that a gang is not an accepted form of an American family.
- Are healthy, just because they appear to be healthy.
- Understand that a fire drill means that they will be safe.
- Are eating lunch every day.
- Have access to breakfast.
- Have had a chance to discover talents that they didn't even know they had.
- Are living with people they know, even if they are relatives.

- Are able to communicate with their parents about school.
- Have parents who believe that it is acceptable to be involved in their child's education.



- Are developmentally at their chronological age.
- Are being treated well by their peers and not getting teased.
- Know what it means to be “on time.”
- Have difficulty in school because of their backgrounds, when they could have a learning disability or health problem.
- Have experience sitting at a desk all day.

- Are used to large crowds of people.
- Are used to adults talking to them individually.
- Can adapt quickly to the routine of changing clothes for gym class.
- Are permitted by their families to participate in all school activities.
- Trust the Academic Coaches, or any other adults, especially those in uniform.
- Have ever seen playground equipment or participated in a game or sport.
- Have ever watched a video.
- Have established a morning routine that is not stressful.
- Are allowed to interact with the other gender.
- Will automatically connect with peers from their native country.
- Do not harbor ill will against peers from their native country, based on past history of civil wars and violence.
- Interpret nonverbal cues in the same way as their American peers and teachers.
- Have forgotten their past, or “moved on.”
- Do not want to talk about their past.
- Want to talk about their past.
- Welcome their new lives, even if it means leaving friends and relatives behind in their native countries.
- Think that they are safe in school.



AND NEVER ASSUME THAT REFUGEE STUDENTS:

- Are having difficulties in school solely because of language barriers, when they actually may be overwhelmed and exhausted from their new school routines.
- Are participating in school activities because they are comfortable and no longer afraid, when they are actually hiding how they really feel.
- Are so far behind that they will never catch up, when they can actually adjust quickly if they receive reassurance and guidance.



Refugee Academy Curriculum



MODULE 1
AMERICAN SCHOOLS

MODULE 1: American Schools

PURPOSE

The purpose of Module 1 is to inform students about the structure, components, and benefits of American schools.

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Share information about personal goals for education in America
- Become familiar with the elements of a school day
- Become aware of the multiple benefits of an American education



SUPPLIES

Handout 1 – 1:
Please Visit Our School

Handouts 1 – 2
1 – 3:
School Supplies

Crayons

Video

A Day at School
(Elementary, Middle, or High School)

Information about resources for school supplies and winter clothing

Arrange for the **school bell** to ring (see Activity #1)

Combination locks for practice



MODULE 1: American Schools

VOCABULARY

Elementary Vocabulary

School
Education
Teacher
Coach
Translator
Plan
Fun
Sports
Learn

Secondary Vocabulary

School
Education
Learn
Coach
Translator
College
Teacher
Counselor
Sports
Interests
Talents
Plans
Goals
Fun
Jobs



Key Points – American Schools



1. Academic Coaches and Translators will be available throughout the Refugee Academy and the school year.

The first day of the Refugee Academy should begin with introducing the Academic Coaches, Translators, and other personnel who will provide support to the students in the Refugee Academy. The purpose of the initial introductions is to inform students of the names that the instructors wish to be called, and to reassure the students that the instructors are at the Academy to personally meet and support the students. These concepts should be reinforced throughout the Academy.

Do not expect the students to grasp the names and titles of the adults, let alone their responsibilities. The title “Academic Coach” is confusing to any student, not just to a student who is new to the American system and unfamiliar with the English language.

The Activities in *Module 1: American Schools* focus on building the comfort level of students with instructors, the school setting, and peers. Make introductions a relaxed, friendly process. Keep repeating introductions throughout the first few days, until students demonstrate that they know the names of the instructors and comprehend the role that the adults will play in their school.



2. Students need opportunities to talk about their personal experiences and goals.

Although the primary goal of the Refugee Academy is to familiarize students with the American school system, it is also important to use the Academy to support students as they move forward in their lives. This does not mean that students should be asked to forget about their experiences prior to coming to America. They should not be expected to adjust quickly to their newcomer status and set aside any memories of their native country.



Regardless of past circumstances, coming to American schools will be confusing and disarming, perhaps frightening and depressing. The students will not only be overwhelmed by the school environment, rules, and procedures, but will be worried about making friends and fitting in. Their past experiences in their native countries, or their images of America, may drive their concerns about what will happen to them in their new schools.

The Activities in the Modules are designed so that students will have a chance to reflect on their past experiences, but focus on what is on the horizon. Emphasis should always be on the opportunities available to them in their new schools, and the

personnel who are there to guide and assist them. As students begin to compare their old schools (or lack of schooling) with what they expect to experience in their new schools, the instructors should dispel myths, provide facts about what to expect, and reassure the students that if they follow the basic rules they will have a variety of chances to learn and make new friends.

Students should be given the chance to express their ideas about what they would like to gain from their new education. Instructors can provide information about how the students can achieve these personal goals.



3. *American schools are designed to facilitate assistance and personal growth.*



At the very beginning of the Refugee Academy, it is important to explain to the students how the American school system is broken into three parts: elementary, middle school or junior high, and senior high school, and further divided into grade levels. Some schools combine the grade levels or include grades kindergarten-12 in one building, but the design is similar across the country.

Once this concept is shown to students, then they can find out where they fit in the spectrum. Are they elementary students? Will they be in grade 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5? They may not know their exact grade level until the school completes assessments, but it is important that the students in the Academy see the progression of grade levels as it exists in the American school system. (*Note:* This will require knowing numbers.)

The teachers and other personnel in schools are responsible for moving children through the levels until they graduate from high school. They do this not only by teaching academic knowledge and skills, but by providing students with individual guidance and personal support as students solve problems and make plans for the future.

This may be a new concept to the students in the Refugee Academy. They may not have experienced support from teachers in developing relationships, making decisions about future plans, and solving academic problems. The Academy instructors should keep reinforcing and demonstrating that teachers and other personnel are available to answer questions, intervene if they spot a problem, and work with families to ensure a smooth transition through the levels of education.

Students should also become aware that they have multiple opportunities to learn and grow: on the athletic field, in the classroom, on stage, in the music room, and so forth. They will be expected to achieve basic knowledge and skills in education, required of all students. But they will also have many experiences that will allow them to cultivate talents, try new skills and interests, and learn about citizenship and service to society.



4. American education has multiple benefits.

Throughout the Refugee Academy, one of the main themes is that attending American schools can have many benefits. It is, of course, not always a smooth path for students as school districts struggle with growing student populations, old buildings, staff shortages in crucial subject areas, challenging communities and school-family relationships.

But for so many refugee students, the schools are a safe haven, a place where the school offerings are a welcome change from their native countries. They welcome the routine, the teacher interest in subject matter and students, the numerous extracurricular activities, and the opportunities for a variety of friendships.



The students in the Refugee Academy may not realize that American schools have multiple benefits. Their own schools, if they existed, may have had a different focus and may have provided limited experiences. The purpose of Module 1 is to expose students to the school programs that they are about to experience. Later Modules give them a chance to learn more about their options and to make some choices about what they would like to pursue.

The ultimate goal of the American education system is to prepare students for their future as adults: pursue education at a postsecondary level; develop skills that can be utilized in the workplace; build strong social skills; develop the ability to think analytically to solve problems; and become contributing members of society.

The Refugee Academy will assist students in becoming aware of the many opportunities that are ahead of them. As the students participate in the Academy activities, remind them of the ultimate goal of education in America.



5. Schools consist of several standard components, but the elements of a school day may vary.

School buildings in America vary considerably in size, location, condition, and security. They differ in offerings, expectations, and academic success rates. But the schools in America have many similarities that students in the Academy should know about.



For the instructors of the Academy, the standardization of American schools is obvious. In America, it is common to refer to “middle school,” “recess,” “the principal,” and “study hall.” These are terms that are well established in the American school systems across the country.

Students in the Academy should be aware of the following similarities across the nation, with specific information provided about their own school system:

- ❖ Schools are generally located in neighborhoods or near a town center.
- ❖ Schools start early in the morning and end mid-afternoon, with staggered schedules for different age groups.
- ❖ Students can walk to school or take free school buses or city buses paid for by the school, or use subway transportation in large cities.
- ❖ In addition to classes in the basic subjects of Mathematics, Science, English Language Arts, and Social Studies, there are classes in Physical Education, Art, Music, Health, Career Development, Languages, Technology, and Family/Consumer Science
- ❖ Older students may be able to take more advanced or accelerated classes or classes in unique subjects such as Art History, Creative Writing, Journalism, and Marching Band.
- ❖ Students in grades kindergarten-5 usually have one teacher during the school day, with additional teachers for “special” classes such as Library, Music, or Art. They eat lunch at school and then usually go outside or to the gymnasium for “recess.”
- ❖ Students in grades 6-12 (or 7-12) rotate to classes with many different teachers.
- ❖ Schools usually have libraries, gymnasiums, athletic fields and/or playgrounds, and cafeterias.
- ❖ Some schools have computer labs, a swimming pool, science laboratories, and weight rooms.
- ❖ Schools have standard rules of conduct, with progressive disciplinary procedures, including detention and expulsion.
- ❖ Schools may have Study Hall, English as a Second Language, Math or Reading Lab, and other classes to assist students in achieving in academic subjects.
- ❖ Guidance counselors are available to assist students in designing their school schedules and creating plans for the future.
- ❖ Schools have a principal who is in charge of all of the activities in the school building, who is often assisted by other administrators.



ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY 1: INTRODUCTIONS

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (45 minutes)

In this activity:



The instructors of the Refugee Academy will introduce themselves to the students, engaging them in informal conversation that is short and relaxed.

Students will not be expected to interact unless they feel comfortable, but they will be encouraged to shake hands (an American custom) with the instructors.

Emphasis should be on learning names.

The process of translating should be explained to the students.

Vocabulary words can be introduced throughout the exercise.

- **One instructor should introduce the adults** in the room and shake their hands.
 - Explain the American custom of shaking hands when greeting someone. Demonstrate the correct way to shake hands, as well as the incorrect ways.
 - Explain that the instructors will be introducing themselves to each student.
- **Shake hands**, one at a time, with each student. Move around the room in no set order so that students do not become nervous about being next in line.
 - Ask the students their names and what countries they are from.
 - Follow up with a general question that is not too personal or potentially embarrassing. Do not ask about the Academy, family situations, or school. Examples of questions are:
 - Was it hard to get here this morning?
 - Have you been in this building before?

- Do you know anyone in this class? (Introduce the student to another student.)
- Are you comfortable in this desk?
- Would you rather be sleeping?
- Follow student responses with a reassuring comment. The message should be positive.
- Questions can be repeated, and the names of the adults should be repeated several times. The adults can pretend that they have forgotten each other's names and can ask to have them repeated.
- Keep refreshing the class about the names of the students.
- Point out new vocabulary words as they are used.
- After everyone has been introduced, **explain classroom behavior** that is required in every school.
 - Demonstrate each of the classroom behaviors listed below. One instructor can demonstrate poor classroom behavior and the other instructor can demonstrate the expected good behavior.
 - The purpose of the activity is to inform students how to act in the classroom so that they can be comfortable and not worry about doing the wrong thing. Emphasis should be on enjoying the Academy and becoming familiar with school procedures, not on obeying the rules.
 - Practice some of the classroom behaviors with the class:

- ★ Raise hand to speak; wait to be called on by teacher
- ★ One person speaks at a time
- ★ Respond to teacher questions
- ★ Listen when someone else is talking
- ★ Face the teacher
- ★ Do not move around the room without permission
- ★ Ignore distractions (students talking, joking)
- ★ Keep hands on the desk; keep feet near the desk
- ★ Listen to announcements
- ★ Wait for the bell to ring
- ★ Line up quietly; show courtesy in the hall
- ★ Address the teacher appropriately
- ★ Talk quietly during group activities



ACTIVITY 2: SHARING OBSERVATIONS AND GOALS

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (45 minutes)

In this activity:



The students will have the opportunity to express their observations and concerns about American schools. It is part of Module 1 so that any worries or misconceptions can be addressed immediately, before the Academy is underway.

This activity will require a class discussion (with students raising hands not only for structuring the discussion but for practice of classroom behavior), and translation time may slow the conversation down a bit. However, since the tone of the discussion should be relaxed and informal, the time for translations will allow for attentive listening.

- **Invite student responses to the questions**, accepting all responses, reminding students about classroom behavior if they talk all at once. Students do not have to respond if they are uncomfortable, but instructors should try to rephrase questions if it appears that the student is unsure or confused.
- **Encourage talkers to listen to others; encourage listeners to comment but only if they are willing.** Do not comment on how a student may be “quiet” or “shy.” Go back to the silent students occasionally, to try to draw them into the discussion.
 - It may take awhile to get any responses from anyone in the room. If the students are not reacting, the adults can discuss the questions with each other, looking to the class to agree or disagree with the answers. This process usually draws in students who cannot resist commenting on what the adults are discussing.
 - Some students may provide information about experiences in their native country that are sensitive or graphic. These comments may provide insight into their feelings about school in America, particularly since they more than likely left situations that were frightening. Although they do need the opportunity to share their experiences, turn the discussion focus toward fears that students may have about going to school in America. Refute myths and provide information that will put them at ease.

- Be alert for emotional responses (or unemotional responses) to stories that may be dramatic. Thank the students, reassure them, and repeat the discussion question so that the class can focus on the question at hand. Let children share their memories, but do not dwell on negative images, and do not compare the experiences of students.
- Emphasis should be on looking toward the future and preparing to enter the American school system. Keep reminding students about the number of adults who are responsible for helping refugee students, some of whom have been introduced at the Refugee Academy.



Discussion Questions



What do you think it will be like in American schools?

- Refute myths and stereotypes
- Acknowledge fears, confusion
- Reassure
- Stress positive aspects of American schools
- Introduce staff available to help, if in the classroom. If not, stress the number of people responsible for assisting refugee students.

What have you noticed already that is different from schools in your native country?

- Recognize range of educational opportunities in native countries (no education to daily formal education)
- Identify areas of adjustment
- Highlight enjoyment, fun
- Stress that schools are for learning

What are you hoping you will learn in school?

- Describe subjects offered, by topics (maps, lab experiments, dance, etc.)
- Describe available help, including peers

What are you most curious about?

- Address “burning questions”
- Explain standard systems in American schools (see Key Point 5)

How will school help you?

- American education has multiple benefits; elaborate on each benefit of education.
- Point out how American students benefit from the enrollment of refugee students; how refugee students will contribute to the school by expanding global education for other students; how students in the Refugee Academy will contribute ideas, talents, and observations that will enhance the education of others.

ACTIVITY 3: A DAY AT SCHOOL

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (45 minutes)

Show the DVD *A Day at School* (Elementary, Middle or High School)

- Use the ***Guide to the Videos*** for introducing the video and for follow-up discussion.
- Distribute *Handout 1-1: Please Visit Our School* and explain that the parents will see the same video.

Instructors or students should fill in the date, time, and place in English and/or in a native language on *Handout 1-1*.

ACTIVITY 4: SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Grades K-5 (15 minutes)

Distribute *Handout 1-2: School Supplies* for coloring.

Review the names of each item:



- ✓ Backpack
- ✓ Crayons
- ✓ Pencils
- ✓ Sneakers / Gym Shoes
- ✓ Gym Clothes
- ✓ Lunch (purchase or bring bag lunch)

- Explain that students will need these supplies for school. The school will provide some supplies, but teachers will also provide detailed lists of supplies that students have to purchase. Students will be expected to have all of their supplies by the first week of school.
- Inform students that they do not have to buy their textbooks.
- If supply lists are available from the teachers, distribute them and discuss what teachers require. Explain where students can purchase supplies in their neighborhoods, and mention that supplies might also be able to be purchased from a school store.
- Community agencies and the school nurse may have free school supplies for students. Provide students with the specific details.
- Explain that students will keep their supplies in a desk that is assigned to them in their classroom, and in a cupboard or “cubby.” They should write their name on all of their supplies.

Distribute *Handout 1-3: School Supplies*.

Review the names of each item:



- ✓ Backpack
- ✓ Pens
- ✓ Pencils
- ✓ Notebooks
- ✓ Assignment Notebook
- ✓ Lunch (purchase or bring bag lunch)
- ✓ Calculator
- ✓ Sneakers / Gym Clothes

- Explain that students will need these supplies for school. The school will provide some supplies, but teachers will also provide detailed lists of supplies that the students have to purchase. Students will be expected to have all of their supplies by the first week of school.
- Inform students that they do not have to buy their textbooks.
- If supply lists are available from the teachers, distribute them and discuss what teachers require. Explain where students can purchase supplies in their neighborhoods, and mention that supplies might also be able to be purchased from a school store.
- Community agencies and the school nurse may have free school supplies for students. Provide students with the specific details.
- Explain that students will keep their supplies in a locker that is assigned to them. If possible, demonstrate the use of a locker and give students the opportunity to practice the combination lock.



JOURNAL TOPIC

- Journals will be distributed in *Module 2: Making Friends*.



SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Finish the day with a second viewing of the video ***A Day at School*** at the same level, or at another level (grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12).
- Introduce adults responsible for helping refugee students and repeat shaking hands.
- Tour school facilities, even if it is not the school that students will attend. Discuss the similarities in all schools.
- Invite local refugee students who live in the school community to talk about their adjustment to American schools.
- Shake hands or “high-five” as students leave at the end of the day.
- Visit school lockers and practice using the locker combination and storing supplies in the lockers.
- Visit local community organizations that provide free or inexpensive winter clothing.



MODULE 2
MAKING FRIENDS

MODULE 2: Making Friends

PURPOSE

The purpose of Module 2 is to assist students in developing new, positive friendships.



OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Understand the qualities of a positive friendship
- Develop new friendships in the Refugee Academy
- Understand the process of developing friendships in American schools



SUPPLIES

**Handouts 2-1, 2-2:
After-School
Activities**

Beach ball

**5 Sets of building
blocks or LEGOs®**

Pencils

**Crayons, markers,
or colored pencils**

White poster paper

**Spiral notebook/
journals**

**Video
*Refugee Student
Interviews***



MODULE 2: Making Friends

VOCABULARY

Elementary Vocabulary

Friend/friends

Help

Kind

Ask

Club

Smile

Bully

Playground

Recess

Secondary Vocabulary

Friend/friends

Help

Kind

Ask

Smile

Newcomer

Bully

Culture

Sports

Club



Key Points – Making Friends



1. *There are many opportunities to develop friendships in American schools.*

Although students are interested in hearing about their new school and all that it has to offer, they are primarily interested in making new friends. They will undoubtedly be concerned about whether anyone will befriend them. Will they be treated well? Will they be included? How will they make friends if they cannot understand the language, and the environment and activities are so unfamiliar to them?

One of the first goals of the Refugee Academy is to reassure students that there are a number of opportunities in American schools to meet new people and form new friendships. In fact, the Academy will be the place that friendships will start.

Students will need to know that friendships can form under a variety of circumstances. They may have a partner or team in a school project, and will get to know their fellow classmates from sharing ideas and tasks. They may sit near someone who helps them with their studies, or the teacher may assign a partner to show them around the school and introduce them to other students.



American schools have so many different activities that it is difficult to predict when friendships will arise. Friendships can develop on the playground or athletic field, in after-school activities, during classroom discussions, while walking to school, or simply when students have adjacent lockers. Encourage students to keep an open mind about the possibilities of new friendships. They should participate in a lot of different activities so that they increase the chances that a friendship will develop.



2. *Developing friendships can take a long time.*

Students in the Refugee Academy should be told many times that the development of friendship can take a long time, especially if the friendship is to be long-lasting. What is a long time? To primary students it can be a matter of two or three days. An invitation to participate in a game on the playground can constitute an immediate friendship. Working on an art project together with a partner can result in the establishment of a new relationship. But for younger students, if a friendship does not happen in the first few hours, they may get discouraged and withdraw from class participation. Instructors should work to cultivate friendships in the Academy to reassure younger students.



For students in intermediate and high school grades, the development of friendships can be stressful, especially in the middle school years. Often “best friends” have already found each other, groups have been formed, and alliances have been established. Friendships are on and off, often

because of miscommunication or changing interests or temperaments. Students in their preteen and teen years tend to be resistant to anyone who is new (especially if they are considered to be “different”). Not all students will be friendly. Not all students will welcome new students into their small group of intimate friends.

It may be difficult at first for refugee students to be included in existing groups, or to connect with someone new. They may feel ignored or rejected, or confused about the reaction of American students to the way that they speak or dress. They may be struggling with how to maintain their culture while adjusting to a new culture. Pressures from family members to follow cultural traditions may conflict with what is considered stylish in American schools. Students can be confused until they figure out how to balance both worlds. Instructors should point out that this is a typical struggle for students who are new to America, and good friends will accept them, no matter how they choose to live their lives.

Students in the Refugee Academy should be aware that teasing, imitation, and other negative reactions will occur, but most students are interested in welcoming new students. Relationships will form, but it will take patience. Refugee students can find stronger connections if they participate in activities that have mutual interests and goals, and if they keep an open mind about friendship possibilities.

 **3. Be a good friend to build friendships.**

Refugee students will undoubtedly be missing their friends and relatives from their native countries, and may feel certain that they will never be able to form new friendships in American schools. While they are trying to cope with the loss of people who were important to them, they will be worried about how they can create new relationships.



Refugee students will often be scared and worried as they try to navigate through an unfamiliar school day. They may appear aloof when they are actually shy, or unwilling to participate when they are just confused about what is expected of them. Instructors should explain to students that they can reach out with a smile and a greeting to demonstrate an interest in forming a friendship. If they consistently demonstrate kindness, cooperation, and willingness to enjoy their new school activities, they will be demonstrating the qualities of a good friend. It may be difficult at times, but if they try to maintain a positive attitude, they will undoubtedly experience positive reactions. They should also be looking for the same positive qualities when forming new friendships, so that the new relationships are ones of mutual respect.

For some Refugee Academy classes, it may be necessary to raise the issue of conflicts between cultural groups. Some students may have resentment, fear, or anger against other students in the classroom because of past history in their native country. Without dwelling on this sensitive subject, keep stressing that enrolling in a new school in America means the possibility of setting old conflicts aside and developing tolerance and new relationships. Students may be resistant because of memories, pressures

from family members, or fears about repercussions. The instructors can gently suggest that students now have the chance to move on to new types of friendships.

 **4. Some “friendships” may not be healthy for newcomers.**

As the Refugee Academy instructors talk to the students about friendship, it is important to discuss the qualities of a good friend. New students may not realize that a fellow student who is paying attention to them is actually mocking them or deliberately making them feel uncomfortable. For refugee students the attention alone may constitute “friendship,” when it is a relationship that is not healthy for newcomers.

Encourage students in the Academy to be friendly and responsive to people who are kind and helpful, but to take their time before forming new alliances. They should observe the dynamics of the classes and after-school activities to see who treats peers with respect. Who stands out in the class for their character and kindness, not for their negative leadership or poor treatment of others?

New students should become acquainted with as many people as possible, without limiting friendships to those who take the initiative, because the initiator may not have the best intentions. Refugee students will be vulnerable because of their limited English and unfamiliarity with their new school. There are, unfortunately, classmates who seek out those who are vulnerable and will mock the clothing, hygiene, eating habits, speaking skills, and other characteristics of refugee students. Some classmates will make it perfectly clear that the refugee students are not welcome in America.

Some refugee students may be so desperate for friends that they will connect with anyone who pays attention to them. This can lead to the development of relationships with peers who are negative influences, sometimes with the refugee student not even realizing that they are participating in activities that are against school policies, or are dangerous or illegal. Inform students in the Academy that good friends do not encourage participation in teasing, bullying, truancy, drug and alcohol abuse, gangs, and other negative activities. (*Modules 4 School Rules and 12 School Safety* address this topic in more detail.)

It is important to warn students that they might encounter individuals who will be unpleasant and unfair. Although the things that those individuals say and do are hurtful, those individuals do not speak for everyone in the school. Inform the students of the Refugee Academy how to avoid responding to negative attacks, and where to get assistance if treatment by fellow classmates interferes with comfort or safety.

ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY #1: QUALITIES OF FRIENDSHIP

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (45 minutes)

In this activity:



Students will begin discussing the importance of forming friendships that are positive. The exercise will facilitate the development of friendships among students of the Refugee Academy.

Before introducing the **Beach Ball Exercise**, discuss the following questions with the students. After student responses, share the concepts listed under each question, emphasizing the Key Points.

The topic is a sensitive one, but important to address early in the Refugee Academy because it is of utmost importance to the students. Emphasize that most peers will welcome newcomers, and that those classmates who are unwelcoming should be ignored. Encourage students to discuss friendship problems with the Academic Coach.



Discussion Questions



How do you know if someone is a friend?

- Discuss the qualities of a positive friendship.
- Explain how the depth of friendships varies (acquaintance vs. friendship).
- Role-play overcoming shyness and developing friendships (instructors play the roles).

Where have you met new friends in your native country and in America?

- Friends can be made anywhere, including the playground, neighborhood, family, at jobs.

- Address that it was probably difficult to make friends if families were moving and living with conflict and fear, but students will be able to make new friends in their new school.
- Students may not have any friends for a variety of reasons, and are worried about making friends in America. Stress that one of the purposes of the Refugee Academy is to meet new friends.

Can you tell what someone is like just by looking at them?

- Explain the phrase “do not judge a book by its cover.”
- Discuss how peers will judge and friendships will take time. Provide ideas about how to cope with embarrassment, rejection, and poor treatment.
- Stress that actions, especially kindness and friendliness, can outweigh appearance and shyness.
- Raise the issue of the difficulty of maintaining native culture and still “fitting in.” Discuss how to balance different cultures and lifestyles.
- If relevant, point out that past conflicts between groups in native countries can interfere with the development of friendships in American schools. Encourage students to set old stereotypes aside without providing specifics of the history between groups.
- Encourage students to take the initiative to form friendships, but only after observing and determining who will treat them with respect.
- Encourage support of fellow newcomers.



Beach ball exercise: Ask the students to stand in a circle. Arrange the circle so that students are comfortable standing near each other. Keep cultural customs in mind as you establish the location of each student.

Tell them that you are going to play **a game that will help them get to know each other better.**

- Explain to the students that you are going to say your name and the country you are from, and then toss the beach ball to someone else in the circle.
- When the ball is caught, the recipient is to say their name, the country they are from, and the name of the person who threw them the ball.
- Continue tossing the ball, recognizing that the list of names will get longer and more confusing. Do not pressure students to remember the names. Ask everyone in the group to assist when names are forgotten. Ask students to repeat their names many times.

- Reassure students that this is not a game of skill, but for fun. All of the instructors should participate, deliberately missing the ball, bouncing it on their knee, etc. to help the students enjoy the game.
- As the students start to learn the names of their Academy classmates, they will become more relaxed and comfortable, paving the way for the development of friendships.

As an added activity, point out the countries of the students on a world map or globe. Keep in mind that some students will have stereotypes of other countries (or of students from their own country with differing religions or cultural backgrounds). Stress the qualities of good friends. Point out that newcomers will not want to be judged when they enter their new classrooms, so the students in the Refugee Academy should refrain from judging their peers.



ACTIVITY #2: FACILITATING ACADEMY FRIENDSHIPS

Grades K-5 (30 minutes)

In this activity:

The purpose of the **Building Exercise** is to show how small groups of students can work together on a project that requires minimal facility with the English language.



Divide students into groups of 3 or 4, mixing gender and native countries, but maintaining the same general age ranges.



Provide each group with a set of building blocks or LEGOs® and a picture of what they are supposed to build. (Instructors may determine that the exercise would be more effective if the students can build any structure, without a picture as a guide.)

- **Explain that each small group is to work together to build**, even if they speak different languages. (ESL instructors may encourage the students to use English words if they have acquired relevant vocabulary words.)
 - **They are to:**
 - Make sure everyone has a chance to participate.
 - Work together, not separately.
 - Use a variety of ways to communicate including speaking English as much as possible (nonverbal cues, drawings, demonstrations).
 - Use the interpreter only if they are unable to move forward with the task.
 - Make their own structure if they are unable to follow the directions on the picture.
 - Demonstrate the qualities of a good friend.
 - **Circulate amongst the groups, encouraging the involvement of students who are holding back** or letting others dominate the group. Intervene when the group appears to be dysfunctional or unable to accomplish the task.

- **Compliment the students** on their ability to work together even though they do not know each other. Remind them that by working on a project together they have developed a connection that can lead to a friendship.

Grades 6-8, 9-12 (30 minutes)

In this activity:

The purpose of the **Drawing Exercise** is to show how small groups of students can work together on a project that requires minimal facility with the English language.



Divide students into groups of 3 or 4, mixing genders and native countries, but maintaining the same general age ranges.

Provide each group with crayons, colored pencils, or markers, and large sheets of poster paper.

- Explain that the small group is to **work together to draw their favorite foods on one sheet of paper**, even if they speak different languages. (ESL instructors may encourage the students to use English words if they have acquired relevant vocabulary words.)



- **They are to:**

- Make sure everyone has a chance to participate.
 - Work together, not separately; help each other draw and color.
 - Use a variety of ways to communicate, including speaking English as much as possible (nonverbal cues, drawings, demonstrations).
 - Use the interpreter only if they are unable to move forward with the task.
 - Demonstrate the qualities of a good friend.
- **Circulate amongst the groups, encouraging the involvement of students who are holding back** or letting others dominate the group. Intervene when the group appears to be dysfunctional or unable to accomplish the task.

Students may have difficulty drawing, and they may have to explain the ingredients of what they are drawing.

- Remind the students that by **working on a project together** they have developed a connection that **can lead to a friendship**. They may not recognize the different foods, but they all share in their interest in food and the way they feel when they eat a meal that they enjoy. (Demonstrate reactions to a good meal.)



 **Discussion Questions** 

How did you do this activity, even though you speak different languages?

How did you show that you could be a helping friend?

How did others show that they could be helpful?

What new words did you learn, in any language?

If appropriate, discuss American “fast foods” and how newcomers can develop a taste for them, not realizing the fat content and expense.

ACTIVITY #3: VIDEO

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (30 minutes)



Show the video *Refugee Student Interviews*.

- Use the *Guide to the Videos* for introducing the video and for follow-up discussion.
- Discuss sharing contact information with peers:
 - Gaining permission to exchange phone numbers
 - Privacy (not sharing personal information)
 - Communication systems such as e-mail and cell phones

ACTIVITY #4: JOURNALS

Grades K-5 (15 minutes)

During the Refugee Academy the students will have the opportunity to write or draw in daily journals. They will be assigned topics, but can write about any subject or draw a picture of anything that relates to adjusting to American schools.



Distribute the journals (spiral notebooks, pencils, and crayons) and discuss:



- The purpose of the journals is for the students to record things that they want to remember, topics that interest them, and reactions to what they have learned in the Academy. The journals are private and will not be shared with the class. (Instructors will have to determine in advance if students will be expected to bring in the journals daily and show their entries to the instructors. This process may be necessary to determine if the students are completing the task, and to identify students who need additional support or counseling.)
- Students may write in their own language or draw pictures of their thoughts. Discuss how a journal is for expression of personal feelings. For many students this will be a novel concept and it may take them awhile to feel comfortable talking about how they feel.
- For the first journal entry, ask students:
 - Grades K-3: Draw a picture of a good friend
 - Grades 4-5: How can I make new friends?



Grades 6-8, 9-12 (15 minutes)

During the Refugee Academy the students will have the opportunity to write or draw in daily journals. They will be assigned topics, but can write about or draw a picture of any subject.



Distribute the journals (spiral notebooks, pencils, and crayons) and discuss:



- The purpose of the journals is for the students to record things that they want to remember, topics that interest them, and reactions to what they have learned in the Academy. The journals are private and will not be shared

with the class. (Instructors will have to determine in advance if students will be expected to bring in the journals daily and show their entries to the instructors. This process may be necessary to determine if the students are completing the task. Middle school and high school students may be particularly sensitive about the contents of their journals. They may insist on privacy, especially if they are concerned that their journals will be shared with their parents. Instructors may establish privacy policies, but should understand that there may be occasions when the contents of the journals may be a signal that students need additional support or counseling.

- Students may write in their own language or draw pictures of their thoughts. Discuss how a journal is for expression of personal feelings. For many students this will be a novel concept and it may take them awhile to feel comfortable talking about how they feel.
- For the first journal entry, ask students to:
 - Write or draw pictures about making friends in America.



ACTIVITY #5: AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (10 minutes)

**Distribute *Handouts 2-1: After-School Activities (K-5)*
*2-2: After-School Activities (6-12)***

- Discuss opportunities for meeting new friends.
- Discuss the clubs and other after-school activities represented by the pictures.
- Add information about local activities.
- Discuss local community programs such as the Boys/Girls Club or the YMCA.
- Explain that school activities are free, but most community activities will charge a fee. Fees are often based on need, and when students sign up, a fee will be determined for them. The School Nurse and Academic Coaches can also arrange for coverage of fees. Students should not eliminate an activity because they cannot afford to pay for the fee or equipment. They should talk to Academic Coaches if there is an interest in an after-school activity.
- Provide flyers and brochures about specific programs. Ask interpreters to translate the information.
- Repeat the information throughout the Academy because the students may have difficulty absorbing all of the information early in the Academy.



JOURNAL TOPIC

- (Discussed in Activity #4)



SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Invite students from the school district to visit for snacks, introductions, and the beach ball game.
- Establish students as mentors for refugee students and invite them to discuss the mentoring process.
- Invite speakers from school clubs and local community organizations to greet the students and describe activities; bring uniforms, games, projects; demonstrate what they have learned in after-school activities (karate, baseball, art, theater, etc.).
- Using the children's books included in the ***Welcome to Our Schools Kit***, discuss what the main characters might write or draw in their journals.
- Rather than sending the students outside for disorganized free time, organize games and activities that facilitate the development of new friendships. If some students will be in the same class or grade, arrange for time for them to connect with one another.



MODULE 3
TRANSPORTATION
AND TIME

MODULE 3: Transportation and Time



PURPOSE



The purpose of Module 3 is to familiarize students with the scheduling of a school day.

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Understand the structure and schedule of a school day
- Understand the importance of planning and organizing to be prepared for the school day
- Become comfortable with school transportation



SUPPLIES

Handout 3-1:

Getting to School

Handout 3-2:

School Subjects

Photos, drawings of school transportation

School maps (modified)

5 full backpacks (see Activity #1)

Items for role - playing (see Activity #3)

student desk, alarm clock, school bell, jump rope, locker or cubby, textbooks, pencil and paper, calculator, etc.

Videos:

Refugee Student Interviews and A Day in School

(Elementary, Middle or High School)



MODULE 3: Transportation and Time

VOCABULARY

Elementary Vocabulary

Time
Bus
Walk
Driver
Car/automobile
School Bus
Late
Supplies
Bus Stop
Clap
Homework

Secondary Vocabulary

Time
Organization
Plan/schedule
Bus
Walk
Driver
Car/automobile
Transportation
Late
Notebook
Planner
Alarm Clock
Supplies
Bus Stop
Homework
Clap



Key Points – Transportation and Time



1. *Transportation to school is free and scheduled.*

Depending on how the students are transported to the Refugee Academy, they may not realize that transportation to and from school is arranged by the school district at no cost to the student. Students can **walk to school**, usually if they live within a specified distance from their school building, or they can take a **school bus**, **city bus**, **subway**, or a combination of those forms of transportation.



It will be necessary to review every aspect of using school transportation. Even if the students are experienced in bus transportation, do not assume that they know about bus safety (including getting on and off the bus), the role of the bus driver, how to handle problems on the bus, and the importance of punctuality. Instructors should determine the mode of transportation for every student and provide detailed information about bus routes, numbers, schedules, and the names of bus drivers. For students taking the train/subway, review safety procedures and strategies for alternative routes.



Students will also need to know what to do if they miss the bus. Discuss possible backup plans that should be established before they start school. They may also sign up for after-school activities that will require them to take a “late bus.” They need to inform family members of changes in their transportation schedule. Some schools will require special passes and permission slips for riding buses after school hours, especially for school-related field trips.



2. *Punctuality is expected and school schedules must be followed.*

Students may not be accustomed to schools that run on a strict time schedule. Instructors should point out that students are expected to be in school on time. They are to be ready for school and waiting for transportation in the morning. They should get to their first class or homeroom in time for attendance, and make it to their classes on time.

During Module 3, the instructors should review the schedules for the schools, explaining details such as where students should go when they arrive at school, what the bells signify, and how much time they have if they have to change classes. For many students, all of this activity while watching the clock will be confusing, perhaps even alarming. It can be disarming to be in a hallway full of high school students when classes are changing in a large school. It can be frightening to students who associate bells with alarms and air raids. Even in the elementary grades when students line up to

move to another activity, many refugee students may not understand the process and may be bewildered about where everyone is going. Instructors should take the time to explain about how large numbers of students are able to get to all of their classes, as long as everyone follows the procedures and schedule.



3. Establishing routines requires practice and experience.

Students need to be reassured that they will soon adapt to the schedules of the schools, but it takes planning and practice. If they pack their backpacks the night before school, they will not waste time searching for schoolbooks in the morning. If they plan out their mornings, they will be able to get to their bus stop on time. If they become familiar with the layout of the school building, they will be able to get to their classes on time.



Observing and practicing will be the keys to establishing routines that feel comfortable. Any chances the instructors can give the students to observe and practice will be essential during the Refugee Academy



4. Time management begins with planning.



One of the purposes of Module 3 is to assist students in getting organized so that they can successfully navigate the school system in the fall. The instructors can teach the students tricks for time management and planning.

Describe basic organizational strategies that may seem obvious, but can make life in an American school more efficient. For example, teachers can demonstrate alarm clocks, assignment notebooks, folders for different subjects, pencil boxes, and calendars, to give students ideas about how they can organize their lives.



Explain to students that they will need to provide some of their own basic school supplies, and should always come to class prepared with notebooks or paper, pencils, and the assigned textbook. They can be better prepared if they keep their backpacks and lockers neat and organized. Suggest that they routinely sort through papers and file them in file folders or pockets of notebooks, clear out lockers of loose papers (and old lunches!) and establish an organization system in their backpacks so that they always know where everything is located.

Students are better able to respond to suggestions about organization if they have the chance to experiment with strategies and can settle on a system that works best for them personally. The activities in Module 3 will give them opportunities to think about how they would like to organize their time and their materials for school.

ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY #1: READY FOR SCHOOL

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (45 minutes)

In this activity:

The purpose of the **Backpack Exercise** is to demonstrate the contents of a backpack, and methods of organizing a backpack or book bag.



Explain to the students what each item is, and how it ended up in the backpack. Students should understand what belongs in a backpack (and what does not belong in a backpack) and how keeping a backpack organized can help in adapting to the American school system.

- **Unload a full backpack, one item at a time.** The backpack should contain:
 - ✓ Supplies, textbooks, library books
 - ✓ School lunch
 - ✓ Bus pass/lunch ticket
 - ✓ School report
 - ✓ Spiral notebooks, folders
 - ✓ Assignment notebook
 - ✓ Amusing items (extra sock, one glove, etc.)
 - ✓ Writing supplies
- **Point out unacceptable items** such as toys, gum, large amounts of money, over-the-counter medicines.

(Do not address school safety at this time other than to point out that school rules forbid dangerous items, toys, medicines that are supposed to be in the nurse's office, and candy or gum in school. See Module 12: School Safety.)
- As items are being removed from the backpack, **point out the following information:**
 - Pack the backpack the night before school.
 - The backpack will contain the same items every day, such as lunch, writing supplies, or notebooks. Make sure the items are handy.

- Class assignments may require additional items such as library books, textbooks, homework, artwork, or school projects.
- The student may have additional items to carry such as clothes for physical education (“gym clothes”), a musical instrument, or a school project.
- Explain how some items must be purchased and some will be provided by the school. Provide ideas about where students can purchase supplies.

- Backpacks can be heavy. Some refugee students do not like to store anything that they own, so they tend to carry everything related to school in their backpacks. Reassure students that, although they can keep their backpacks with them, they can keep most school materials at home or in their locker when they are not needed in class. Some schools do not allow students to carry backpacks around the school building, so students will have to plan when they can make a stop at their locker between classes. Remind students to keep their backpacks in sight when they do have the backpacks with them.



- Some schools may conduct random searches of backpacks. Inform students to cooperate. If the students have followed school rules, they should not worry. If they are detained by the school administration or police officers, they should request a translator and their Academic Coach.
- Younger students will have a storage area in their elementary classroom, often referred to as a “cubby”. The teachers will tell them what should be stored in the cubby and what should be stored in their desk.

- Divide the students into small groups of 3 or 4, and **give them a full backpack.**

Ask the students to:

- Identify each item in the backpack.
- Refill the backpack in an organized manner.
- Identify items that could be stored in a locker or cubby.
- Students should make a list or draw pictures of items needed for a backpack, to share with family members.

ACTIVITY #2: VIDEOS

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (30 minutes)



Show the videos *Refugee Student Interviews* and *A Day in School* (Elementary, Middle or High School)

- Use the *Guide to the Videos* for introducing the video and for follow-up discussion.
- Discuss local transportation details:
 - If possible, identify specific transportation arrangements and/or bus stops for each student.
 - Discuss “late” buses for after-school clubs, sports, and field trips, and other transportation arrangements.
 - Discuss assigned lockers/cubbies if the information is available.
 - **Distribute bus stickers** with the correct bus numbers.

ACTIVITY #3: SCHOOL SCHEDULE

Grades K-5 (45 minutes)

In this activity:

The instructors and guest “actors” will **role-play a school day** in fast-forward, with humor.



One instructor is the student, another is the teacher/parent and bell ringer. The actors will take the following steps, using exaggerated pantomime, props, and occasional translation from the interpreters.

- The “play” should show an instructor acting as a busy, harried student trying to stay organized in a confusing, demanding day. Most of the play can be pantomimed.
 - Night before school: clothes ready/backpack checked
 - Sleeping/alarm clock
 - Walk to bus stop/subway or to school
 - Parent runs up with forgotten lunch
 - Line up outside school/bell rings
 - Move from cubby to class job (watering plants, feeding the fish, etc.), sitting in desk, gym class, lunch, jumping rope at recess, library, music, math class, etc. (Move to different classes, carrying out a variety of activities to demonstrate the subjects.)
 - Recess bell/recess activities
 - ESL class
 - After-school activity (theater, chess, sports)
 - Home on bus or subway or by walking
 - Work on homework/unload backpack
 - Organize backpack for next morning
 - Set alarm/sleep

- Encourage students to applaud, demonstrating the etiquette of clapping.
- Continue to role play, with instructors carrying out a discussion between the actors, in roles of teacher and student. The focus of the discussion is below. ***The “teacher” asks questions of the “student.”***

 <i>Do you have a busy day?</i>
<i>Answers should focus on:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Busy, but organized ▪ Many things to learn each day
 <i>Is every day the same?</i>
<i>Answers should focus on:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Same subjects each day (reading, math, social studies, and science) ▪ Every day has music or art or library
 <i>Does the school day go this fast?</i>
<i>Answers should focus on:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ At first the days feel confusing ▪ Depends on activities, interests
 <i>How do you know what is next?</i>
<i>Answers should focus on:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wall chart in classroom ▪ Teacher announcements ▪ Follow the students ▪ Ask classmates
 <i>Is there time to play?</i>
<i>Answers should focus on:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recess, gym, after school ▪ Group activities, art, music
 <i>What if you forget your lunch?</i>
<i>Answers should focus on:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lunch pass/credit (describe school procedures) ▪ Ask classmates, lunch aides, teachers for help
 <i>What if you miss the bus?</i>
<i>Answers should focus on:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Backup plans ▪ Call school/bring a tardy note the next day

? <i>Do you stay after school every day?</i>
<p><i>Answers should focus on:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Options available in the school ▪ Permissions required from parents ▪ Bus arrangements
? <i>What if you do not finish your work in class?</i>
<p><i>Answers should focus on:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Homework ▪ After-school assistance ▪ Ask teachers, Academic Coach, ESL teachers for help
? <i>What if you do not understand what the teacher wants?</i>
<p><i>Answers should focus on:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ask teacher, classmates (without disturbing the class) ▪ Ask the Academic Coach
? <i>Who helps you if you are confused?</i>
<p><i>Answers should focus on:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Classmates, teacher, Academic Coach ▪ Observing and asking will result in comfortable routines

Grades 6-8, 9-12 (45 minutes)

In this activity:

The instructors and guest “actors” will **role-play a school day** in fast-forward, with humor.



One instructor is the student, another is the teacher/parent and bell ringer. The actors will take the following steps, using exaggerated pantomime, props, and occasional translation from the interpreters.

- The “play” should show a busy, sometimes harried, student trying to stay organized in a confusing, demanding day. Most of the play can be pantomimed.
 - Night before school: clothes ready/backpack checked
 - Sleeping/alarm clock
 - Walk to bus stop/subway or to school
 - Stow backpack in locker

- Homeroom for attendance
 - Move from class to class
 - Demonstrate different subjects, including music, physical education, science lab, math, Social Studies, etc.
 - ESL class
 - After-school activity (theater, chess, sports)
 - Home on the bus or subway, walking
 - Unload backpack and set up to work on homework
 - Turn off cell phone and television
 - Work on homework
 - Attend practice for sports, dance, karate, school event
 - Organize backpack for next morning
 - Set alarm/sleep
- Encourage students to applaud, demonstrating the etiquette of clapping.
 - Continue to role-play, with instructors carrying out a discussion between the actors, in roles of teacher and student. The focus of the student discussion is below. ***The “teacher” asks questions of the “student.”***

 <i>Do you have a busy day?</i>
<i>Answers should focus on:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Busy, but organized ▪ Many things to learn each day
 <i>Is every day the same?</i>
<i>Answers should focus on:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Same subjects each day (reading, math, social studies, and science) ▪ Every day has music or art or library or elective subjects
 <i>Does the school day go this fast?</i>
<i>Answers should focus on:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ At first the days feel confusing ▪ Depends on activities, interests, friendships

 How do you know what is next?
<p><i>Answers should focus on:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teacher announcements ▪ Follow the students ▪ Ask classmates ▪ Follow a written schedule from the first week of school ▪ Practice going from class to class
 Is there time to have any fun?
<p><i>Answers should focus on:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lunch in the cafeteria, gym, after school sports and clubs ▪ Group activities, art, music
 What if you forget your lunch?
<p><i>Answers should focus on:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lunch pass/credit (describe school system) ▪ Ask classmates, lunch aides, teachers for help
 What if you miss the bus?
<p><i>Answers should focus on:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Backup plans ▪ Call school/bring a tardy note the next day
 Do you stay after school every day?
<p><i>Answers should focus on:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Options available in the school ▪ Permissions required from parents ▪ Bus arrangements
 What if you do not finish your work in class?
<p><i>Answers should focus on:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Homework (defined) ▪ After-school assistance ▪ Ask teachers, Academic Coach, ESL teachers for help

 What if you do not understand what the teacher wants?
<p><i>Answers should focus on:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ask teacher, classmates (without disturbing the class) ▪ Ask the Academic Coach
 Who helps you if you are confused?
<p><i>Answers should focus on:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Classmates, teacher, Academic Coach ▪ Observing and asking will result in comfortable routines
 Do you ever get lost in school?
<p><i>Answers should focus on:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Academy tours ▪ Studying the school map ▪ Practice walking through the halls, study the locations of the classes and the room numbers ▪ It takes time to know your way around ▪ Know the location of the main office
 Do you have enough time between classes?
<p><i>Answers should focus on:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Depends upon schedule, may have to rush ▪ Develop routines about locker access
 What if you are late to class?
<p><i>Answers should focus on:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Practice and organization will reduce the chances of getting lost ▪ Office late passes ▪ Some teachers more tolerant than others
 What if you are late to school?
<p><i>Answers should focus on:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have backups for transportation arrangements ▪ Buses and subways can be late ▪ A tardy note from parents is required ▪ Call school if more than 30 minutes late

 What is a tutor?
<p><i>Answers should focus on:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Purpose ▪ Tutoring process ▪ Take advantage of tutors without being embarrassed/more embarrassing to fail a subject
 What is in your locker?
<p><i>Answers should focus on:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Items ▪ Organization/time ▪ Privacy/decoration
 How can you be ready for class?
<p><i>Answers should focus on:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supplies/ textbooks ▪ Homework (preparation) ▪ Pay attention to teacher requirements
 What class is your favorite?
<p><i>Answers should focus on:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Depends upon the teacher, interests, talents, new knowledge ▪ It is necessary to persevere with classes that are disliked
 Who helps you if you are confused?
<p><i>Answers should focus on:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Peers, teachers, office, guidance counselors ▪ Academic Coach

- Encourage the Academy students to ask questions based on the role-playing.

ACTIVITY #4: REVIEW

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (15 minutes)

Distribute *Handouts 3-1: Getting to School* *3-2: School Subjects*

- Conduct individualized discussions of the handout information while students write or illustrate in journals.
- Identify school subjects of interest.



JOURNAL TOPIC

Grades K-5

Draw or write about what you want to learn about in school.

Grades 6-8

Draw or write about your plans for learning in school.

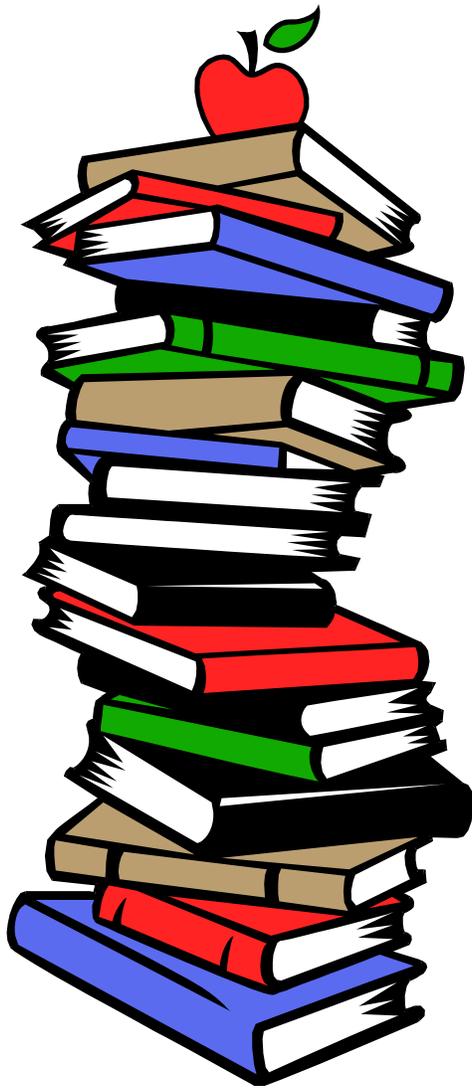
Grades 9-12

Draw or write about the best way for you to stay organized in school.
What are you excited about learning about?



SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Meet the bus drivers.
- Tour school buses, city buses and subways and discuss safety, punctuality, and alternative routes.
- Visit bus stops and discuss safety and punctuality.
- Tour the school following a sample schedule of classes.
- Reenact role-playing with Academy students.
- Follow class schedules, monitoring the timing between classes.
- Shop for backpack items, with donations from local retailers and thrift shops.
- Go over teacher supply lists sent to students before school, showing each item that needs to be purchased.
- Locate assigned cubbies and lockers; try locker combinations and practice filling lockers.



MODULE 4
SCHOOL RULES

MODULE 4: School Rules

PURPOSE



The purpose of Module 4 is to familiarize students with classroom procedures.

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Understand school rules
- Understand classroom activities and procedures
- Understand the role of teachers and other personnel in schools



SUPPLIES

***Handout 4 – 1:
School Rules***

Six puzzles

Supplies for children’s book activity

Classroom Jobs chart from an elementary classroom

Tables/desks together for completing puzzles

Boxes of classroom instructional resources (5 elementary boxes, 5 secondary boxes), including textbooks, maps, globes, mathematics manipulatives, and other classroom resources for all subjects

Video:
Refugee Student Interviews



MODULE 4: School Rules

VOCABULARY

Elementary Vocabulary

Skills
Learn
Ask
Ask Questions
Listen
Pair
Group
Raise Hand
Quiet
Team
Classroom
Rules
Help
Teacher

Secondary Vocabulary

Knowledge
Skill
Interest
Listen
Ask
Ask Questions
Learn
Plan
Textbook/books
Puzzle
Puzzle Piece
Raise hand
Quiet
Team
Classroom
Rules
Attendance
Help
Teacher
Principal
Pair
Obey
Detention
Discipline
Group



Key Points – School Rules



1. *Students can build knowledge, skills, and interests in school.*

Although some of the students in the Refugee Academy will have attended school in their native countries, they may not have experienced schools that not only build knowledge and skills, but cultivate interests as well.



Most American schools, regardless of the level of resources, value learning experiences for students that capture their interest and inspire their curiosity and motivation. Teachers in general try to encourage students to pursue their interests and to express their ideas and opinions.

For many students in the Academy, it will be the first time they will be able to openly discuss their point of view. They will be exposed to a variety of perspectives, and allowed to share their own ideas on many topics discussed in class. At first this may seem risky to the students, but eventually they should be able to understand that the learning process involves questioning, raising concerns, and analyzing issues from many different angles.

New refugee students may hesitate when they are asked, “What do you think?” or “Do you agree?” They may be afraid to speak up. They may not feel comfortable sharing their point of view, especially if they fear that it contradicts the teacher, the other students, or their family members. Explain that teachers understand that new ideas may conflict with cultural traditions and understandings, and the purpose of education is not to undermine the cultural heritage of students.

Encourage students to listen to discussions, weigh information, check facts, and share what they are thinking. Encourage them to explore new ideas and activities, developing creativity and new interests, without demeaning or rejecting their traditional cultural perspectives.



2. *By following basic classroom rules of behavior, students have a better chance to learn.*



In Module 4 students learn about the basic rules in school that are designed to facilitate learning. The expected classroom behaviors that every American student recognizes will not necessarily be so obvious to refugee students.

Rules such as sitting at a desk and facing the front of the room, raising a hand to be called upon by the teacher, and lining up with the class to move to another classroom may all be unfamiliar for new students.

The Refugee Academy provides a chance for the students to learn and practice basic classroom behaviors, to better facilitate learning.



3. *Some school activities are designed for student interaction.*

Although students in American schools sit in desks for most of the day, there are occasions when they have the opportunity to pull their desks together or sit around a table to meet in groups to work on class projects. Students are often asked to work in teams in physical education, art, and theater classes, and to work in partners in classrooms to correct assignments and solve problems.



For those new students who have not experienced school, or for those who have attended schools with more rigorous approaches to instruction, the informality of group work may be confusing. The students will need to learn how to participate in a group, especially when every student seems to be talking at the same time. They will need information about how to be assertive and cooperative, and how to lead with confidence and contribute skills and ideas.

They will also need to know what the parameters of group work are, such as monitoring the noise level, focusing on the task, and treating group members with respect.

School activities that are designed for student interaction give new students a chance to show what they know and to make new friends. Module 4 allows them to build the skills that will enable them to participate in groups effectively.



4. *Teachers enforce the rules and provide assistance.*



Once basic school rules are reviewed in the Refugee Academy, it is necessary to inform students about how the rules are enforced. Explain how teachers take attendance, check for hall passes, warn students about classroom behaviors that are unacceptable, and refer students to the principal or vice/assistant principal (or send them “to the office”) if they are not following classroom rules.

Students should know about the progressive discipline policies in their school district, including the impact of detention, suspension, and expulsion on their academic record and their future.

As disciplinary methods are being described, include information about student rights. Stress that they may ask for assistance from the Academic Coach or the translator if they are having difficulty with a teacher (or fellow student), or are sent to the principal's office for discipline.

Most important, emphasize respect for classroom teachers. New students may not understand that one student or a class of students disrespecting a teacher is not acceptable behavior in school. Explain to them how they can request assistance if they feel that they are unwillingly becoming involved in classroom behavior that is disruptive and interfering with their ability to learn.

ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY #1: SCHOOL RULES

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (45 minutes)

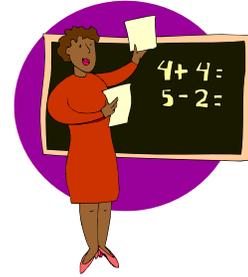
In this activity:

Students will learn about school rules and will have the chance to practice them.

The younger students may need more time to practice basic classroom behavior such as raising their hands to speak, lining up to walk through the halls, and quietly working in pairs on classroom assignments.

Older students (grades 3-12) will need information about how to ignore distractions in the room, especially if they are tempted to be part of a group that is not paying attention.

All students will need reassurance that there are occasions when teachers will allow conversations and social interactions if the students are still concentrating on their work and cooperating with each other. The teachers will inform the students about expected behavior.



- Distribute *Handout 4-1: School Rules* and discuss the illustrations, asking students to practice the school rules.

- Keep some textbooks and supplies in a locker and determine when would be the best time to stop at the locker. Keep it locked and do not allow other students to have access to the locker.
- In elementary classrooms, school supplies and backpacks will be kept in the classroom. Clothes for physical education may be locked in a locker room. When the class moves to another classroom, all students line up quietly and leave their supplies in their classroom.
- Enter the classroom and go straight to an assigned seat. Face the teacher and listen. If other students are not paying attention and are talking, continue to face the teacher, put hands on the desk, and focus on the teacher.



- Raise a hand to be called upon or to add to the conversation. Raise a hand to ask permission to leave the seat or the room. Do not wave hands or shout out.
- Students are obviously allowed to talk when working in pairs, but sometimes the noise level in the classroom can get too loud. Demonstrate signals for class quiet:



- Finger on lips
- Teacher hand in air
- Teacher standing quietly
- Classroom lights on and off “quiet”, “shhhhh”, “attention, please”

Students are also expected to be quiet during announcements on the public address system and during fire drills and evacuation/lockdown drills. (See *Module 12*)

- When working independently on a test, students should refrain from talking to other classmates. If they have any questions, they should raise a hand or approach the teacher’s desk.

- The students will probably begin the day with the Pledge of Allegiance. The instructors can inform the students about this routine and the appropriate behavior during the pledge.



- In group activities such as those shown on the handout, students may be allowed to quietly socialize, but are expected to focus on the task at hand. Teachers will have different rules about what is allowed, depending upon the style of the teacher and the type of activity.



Discussion Questions



What should you do if students next to you are talking when the teacher wants quiet?

- Face forward.
- Do not interact or get involved.

What if the other students near you are having fun and you want to join them?

- Remind students that the purpose of school is to learn.
- Some classes will allow social interaction.
- Assess the situation to determine if social interaction is acceptable to the teacher.

When should you be quiet in school unless you have a question?

- Walking in the halls (elementary)
- Class study time
- Library
- Study Hall
- Assemblies

When can you talk and laugh, but not too loudly?

- Bus
- Hall (secondary level)
- Physical Education
- Group projects

How do you ask a teacher for help?

- ESL program/Academic Coach
- Raise hand
- After class
- Parent calls
- Study Hall
- Guidance counselor

- E-mail, if appropriate
- Approach the teacher's desk, if it is allowed.
- If quiet is required, ask a teacher, not a student.

What if you don't want anyone to know you need help?

- Discuss the importance of seeking out an adult to ask for help. Provide options, including the Academic Coach.
- Suggest discreet ways of asking for assistance.

How can the Academic Coach help?

- Describe the role and availability of the Academic Coach.

ACTIVITY #2: WORKING IN GROUPS

In this activity:

Elementary students will learn about the responsibility of taking care of their classroom.

Secondary level students will have the opportunity to practice working on a task in groups.

For all ages, emphasize how it is important to share tasks in the classroom and in learning activities. Students can demonstrate their willingness to help out and share, even if they cannot speak English.



Grades K-5 (45 minutes)

- **Show a typical classroom jobs chart** from a local elementary classroom.
- With the class, **identify and assign classroom jobs** for the Academy, such as:



- Watering plants
 - Feeding fish/animals
 - Collecting papers
 - Distributing handouts
 - Leading the line.
- Use the model chart or create a chart on the chalkboard.
 - Switch jobs two or three times to give students a chance to experience the responsibility of different jobs.

Grades 6-8, 9-12 (45 minutes)

- Divide the class into groups of 3 or 4 and discuss basic rules about working in groups:
 - Take turns.
 - Include all group members.
 - Help and share.
 - Discuss how it is important to ask for clarifications.
 - Demonstrate how asking for help can be done in English or nonverbally.
- Give each group a puzzle to complete *as a group*.
 - Discuss how to work together to put the puzzle together.
 - Show how puzzles are put together for those students unfamiliar with the process. (Some students will never have seen a puzzle before.)
 - After completion of the first puzzle, rotate students so that they work with new students on a new puzzle.



Discussion Questions



How did you work together to put the puzzle together?

- Discuss how the students shared.
- Point out different skills that were used by the students.
- Comment on how students can learn from new experiences, and that some activities are easier when peers provide assistance.

Was it hard to do?

- There will be varying reactions to this question. Point out that some people love to do puzzles, while others find them frustrating. Puzzles take practice and skills can improve. They can be challenging, but fun to do.
- Without pointing out specific students, discuss how some personalities can dominate a group. Discuss how respectful leadership can be a positive influence in a group, but interrupting and trying to control the group can slow the activity down and cause friction and discomfort. Discuss the qualities of a positive group member.

Was it fun working in a group?

- Point out the noise level of enjoyment
- Discuss how groups can be difficult at times because of different personalities and skill levels.
- Some students who were not able to participate effectively because they were not fluent in English might have been frustrated. Reassure students that it will take time to be able to be a full participant in groups, but they should always make an effort to contribute to group activities.
- Instructors should identify strategies that students employed to help out the group, even if they could not speak English.

What are some puzzles or problems about going to school that you would like to solve with the help of a group?

- Provide suggestions that the class can discuss in groups, such as where to buy school supplies, what to bring to school on the first day of class, and how to make new friends.

ACTIVITY #3: CLASSROOM RESOURCES

In this activity:

Refugee students will have the opportunity to find out what instructional resources are readily available in classrooms. They may not realize that the schools will provide textbooks and other free materials that can be used in the classroom or can be borrowed for homework and research.



To help students become familiar with the resources, they will be shown each item in a box of instructional materials, and then will be asked to look through the resources to find specific information.

Emphasize that the materials need to be signed out, returned on time, and treated carefully since they are the property of the school. They may be distributed at the beginning of a class, and then collected at the end of the class.

Grades K-5 (45 minutes)

Can You Find?

- Divide students into groups of 4 or 5. Provide each group with a large box of instructional resources, including textbooks, library books, math cubes and manipulatives, workbooks, small globe, flash cards, etc.
 - Ask students to look through the box to see what types of resources they will find in their classrooms. Ask the groups to work together as a team to locate the following items, one at a time:

A page of math problems

Workbook for writing

A map of the world

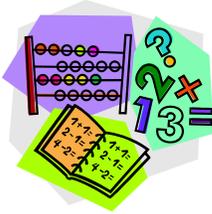
Story to read

Math tools (specify)

Picture of a science experiment

(Add easy-to-locate items, depending upon resources.)

Grades 6-8, 9-12 (15 minutes)



- Show and pass around resources from a large box of instructional materials, including textbooks, library books, math cubes and other math manipulatives, workbooks, small globe, flash cards, and so forth.
- Explain to students:
 - Resources are stored in classrooms.
 - Students may often sign out resources, or they are distributed routinely in class.
 - The materials are free to all students to use in class or borrow.
 - Students will be provided with assistance with materials written in the English language.

ACTIVITY #4: SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

Grades 6-8, 9-12 (15 minutes)

- Discuss the district/school policies about discipline. Reassure students about:
 - No corporal punishment
 - Warnings before detention
 - Student rights
 - Role of the Academic Coach
 - The negative repercussions of befriending students with a history of disciplinary problems
 - Appropriate responses to hall monitors, teachers, aides, administrators, school police officers
 - Role of the translator
 - Role of the parent
- Discuss commonly used disciplinary terms used by adults in schools, and appropriate responses to questions that students may be asked by adults:
 - Where are you supposed to be?
 - Do you have a hall pass?
 - What are you doing?
 - What are you up to?
- Discuss paperwork such as referrals.
- Show disciplinary forms/slips used by teachers.
- Discuss the impact of discipline, including phone calls to parents, meetings with the principal, and detention, suspension, or expulsion.



JOURNAL TOPIC

Grades K-5

Draw a picture of how you can follow the school rules.

Grades 6-8

Draw or write about how the rules will help you to learn.

Grades 9-12

Draw or write about how the school rules will be new and may be hard to follow all of the time. How will you respond if you are corrected by an adult?



SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Meet the principal and others responsible for school discipline.
- Practice school rules in the hallways and classroom.
- Invite classroom teachers to talk about the rules of their classrooms and show the job charts that they use.
- Provide more complicated puzzles and other manipulative games for group activities.
- Meet classroom and lunch room/recess aides, hall monitors, school law enforcement, and other adults who routinely interact with students in school
- Practice responding to disciplinary questions such as “Are you paying attention?” and “Where are you supposed to be?”
- Show the video *Refugee Student Interviews* using the *Guide to the Videos*



MODULE 5
SO MUCH TO LEARN!

MODULE 5: So Much to Learn!

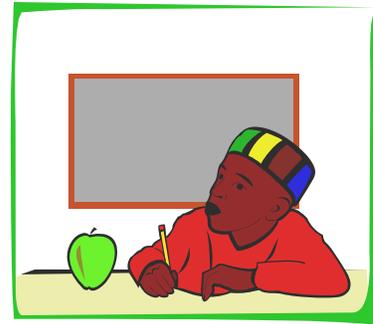
PURPOSE

The purpose of Module 5 is to inform students about the range of learning opportunities in American schools.

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Recognize that the purpose of school is to learn, regardless of the setting or activity
- Become familiar with common American knowledge and traditions in American schools
- Understand the valuable contributions of refugee students to American schools



SUPPLIES

***Handout 5 – 1:
School Calendar***

Current world map

Globe

United States map

Tossed salad

***Welcome to Our
Schools* poster for
each student**

Videos:

***Refugee Student
Interviews and
A Day in School***
(Elementary, Middle
or High School)

School calendar
(See Activity #3)



MODULE 5: So Much to Learn

VOCABULARY

Elementary Vocabulary

Country
Map
Globe
Tossed Salad
Welcome
Holiday
Vacation
Learn
Calendar

Secondary Vocabulary

Country
Map
Globe
Tossed Salad
Welcome
Contribution
Vacation
Learn
Calendar
Melting Pot
Tolerance
Holiday



Key Points – So Much to Learn!



1. *Regardless of the activity, the purpose of school is to learn.*

Students who are new to America may be so enamored with all of the entertaining activities of American schools that they may not realize that for every activity there are many educational objectives. The purpose of Module 5 is to remind students that, although there are many interesting activities offered by American schools, the underlying intention of all of them is for students to be able to learn.

Teachers emphasize “content” and “process” in all subject areas, encouraging students to build knowledge and skills, while learning how to solve problems, tackle issues critically, make sound and rational decisions, build social skills, and express opinions with confidence.



For example, activities on the athletic field not only teach students about the rules of a sport, but they help students understand how teamwork and communication work and how it is important to practice and develop skills. In a lab, it may be fun to carry out science experiments with a partner, but students are also learning scientific principles and concepts, lab techniques, problem-solving, and other skills such as graphing, charting, and statistics.

New students who have never experienced any of these activities may see them only as an opportunity to socialize and enjoy the school day. However, if this enthusiasm is coupled with an understanding of the purpose of school, the result can be better success in the American education system.

Of course, not every subject will be stimulating for all students, and refugee students will soon discover that there are activities that are routine and repetitive, and teachers who are unimaginative and boring. It is important to explain to new students that they will find activities that are fun and exciting, and activities that are tedious or demanding. For all of those activities, however, students are expected to work hard to learn something new.

It may be necessary to encourage students to expand their horizons and try new subjects and activities. They may be afraid to participate



in class or join a club because they are uncomfortable with their classmates, or afraid because they have never experienced the activity before. Once students grasp the concept that everything they do in school is a learning experience, they may be more willing to seek many different ways of gaining knowledge.





2. Knowledge and traditions can be common to all Americans.

There are commonalities that connect American school systems. Basic curriculum and school traditions are generally the same across the country. Every school in the country includes English Language Arts or Reading, Science, Social Studies, and Mathematics in their curriculum. In general, the schools across the nation hold student assemblies, science fairs, band concerts, and pep rallies.

One tradition that is consistent across the country is the school calendar. Across the nation there are students who have summer vacations, national holidays, conference days, and winter breaks, when school is not in session. The dates may vary slightly, but the patterns are the same.

Students in the Refugee Academy should not only be aware of the traditional school calendar, but should understand why there will be days when school may be canceled. Suppose, for example, that they are not aware that in some districts they do not go to school on “snow days” “Yom Kippur” or “Good Friday.” Students and their families need to be forewarned.



In Module 5 the instructors can go through the school district calendar with the students, explaining national holidays such as Thanksgiving, Memorial Day, and Martin Luther King Jr. Day. They can explain why some days are “half-days” so that teachers can attend training sessions, and parents can meet with teachers.



Students may be confused about long winter breaks or religious holidays. Instructors can discuss the holidays authorized by the school district, and how families might celebrate during those holidays. They can discuss how students can spend their school vacations during the year, and in the summer.

In the elementary grades the students may have the opportunity to learn more about national holidays as part of the academic curriculum. However, at the secondary level it is often assumed that students know why school is cancelled for holidays such as “Presidents’ Day” or “Labor Day.” Module 5 familiarizes students with the school calendar so that they and their families can be prepared.



3. Refugees contribute to a multicultural America.

It is essential that students in the Refugee Academy be aware of how much *they* contribute to American schools.

The emphasis in the Academy is refugee students becoming acclimated to American schools. It is equally as important to point out what refugee students bring to their classrooms. Students in multicultural classrooms have a better chance of developing global awareness, appreciation of diversity, better understanding of the freedoms of American life, and tolerance of other religions and cultural traditions.

ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY #1: VIDEOS

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (45 minutes)



Show the videos ***Refugee Student Interviews*** and ***A Day in School*** (Elementary, Middle, or High School) to provide information and to help students to understand that there are many different ways to learn in American schools.

- Use the ***Guide to the Videos*** for introducing the videos and for follow-up discussion.

ACTIVITY #2: STUDENT CONTRIBUTIONS

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 - (45 minutes)

In this activity:

The students will learn that they make significant contributions to American education.



They will discover that they can teach their fellow students about global events and diversity of cultures. They can help students develop appreciation for the world outside their classrooms.

Students in the Refugee Academy can **maintain pride in their culture** while learning about how to connect different cultures in their new classrooms.

Begin by **making a tossed salad** in front of the class. Add one ingredient at a time, asking the students why the salad represents American schools. Point out the value of multicultural classrooms, and the contributions that the Academy students can make to American schools.



Discussion Questions



What can you tell me about the country that you came from? Where is it and what did it look like?

- Stress the landscape, size, and location, rather than political and social activities. Students will inevitably mention current events in their countries, perhaps with graphic details. When they do, ask them about the terrain in their native countries and changes in the environment because of current events. Emphasize the variety of environments that they have come from.
- Point out how interesting it is that people from all over the world ended up in one classroom.
- Find the countries on a globe or a world map.



How many countries are we from – in this room right now?

- Mark the location of the classroom on a map of the United States.
- Instructors can share information about personal cultural heritage.

What does this country look like?

- Describe urban/rural/suburban environments.
- Describe the cultural diversity of the United States.
- Students may bring up how American students dress and talk, and what they are interested in. Address the difficulties that refugee students may face in maintaining their cultural traditions while trying to fit into their new environment. Discuss the importance of pride in heritage. Acknowledge that some students may want to cast aside native dress, foods, or other traditions. Ask students how they can fit in with American students and yet stay connected with their personal heritage.
- Students may encounter misconceptions and stereotypes when interacting with their peers. They may have to answer a lot of questions about their background and culture. They may also be confronted with strong negative reactions to refugees in America. Discuss how these attitudes can be handled by refugee students.

What has surprised you about this country? What do you dislike about it? What do you like?

- Accept the observations of the students. Explain that they may change their minds in the future, and should be careful not to judge.
- Ask how students plan to enjoy what they like about America.

How do you think American students can learn from you?

- ✓ World view
 - ✓ Knowledge of geography
 - ✓ Tolerance for diversity
 - ✓ Overcoming resistance, prejudice
 - ✓ Understanding of current events
 - ✓ New languages
 - ✓ New ideas, experiences
- Ask students to describe specific things that fellow students can learn from them.

How do you say WELCOME in your language?

- Demonstrate American greetings (*hi, howdy, greetings, hello, how are ya, etc.*), role-played by instructors. Ask students to share “*hello*” and “*welcome*” in their native language. **Distribute the *Welcome to Our Schools* poster for all students to take home.**

ACTIVITY #3: SCHOOL CALENDAR

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (60 minutes)

In this activity:

The students will learn about the calendar of the school year.

They will be preparing a **school calendar** to post at home.

They will also learn about American holiday traditions, and the reasons behind the cancellation of specific school days.



Distribute Handout 5-1: School Calendar

- Provide each student with a marker or pen.
- Go through the calendar slowly, month by month, pointing out half-days of school, holidays, vacations, testing days, etc. Include the first day of school.
- Show students how to mark each day with a circle or symbol.
- Discuss the details of holidays and vacations:
 - National – President's Day, Thanksgiving, etc.
 - Religious – Christmas, Hanukkah
 - Community Events – parades, festivals, fireworks
- Discuss vacation activities
 - Relaxation
 - Vacation camps
 - Reading and study time
 - Extracurricular programs
 - Child care
 - Supervision of siblings
 - Lack of supervision of older students



Discussion Questions



What holidays or special occasions will you celebrate with your family?

How will you spend your time during your holidays and vacations when you are not in school?

How will you stay safe, especially if you are home alone or supervising siblings?

How will you continue to learn when you are not in school?



JOURNAL TOPIC

Grades K-5

Draw or write about what you think you will learn about in school. What can other students learn from you?

Grades 6-8

Draw or write about how students in school will be able to learn from you. What will you do if they are resistant or not interested?

Grades 9-12

Draw or write about how you will keep the traditions of your native country, but also learn from your new country. What are you most interested in learning about?



SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

Read aloud children's books from the *Welcome to Our Schools kit* that show how students adapt to the American way of life while maintaining their cultural traditions.

- Make a “tossed salad” with the class, representing everyone in the Academy.
- Invite future classmates to visit class and hear about the environment of the native lands of students of the Academy. Prepare visitors for details that may surprise them and/or make them uncomfortable. Find the countries on the globe or map of the world.
- Attend local events, festivals, or celebrations as examples of American traditions. Prepare students for the celebration of holidays in the beginning of the school year.
- Provide brochures, flyers, and Websites about national celebrations.
- Instructors may want to teach students the Pledge of Allegiance, explaining that students across the nation are reciting it every day in school.



MODULE 6
STAY HEALTHY

MODULE 6: Stay Healthy

PURPOSE



The purpose of Module 6 is to familiarize students with strategies for staying healthy.

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Become familiar with meal options at school
- Understand the impact of exercise and hygiene on physical and mental health
- Appreciate the role of food in different cultures
- Understand lead poisoning and the importance of good hygiene and nutrition



SUPPLIES

***Handout 6 – 1:
Stay Healthy (K-5)***

***Handout 6 – 2:
Stay Healthy (6-12)***

***Handout 6 – 3
Possible Sources of
Lead
(K-12)***

***Handout 6 – 4
Good Nutrition
(K-12)***

***Handout 6 – 5
Fruit to Color
(K-12)***

***Handout 6 – 6
Vegetables to
Color (K-12)***

Continued on page 2



SUPPLIES (CONTINUED)

Sample breakfast and lunch items from the school cafeteria

Pudding, fruit cup, or dessert for all students (check in advance for food allergies)

Two lunch bags containing staples of American student bag lunches

One bag lunch containing **food from the country of a refugee student**

Box of personal care items (shampoo, toothbrush and toothpaste, deodorant, soap, nail clipper, etc.). If possible, obtain free samples.

Dance music from different cultures; current American dance music; CD player

Colored pencils, crayons, or colored markers

Lead Poisoning Script located at the end of this module

Lead Poisoning Photos located in Section C – Handouts for Module 6

Examples of lead-free products (dishes, toys, jewelry, cosmetics, paint)

Samples of fresh fruits and vegetables, dairy products (select many colors)

Samples of vitamins for children (chewable, cartoon, fruit-flavored, etc.)

Snack pairs:

Banana and yogurt

Apple and cheese

Broccoli and sour cream dip

Carrot sticks and soft cheese

V-8 juice or other healthy juices
(low-sugar)

Vegetable soup and milk

Videos: Refugee Student Interviews and A Day in School

(Elementary, Middle or High School)

Websites:

NYS Department of Health -

http://www.nyhealth.gov/environmental/lead/recalls/questions_and_answers.htm

U.S. Safety Product Commission - <http://www.cpsc.gov>

Optional: Bar of soap, hand towel for each student



MODULE 6: Stay Healthy

VOCABULARY

Elementary Vocabulary

Healthy
Unhealthy
Food
Clean
Wash
Toothbrush
Toothpaste
Soap
Shampoo
Recess
Exercise
Breakfast
Lunch
Cafeteria
Lead
Lead Poisoning
Nutrition
Food names such as peanut
butter, jelly, cookie, potato
chips, lettuce, banana, orange,
yogurt, milk, etc.

Secondary Vocabulary

Healthy
Unhealthy
Food
Clean
Shampoo
Toothbrush
Toothpaste
Soap
Deodorant
Razor
Exercise
Breakfast
Lunch
Cafeteria
Lead
Lead Poisoning
Nutrition
Food names such as peanut
butter, jelly, cookie, potato
chips, lettuce, banana, orange,
yogurt, milk, etc.



Key Points – Staying Healthy



1. *Schools offer lunch every day.*



Students may not realize that lunch is offered every day in school, served in the school cafeteria. Students can either purchase a full lunch on a tray, or items to supplement a lunch that they brought from home.



Schools differ in their procedure for paying for lunch. Some schools take a “lunch count” every morning to find out who will be buying lunch. Some schools have lunch tickets or cards that families pay for at the beginning of the school year, or throughout the year. Review the procedures in the school district. If possible, make arrangements for students to obtain their lunch passes and copies of the school lunch menus. Show them how to get to the cafeteria, how to work the vending machines, what cartons of milk and other food items look like, and how to throw away their garbage and return their trays.

Students who may have difficulty paying for lunch every day may be eligible for “free lunch” arranged by the school nurse, social worker, or guidance counselor. Academic Coaches should discuss the lunch form at a parent Open House, and discreetly refer any students who may need assistance in paying for lunch. In some cases, breakfast may be provided as well.

Refugee students may have difficulty negotiating the lunch period in the cafeteria. They will have to figure out how to purchase their full lunch or milk, desserts, and other items available in the cafeteria line or in vending machines. Then they have to figure out where to sit in the cafeteria. For elementary students, the class usually sits together. For secondary students, determining where to sit in the cafeteria can be a challenge. Students sit with their friends and do not often welcome newcomers to their lunch tables. It is intimidating to approach a table of strangers and sit down at their table with them.

The instructors should discuss the steps involved in eating lunch in the cafeteria, including strategies that can be employed when searching for a place to sit. Discuss how uncomfortable it can feel to be eating alone, and ask students what they can do about finding a friend to eat with, and what they can do to help a friend who is sitting alone. Explain to students that the lunch period is a time to socialize, but students are to try to keep their voices low. They are to respond to adults in the cafeteria who are there to maintain discipline, and should always clean up their own garbage.



2. American foods will be different; try new foods while maintaining personal traditions.

Students in the Refugee Academy may enjoy traditional native foods at home, and be resistant to trying new American foods.



Encourage students to widen their range of eating experiences. Explain that America has staples such as hamburgers, hot dogs, and apple pie, but in any household there will be traditional foods that are eaten all over the world. Students in urban areas will see that there are international restaurants throughout the city. Their own neighborhoods may have restaurants with familiar cuisine from their native country in addition to American fast-food restaurants and diners, and restaurants with Chinese, Indian, Thai, Vietnamese, or Italian menus.

Students need to be reassured that they can still maintain their cultural heritage and enjoy familiar foods while tasting new foods from many different countries, including America.



3. Good hygiene can build confidence and self-esteem, as well as friendships.

For a variety of reasons, students may not realize how to maintain good hygiene. They may not have the experience, the facilities at home, the resources, or the skills. They may not be aware of the number of hygiene products available in America, or are well aware and totally confused!

Bring examples of hygiene items to the Academy and discuss what they are for. Remind students that good hygiene can make an them feel proud of their appearance, resulting in more confidence.



If students are aware that they are not taking care of their hygiene but are unable to fix the problem, they can feel humiliated. Provide everyone with basic information about personal care and where they can obtain the items necessary for personal care. If possible, visit a local drugstore to talk about the numerous products on the shelves.

Students may need to be reminded that hygiene will be influential in their ability to develop new friendships. However, never isolate a student and comment on hygiene. Always make the subject a general discussion, pointing out a possible hygiene problem, the causes, and the remedies. If it appears that a student does not understand how to maintain personal hygiene (or does not have access to a shower, shampoo, toothpaste, clean clothes, nail clippers, etc.) then an Academic Coach or school nurse should talk quietly with the student, providing the necessary resources and advice about where to obtain products.

It is suggested that the Academic Coaches approach local businesses and drugstores to obtain samples of hygiene items such as toothbrushes, combs, shampoo, soap, deodorant, and laundry detergent.



 **4. Exercise can build strength, friendships, confidence and skills, and can reduce stress.**

Opportunities for exercise are provided by schools during physical education classes, after-school activities, and athletic programs. Community-based organizations often offer programs that encourage exercise.



However, it may be very tempting for refugee students to stay home alone, watching television. They may not feel comfortable participating in after-school and sports programs. They may not know how to join them, or how to play the games. They may not want to participate because they do not know anyone.



Encourage students to participate in activities that require physical exercise. They may not realize that exercise can build their strength and confidence. They can make new friends who have a mutual interest in the activity. They may discover that they have the ability to excel in a particular sport.



Students may not realize that exercise can also reduce stress. Point out how satisfying it can feel to run the bases, shoot a basket, or do karate after a stressful day at school. If they do not enjoy the activity and it is creating more stress, they should seek out something new that is more rewarding. Above all, they should exercise to keep healthy as they adjust to the many demands of a new school.

 **5. Refugee students may have significant health concerns.**

Many refugee students and their families have serious health concerns. The students may have experienced malnutrition, physical torture, infectious diseases, and injuries from war. They may have depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, and other mental and physical disabilities.

It may seem insignificant to talk to students about topics such as choosing an apple to eat instead of potato chips, or signing up for an exercise class, when they have so many serious health needs. But the purpose of the Refugee Academy is to focus on the future in school, and students need to learn how to monitor their personal health while adjusting to their new lives.



Instructors should be alert for students who may need specialized health care, referrals from the school nurse, support from school social workers and psychologists, or assistance from administrators and teachers in planning adapted academic programs due to health concerns. During the Academy, help the students understand the essential components of good health and make sure that they are getting professional help if needed.



6. The health effects of lead poisoning on children can be devastating, especially because the impact of lead may be invisible.

Lead poisoning is one of the most common and preventable childhood health problems in the United States. Refugee children could have been exposed to lead before they arrived in the United States, or they may be exposed in their current homes.

Instructors and Academic Coaches do not need to be experts on lead poisoning. Academic Coaches should follow up on student concerns by contacting the school nurse or the Refugee Resettlement Case Manager.

Students do not need to know scientific information about lead in the body. When discussing lead poisoning with students, stress the importance of hand-washing and eating healthy foods.

Background information on lead poisoning

Lead is a heavy metal that does not break down and decompose, so it has been used in many products such as water pipes, pewter dishes, paint, and other commercial products. Once it was confirmed in the early 1960s that lead could be a poison, including the dust of lead paint, actions were taken to eliminate the use of lead and to implement screening for lead in infants and children.

Lead is a poison that affects almost every system in the body. Shortly after lead enters the body through ingestion, hands in the mouth, or inhalation of dust, the lead travels in the blood to the soft tissues such as the liver, kidneys, and brain. The body gradually moves lead from the blood and organs to the bones and teeth, where it can be stored for decades. Any amount of lead in the body is considered toxic.

Children under the age of 6 are at the greatest risk of health effects associated with exposure to lead. They are particularly vulnerable because their brain and central nervous system are still forming. Lead interferes with the development of these systems as well as the kidney and blood-forming organs. In addition, lead can cross the placenta and adversely affect a developing fetus.

Lead poisoning is not always visible, and the vast majority of children exposed to lead go undiagnosed and untreated. The effects of lead may occur with no overt outward symptoms, and cognitive damage is not apparent until children reach age 4 or later. The behavioral effects of lead are irreversible and may not be noticed until the child enters school.

Health effects vary from child to child, but examples of the toxic nature of lead are:

- Decrease in IQ points from even very small exposure to lead
- Learning disabilities
- Behavioral problems
- Hyperactivity
- Lethargy
- Stunted or slowed growth
- Impaired hearing
- Difficulty concentrating / attention deficits
- Wrist or foot drop
- Seizures
- Abdominal pain, vomiting, diarrhea
- Encephalopathy (brain dysfunction)
- Nausea, constipation, colic, dyspepsia
- Reproductive damage
- Hypertension
- Deficits in visual-spatial skills, fine motor coordination, balance
- Coma

These effects can get worse if nothing is done to eliminate the lead exposure problem. At increasingly higher levels of exposure, the health effects can be kidney damage, significant IQ deficits, and developmental disabilities such as mental retardation. Children and adults can fall into a coma or die from lead poisoning.

The symptoms of lead poisoning can be subtle and they are often confused with other problems in learning, behavior, or health issues. For example, a child may have a stomachache or headache, loss of appetite, irritability, or hyperactivity. The child may be inattentive or confused, or demonstrate lack of initiative or enthusiasm for school activities.

All of these behaviors can be misinterpreted as discomfort with school, adjusting to a new school environment, language difficulties, and other factors that would naturally occur when a refugee child is adapting to an American school.

But since the symptoms of lead poisoning are not always visible as health issues, parents may not understand how lead poisoning can affect the *behavior* of children.

Parents of refugee children may be comfortable with the behavior of their children because their child has always behaved that way, or because the parents are unfamiliar with behavior that is expected in an American classroom.

For example, if a child is particularly lethargic or unable to pay attention in class, the parents may attribute that to adjusting to a new school (or adjusting to formal education)

and the demands of life in the new country. They may also indicate that the child has always behaved that way.

Academic Coaches can provide information and support to parents or students why they may have concerns about behavior in school. Lead poisoning should be considered as a possible explanation for the behavior.

Sources of lead poisoning

Lead is a natural element that had thousands of uses, but it is also a powerful neurotoxin that interferes with the development of the brain and nervous system.

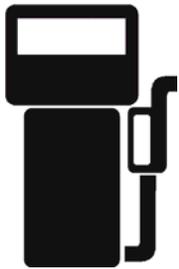
Lead poisoning is not limited to the United States, although industrialization was a major contributor to the use of lead in public facilities, manufacturing plants, and homes. Lead poisoning is a worldwide problem, particularly in countries where there are no regulations about the use of lead.

It is a myth that the problem of lead poisoning is limited to Africa. This myth generated from the death of a Sudanese refugee child in the year 2000. Lead poisoning can be found in both developing countries and in highly industrialized countries anywhere in the world.

Refugee children are twice as likely as U.S. children to have elevated lead levels in their blood. Some are exposed to lead prior to arriving in the United States, while others are exposed once they are resettled. In developing countries, several factors increase the potential for lead exposure:

- environmental pollution
- absent or lax environmental regulations
- hot climates that allow for outdoor living and activities (on ground that may contain lead)
- open housing construction, often with lead-painted materials
- concentration of populations around heavy traffic areas.

Refugee children may have a compromised immune or nutritional status that can cause an increase in vulnerability to lead poisoning. Malnutrition and anemia can enhance lead absorption. Children who mouth or eat non-food items, especially soil, can become exposed to lead.



Leaded gas, leaded solder, and lead paint have been banned in the United States, but the remnants still remain across the country. Smelters, chemical and battery plants, burning of fossil fuels and solid waste, ammunition manufacturing and use, and traditional use of home remedies that contain lead have all contributed to lead in the environment.

There are at least 38 million homes and buildings in the United States that contain lead paint, some of it peeling and covering the area with dust. Leaded gasoline is still in the soil around roads and storage areas. Thousands of lead pipes continue to serve as water service lines in many older United States cities.



The most common risk hazard is living in an older home (built before 1975), especially those homes that were built before 1950 and are in disrepair. Many refugee families are resettled in older housing because of the affordability and availability.

Peeling and chipping paint on the housing exterior and on

walls, banisters, windowsills, and radiators often contain lead. The lead paint starts to chip and peel and gets grounded into dust. The tiny pieces of lead can gather in areas that are not often cleaned, such as corners of windows, between floorboards, and under radiators. The lead dust can become part of the dust in the house and in the soil around the house.



Lead hazards have been found in playgrounds, primarily due to the age of paint on the playground equipment. School districts are responsible for determining the age and condition of the paint, and should be alert to deteriorating paint.

Some dishes and ceramic ware contain lead, even though since 1980 the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) has had limits on lead and cadmium in ceramic ware products. However suspect ceramic ware products can enter the United States, especially if they are brought in personal baggage. A glaze or decoration may have high levels of lead that can get into food, wear off on hands, and leave lead dust.

Lead can be found in the following products, depending upon the year and the source of production:

- Drinking water (from lead pipes)
- Hair dyes
- Miniblinds
- Calcium and other vitamin supplements
- Cleaning products
- Playground equipment
- Necklaces
- Toys
- Dishes and lead crystal
- Eye makeup, lipstick, kohl
- Imported wine containers with lead foil wrappers
- Folk remedies such as “pay-loo-ah” - a red and orange powder used for fever (Asian origin)
- Imported soldered cans containing food



Lead exposure can also occur in various occupations and hobbies:

- Hobbies such as glazed pottery making, stained glasswork, home remodeling, lead soldering, preparation of home remedies
- Employment such as auto repair, welding, bridge reconstruction, painting and remodeling, cable splicing, and foundry work may result in lead dust on clothing and car seats if parents wear uniforms home.
- Lead dust from paint can get on household surfaces, floors, toys, blankets and linens, and even pets. Children tend to spend more time on the floor where lead dust may be present.

So what should the students be told? Younger students should be aware that lead may be in paint, paint chips, broken pottery, and some toys. They should be reassured that parents and the Academic Coaches can talk to them about items in their home to determine if they should be checked for lead.

It is important to avoid scaring young children, but at the same time raise their awareness about how they should think about what they are exposed to at home. Encourage them to wash their hands and keep objects (and fingers) out of their mouths. Tell them to talk to the Academic Coach if they are afraid that something in their home may contain lead.

Older students can be told more information about sources of lead, particularly if they are involved in automobile repair, hobbies, or construction that may expose them to lead. They can also be helpful in assessing their home environments and informing their parents about the dangers of exposure to lead. (Note that *Parent Program 4: Lead Poisoning* is included in the **Welcome to Our Schools Kit**.)

Lead Screening

The first step to determining if there is a problem to address is screening children and adults for lead. The second step is to assess the environment of the refugee families, including their homes, playgrounds, recreational facilities, religious centers, and other gathering places.

- Federal standards currently stipulate that a refugee medical screening must take place within 90 days after a refugee's arrival (or status granted) in the United States – for children less than 7 at the time of arrival or status granted.
- The contents of the screening vary from state to state, and many states do not specify a blood lead level (BLL) screening for refugee children.
- In New York State, refugee children under 7 should have been tested for lead.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the American Academy of Pediatrics recommend testing for children who have emigrated from other countries where lead poisoning is present. Recently local and state health organizations have encouraged BLL screening for adults who are refugees, as

well as for all refugee families who may have settled in housing in the United States that may contain lead paint or pipes.

Screening children for exposure to lead is done by a *finger-stick* (or capillary) method. Further testing may be necessary. Instructors can ask students if they remember the simple, quick test that is vital for determining lead levels in the body. Students should be reassured that there are treatments and medications available for treating elevated lead levels.



- Once lead exposure is suspected, further medical evaluation of health history, environment (past and current), family activities and traditions, mother's habits when pregnant, food and folk medicines, and other factors associated with lead exposure need to be assessed. This should be done by a physician in conjunction with lead poisoning specialists from a local health department.
- A repeat blood test should be performed three to six months after refugee children are placed in a residence, to determine if BLLs have been reduced or elevated. Resettlement in housing in the United States may have contributed to higher BLLs that did not exist when the child first arrived. Blood levels can rise quickly, signaling sudden exposure to lead.
- If students are concerned about whether they were tested, or if they think that they might have been exposed to lead after they were tested, they should be encouraged to talk to their Academic Coach.

Environmental assessment and cleaning

An environmental assessment should be done by a specialist in lead poisoning, but it may not be possible to assess housing before a family is resettled. Older students can be encouraged to take a look at their environment and inform their parents or Academic Coach if they are concerned about possible exposure to lead.

A visual assessment, from floor to ceiling, can be done by walking around the exterior and interior of a building, looking under radiators, on windowsills, in corners, and in other places such as steps, porches, railings, gutters, spouts, doors, roof tiles, or cellar entries, that may not be immediately noticeable. Parents and older children can take note of peeling or chipped paint, dust that has collected, or any area that needs repair.

The instructor should encourage older students to assess all of the places that their family members visit, including child care centers or the homes of babysitters; playgrounds; recreation centers; and the homes of friends and relatives.

It is difficult to simply relocate refugee families to lead-free housing, especially because alternative housing may not be available. At the same time, extensive on-site removal of lead paint can raise the concentration of dust in the home.

Some students may need to assist their parents in getting advice from the health department, housing agencies, and other experts about how to clean up their home environment. If they need assistance in contacting those agencies, they can talk to the Academic Coach.

Parents can scrape and repaint, as long as they receive instructions on how to do the repairs without further exposure to lead. Remind students that lead dust can be created during the paint removal process, and the students themselves should not be involved in doing the repairs.

If the property owner is not able to provide a certificate of compliance that the property is lead safe, then the refugee families need to know who to contact for assistance. The Refugee Resettlement Case Manager can provide information about:

- Who can inspect the property for lead
- What is expected of the families before and after a lead inspection
- How the property owner/landlord will be contacted and what will happen as a result of contacting the property owner
- What will happen to the family if the property is determined to be “high risk” or in need of immediate painting and repair

Students should be told that families should frequently wash all toys, pacifiers, bottles, and other items handled by the children in the family.

Parents should wet wash floors and other surfaces. Vacuum cleaners or sweeping can simply spread the dust.

If a parent or family member works in an environment where there might be lead dust (such as a factory or in a home that is being remodeled) then they should assess their exposure to lead and take precautions. All work clothing should be removed before entering the home, and clothes should be washed separately.

Parents can run tap water for a minute before drinking or cooking with it. If the water has been tested high in lead, install an effective filtering device. Although it is expensive, families may need to switch to bottled water.

Families should not eat canned goods from countries outside of the United States. The ban on lead-soldered cans is not worldwide.

Parents should discard any dishes and ceramic ware in their homes that are chipped or cracked. This may mean that refugee families have to throw out personal items that are meaningful to them, but they must realize that even handling the item can contribute to lead poisoning.

They should not store food in any dishes that might contain lead, or store food in any antiques or collectibles. Any highly decorated or metallic-coated tableware, particularly items made in other countries, should never be used for food or liquids.

Ordinary glassware does not contain lead, but lead is still used to make expensive lead crystal. Families should take the same precautions with crystal. Manufacturers are the best source of information about the contents of eating and cooking utensils.

Promoting good hygiene and nutrition

Children should be encouraged to wash their hands and keep their hands out of their mouths for general good health and hygiene.

Instructors should keep stressing that students should wash their hands often, regardless of whether they have been exposed to lead or not.



The students can be reminded that infants and children naturally put things in their mouths and should not be punished when they do. Children are curious and reach for things in areas that may not be routinely cleaned, like corners and under windows and radiators. The environment should be safe and clean.

When there is a possibility that students may be exposed to lead, such as on a public playground or in an older building, they should be especially careful about washing their hands and keeping hands out of their mouths. The children may not touch the lead paint directly, but the dust can get on their hands and clothing. (Reassure students that school playgrounds have all been tested for lead.)

In addition, students can slow the absorption of lead in their bodies with healthy eating habits. Children under age 6 will generally absorb/retain about 50% of the lead that they ingest, but that percentage can be slowed with good nutrition. The consumption of fatty foods should be kept to a minimum (but not eliminated, especially for children under age 2), and children should be receiving adequate levels of calcium, iron, vitamin C, and zinc.



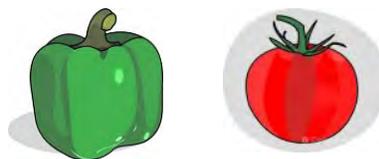
A diet deficient in iron and calcium may enhance the amount of lead absorbed. Some of the healthy staples may not be foods that are found in the homes of refugee families because they are not part of the traditional diet. Milk, yogurt, cheese, and green leafy vegetables (spinach, kale, collard greens) are good sources of calcium.

An iron-rich diet will help to reduce the amount of lead in red blood cells. Good sources of iron include red meats, fish, and chicken; iron-fortified cereals; and dried fruits such as raisins and prunes.



Iron is also better absorbed when foods and juices with vitamin C are part of a daily diet. Fruits, vegetables, and juice, particularly oranges, tomatoes, and green peppers, are excellent sources of vitamin C.

A daily vitamin should be part of a healthy routine at home.



ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY 1: THE FOOD AT SCHOOL

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (90 minutes)

In this activity:

Students will discover what foods are offered at lunch in the school cafeteria.



Instructors should show samples of a variety of foods from school lunches, including items that may not be familiar to the students, such as milk cartons, ketchup packets, ice cream sandwiches, and peanut butter and jelly. (Check for food allergies, even if the students are not sampling the food.)

Some students will be familiar with what the school has to offer, or at least familiar with traditional American foods. Others may be wary about what their choices are. They may be resistant to trying new foods. Reassure them that they can bring their own lunch to school, but they should be prepared for questions about what they are eating.

Show the students how they can bring their lunch in a brown paper bag (generally the preferred way of high school students), or a soft lunch box (popular with middle school students), or a hard lunch box (usually brought by elementary students). They will not be able to refrigerate their food, and should wrap food carefully.

Above all, emphasize the characteristics of a healthy diet.

- **Set up 5 trays of food from the cafeteria and 3 bag lunches.** Two of the bag lunches should be staples of an American lunch diet, such as peanut butter and jelly, potato chips, celery and carrot sticks, cookies, and a carton of milk. One brown bag should have food native to the country of refugee students.
 - **Describe each food**, explaining that different foods are offered every day in school. A school lunch menu is often provided so that students can plan which days they want to buy lunch.
 - **Discuss:**
 - Choices in buying or bringing lunch to school
 - Payment options

- Lunch count that is often taken in homeroom or elementary classrooms
 - Seating in the cafeteria
 - Food options
 - Cleanup
 - Noise level; moving around the cafeteria
 - Lunch aides
 - American student eating habits
 - Suggested foods to pack for lunch
 - Possible reactions to refugee traditional native foods
- Distribute a typical snack from the school cafeteria for students to sample, such as pudding or fruit cup, and discuss healthy eating at school.



Discussion Questions



What foods here look good?

- The topic of food may be a sensitive subject for students, depending upon their personal history with food. They may have experienced extreme hunger, food sensitivities and allergies, a constant diet of the same food, or limited options from home.
- Students may be embarrassed by their lunch from home. Discuss how healthy eating is important, and the school will arrange for everyone to be able to have a healthy lunch.
- Encourage students to try new foods, even if they do not look appealing. Discuss how to handle a situation if they dislike a new food.

What if you cannot buy lunch every day?

- Explain that if students think they will need to have to skip lunch for financial reasons, they should tell the Academic Coach and arrangements will be made for a free lunch. All arrangements will be confidential.

- The Academic Coach will assist students in arranging for lunch payment and the purchase of lunch tickets or cards.
- Discuss the expense of using vending machines every day, and the impact of snacks on overall health.
- Discuss the cafeteria line, and how it may move quickly. Lunch aides may want immediate decisions about food choices and payment. Inform students that the first few times through the cafeteria line they may feel rushed and confused, but eventually they will recognize the food (because it will keep reappearing throughout the school year) and they will discover what they like.

What if you are still hungry?

- Snacking is not permitted in class.
- Students can supplement their lunches by purchasing snacks, but they must be eaten in the cafeteria.
- If students are participating in an after-school program, they might want to pack a snack in their backpack. Remind students about healthy snacks.

ACTIVITY 2: VIDEO

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (45 minutes)



Show the videos ***Refugee Student Interviews*** and ***A Day at School*** (Elementary, Middle or High School).

- Use the ***Guide to the Videos*** for introducing the videos and for follow up discussion.

ACTIVITY 3: PERSONAL HYGIENE

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (30 minutes)

In this activity:

Students will learn about the basics of personal hygiene.

They will also discuss the impact of hygiene on self-confidence and friendships.



- Distribute *Handout 6-1: Staying Healthy*. Describe each item on the handout and explain how they help students stay clean and healthy.
 - Discuss the emphasis that is in American culture on washing daily; keeping hair, hands and face clean; having no body odor; and keeping teeth clean.
 - Discuss the social impact of hygiene.
 - Explain that cultural traditions can be maintained as long as students are clean and tend to their personal hygiene.
 - Discuss access to personal care items.
 - Discuss washing hands in the rest rooms.
 - Students often forget that they should care for their feet, nails, and shoes to maintain personal hygiene.
- Distribute free samples of personal care items, if available.
 - If it seems necessary, demonstrate the use of personal care items.



- Discuss the role of the school nurse. Adolescent girls should meet with the school nurse about personal hygiene. (Determine if school policy requires parental permission.)

ACTIVITY 4: GETTING EXERCISE

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (30 minutes)

In this activity:

Students will have the opportunity to participate in an exercise activity that is fun and entertaining.

They will discover that exercise comes in many forms, including dance.

The students themselves can demonstrate dances of their native countries, or the instructors may want to invite guests to teach dances from around the world.

Classmates can bring music to the class and demonstrate how American students dance when they attend school dances and parties.



- **Demonstrate dances from different cultures.**
- **Demonstrate and teach current American dances.**
 - Discuss dance moves that are inappropriate, including many that are seen on popular television programs. This may be difficult to explain, but students should be aware of what will be unacceptable at school dances, and what is considered to be inappropriate by most adults and students.
 - If the instructors are unable to arrange for guests to demonstrate dances, the students can listen to music from a variety of countries while they toss a tennis ball, playground ball, or beach ball, to the beat of the music. Discuss the many benefits of exercise.

ACTIVITY 5: GOOD AND HEALTHY

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (45 minutes)

In this activity:

Students will review healthy foods as a source of protection from illnesses and lead poisoning.



Before carrying out this activity, make sure that a healthy snack is available to serve everyone at the conclusion of the activity. The students will be looking at food and might get hungry. Check for food allergies in advance. It is best to avoid serving peanut butter or anything with nuts or berries in case students have undiagnosed allergies.

- In the front of the room, display the following snacks:
 - Banana and yogurt
 - Apple and cheese
 - Broccoli and sour cream dip
 - Carrot sticks and soft cheese
 - V-8 juice or other healthy juices (low-sugar)
 - Vegetable soup and milk
- Ask the students to identify the snack items.
 - Ask students to raise their hands to vote for the snack that they would enjoy the most if it were offered to them at home. (Make sure it is clear that they will *not* receive the snack if they vote for it!)
 - Then ask the students to vote on which snack is the healthiest. Ask them which one is better for their health.

The answer is that all of the snacks are healthy, and the foods can be eaten individually or in any combination as a healthy snack.
- Distribute Handout 6-4 *Good Nutrition* and discuss the pictures of food on the handout. Discuss how eating foods that are healthy can build protection from health problems. With older students, discuss the nutrients in the foods that build better health (calcium, iron, vitamin C, zinc, etc.).

Explain to students how a strong, healthy body is better prepared to handle illness, and tell them they should reach for a healthy snack to take care of their health.

- Serve a snack and discuss how the snack will build better health. Compliment the students on taking care of their health.

- While the students are eating their snacks, explain that fresh foods are the best source of vitamins.

Vitamins can be in other prepared foods such as cereals, pasta, cheese, bottled tomato sauce, and canned fruit.

Fresh or frozen meats can also contain important vitamins.

- Show samples of these foods and encourage students to eat a mixture of them daily.
- Explain that sometimes they will not get all of the vitamins that they need from foods, so they should take a daily vitamin. Show different types of vitamins (chewables, cartoon characters, fruit-flavored, etc.) and encourage students to talk to their parents about taking a daily vitamin.

ACTIVITY 6: CHOOSING HEALTHY FOODS

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12

In this activity:

Students will learn how to select foods that are healthy.

They will discover that choosing fresh foods in many different colors can result in a balanced, healthy diet.

- Explain to students that an easy way to eat healthy foods is to choose lots of different colors during the day.
- The healthiest foods are fresh (not from a box or a can) and come in many different colors. Examples are:

Oranges	purple eggplant
Blueberries	green and purple grapes
Strawberries	brown, white, red potatoes
Red, green, yellow, and orange peppers	yams
Greens	carrots
White and brown mushrooms	dairy products
Red and green apples	

- If possible, show examples of the many different colors of fresh foods.
- Distribute handouts 6-5: *Fruit to Color* and 6-6: *Vegetables to Color* for students to color.
- Discuss the names of the fruits and vegetables depicted on the handouts.



JOURNAL TOPIC

Grades K-5

Draw a picture of the foods that you will eat at school and the foods that you will eat at home.

Grades 6-8

Draw or write about your plans for eating lunch at school. Include potential problems and how you will solve them. Describe new foods that you want to try. Choose foods that have good nutrition.

Grades 9-12

Draw or write about your plans for eating lunch at school. Include potential problems and how you will solve them. Describe new foods that you want to try. Choose foods that have good nutrition.

Draw or write about how you can help to prevent lead poisoning.



SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Tour the school cafeteria.
- Tour local restaurants, grocery stores, and fast food centers. Discuss healthy eating as you tour.
- Practice moving through the lunch line, paying for food, and eating in the cafeteria.
- Invite dancers or arrange for dance instruction in current American dances that will be seen at school dances and parties.
- Describe “proms” or “formals” or “senior balls” and so forth. If possible, show pictures of special school dances.
- Invite the school nurse to talk about personal hygiene.
- Invite representatives from local community agencies to demonstrate exercise programs that are available to students and families, including basketball, yoga, swimming, ice skating, and dance. Visit the classes if possible, and explain to students how they can enroll. Encourage them to try something new.

ACTIVITY 7: LEAD POISONING

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12

In this activity:

Students will learn about lead poisoning.

A series of photos will be shown to the students to inform them about the causes and impact of lead poisoning. Since many students will be familiar with the word “poison,” the activity may make them uncomfortable or scared.



PHOTOS ARE LOCATED IN SECTION C – HANDOUTS FOR MODULE 6.

Emphasize that students can talk to their Academic Coach or Refugee Resettlement Case Manager if they have any further questions.

- Explain to the students that there are some things in the environment that are *unhealthy*. One of these things is *lead*, sometimes found in homes.
- Show the pictures from the *Lead Poisoning Information Photo Series*, reading aloud the script at the end of this module.
- Make sure that the photos are held up so that everyone can see them.
- Speak slowly and allow for translation of the script.
- Pause frequently and ask students if they have any questions.
- Complete the entire script.
- Explain to students that parents will also see the pictures at a parent program, and they can talk to their family members about what they have learned about lead.

Ask the following questions, leading a discussion to raise awareness about lead poisoning and the role of good hygiene and nutrition:

Have you noticed anything in your home that may have lead?

- Ask students what they have seen.

- Explain that all American families are inspecting for lead and may be painting over old paint, replacing cookware, and throwing out glazed pottery and toys that may contain lead.
- Explain that they can inspect their home environment with their parents.
- Distribute Handout 6-3: *Possible Sources of Lead* for the students to take home and share with their parents.
- Inform Academic Coaches about students who have indicated that they have noticed possible sources of lead in their homes. Academic Coaches can then talk to the Refugee Resettlement Case Manager.

How many of you are responsible for watching a brother or sister or other family member? What can you do to protect them from lead?

- Discuss possible sources of lead in the home and what can be done.
- Encourage students to wash the hands of siblings and watch closely what they may be putting in their mouths.
- Students who are responsible for supervising other children should know that they can talk to the Academic Coach if they are concerned about exposure to lead.

What foods can you eat that will help to fight off lead poisoning?

- It is important that students understand that eating spinach and drinking milk are not the “cures” for lead poisoning. Explain that any exposure to lead is bad for the body.
- Explain that healthy foods do not *stop* lead poisoning but can make the body stronger. For older students, explain that less damage will occur if the body is in good health.
- Explain that testing for lead poisoning was done when they arrived in the United States, but it is still necessary to get tested if anyone has been exposed to lead – even if they have a healthy diet.
- Review the pictures of food on Handout 6-4: *Good Nutrition*.

Have you ever seen anyone put their fingers in their mouths? How about babies chewing on toys and rattles?

- Explain that babies and young children naturally put their fingers and hands in their mouths. It is hard to stop young children from doing this, especially when they are infants who are teething, or toddlers who are playing with toys.
- Acknowledge that people of all ages often eat with their fingers.

- Explain that young children should not play on floors that have lead chips or dust. Toys should be washed frequently with soap and water.
- Explain that parents will learn how to check toys for lead if they attend a parent program. Older students can be advised about websites (see Supplies) that provide information about toys with lead.

When is the next time that you will wash your hands?

- Explain that at any age hands should be washed frequently. Students should wash their hands:
 - After using the restroom
 - Before and after eating
 - After school
 - Before and after sports activities
 - Before and after playing with friends, especially if they are ill
 - When handling food
 - Before handling a newborn
 - Before and after a doctor's appointment
- Emphasize that if there is any possibility of lead exposure, hands should be washed.

Take a break so that everyone can go to the restroom and practice washing their hands. (Make sure that the restrooms are equipped with soap and paper towels.) If possible, distribute a bar of soap and hand towel to each student to take home.

SCRIPT

Lead Poisoning Photo Information Series

Refugee Academy Student Activity 7: Stay Healthy

See SECTION C – HANDOUTS FOR MODULE 6 FOR PHOTOS

The number corresponds to the picture to be displayed.

Instructor:

- I am going to show you some pictures while I tell you about something that is important to know.
- Watch and listen carefully so that you can learn how to take care of your health.
- I am going to be talking about something called *lead poisoning*.

PICTURE NUMBER	TEXT TO READ ALOUD
1	Lead is a metal that has been used in many products: Such as paint
2	Or pipes that bring water to your home
3	Dishes
4	Toys
5	Some types of makeup
6	And some types of jewelry.
7	Lead was also used in gasoline and factories around the world.

PICTURE NUMBER	TEXT TO READ ALOUD
<p style="text-align: center;">8</p>	<p>Several years after lead was used in many different products, it was discovered that lead is a poison that can affect all parts of the body.</p> <p>Not everything contains lead, but there are still many products that have lead in them.</p> <p>Laws have been passed to stop the use of lead in products.</p> <p>Doctors and nurses test children and adults to see if they have been exposed to lead and have it in their bodies.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">9</p>	<p>You were tested for lead when they came to this country, and will be tested again in a few months.</p> <p>You may remember that the doctor or nurse did a simple finger prick test when you arrived.</p> <p>Does anyone remember that test that the doctor did?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">10</p>	<p>If children have lead in their bodies, then doctors can tell parents what to do.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">11</p>	<p>There are medicines and treatments that can flush out the poisonous lead.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">12</p>	<p>How can people get exposed to lead? How does it get in your body? The most common source of lead is paint.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">13</p>	<p>When paint with lead in it gets old it can chip and peel and crumble into dust.</p>

PICTURE NUMBER	TEXT TO READ ALOUD
14	The pieces of paint and paint dust can get on the furniture
15	on the floor where children play -
16	on the dishes and in the food when the dust is in the air
17	and hidden in corners and under heating systems like radiators.
18	<p>You often play on the floor, right?</p> <p>Little children crawl on the floor and chew on rattles, toys, blankets, and other objects</p>
19	like stuffed animals.
20	<p>They tend to put their hands in their mouths.</p> <p>That is how the lead from the paint chips and dust gets into their bodies.</p> <p>Remember – lead is not everywhere, but if there is old, chipped paint, then there might be lead in it.</p> <p>Any amount of lead in the body is too much and can be poisonous.</p> <p>What can happen?</p>
21	<p>Children can get sick.</p> <p>They can get stomach aches and headaches.</p>

PICTURE NUMBER	TEXT TO READ ALOUD
22	They may have trouble with their balance.
23	Sometimes they have problems in school. They can't pay attention
24	They might be very tired or they might have trouble concentrating. Children with lead poisoning may fall way behind in school.
25	<p>School is hard for them.</p> <p>There could be many reasons for this, but one of them could be because they have lead poisoning.</p> <p>If you are concerned about how you are doing in school, talk to your Academic Coach.</p> <p>If you think that you are always tired or having trouble paying attention in school, then talk to your Academic Coach.</p> <p>Or if you just don't feel good, tell your Academic Coach.</p> <p>You are probably fine!</p> <p>School is hard sometimes.</p> <p>School is hard sometimes.</p> <p>There are going to be times when you feel tired or might have a stomach ache.</p> <p>But if you feel like this a lot, especially if you think there might be lead in the paint in your home, then talk to your Academic Coach who will discuss it with your Refugee Resettlement Case Manager.</p>

PICTURE NUMBER	TEXT TO READ ALOUD
26	You can <i>help</i> your family protect themselves from lead poisoning!
27	The first thing you need to do is take a good look around your home. Do you see chipped and peeling paint?
28	Look in attics, cupboards, and in the corners. If you think that you have lead in your home, talk to your Academic Coach.
29	Your Academic Coach will talk to the Refugee Resettlement Case Manager and they will let your family know how to get your home cleaned and painted if there is lead in it.
30	What else can you do to prevent lead poisoning? Remember that lead is not in everything. But it's a good idea to wash you hands often. Wash them before and after you play with friends. Wash them before you eat. And keep their hands out of your mouth. Little babies and your younger brothers and sisters will naturally put things in their mouths. So make sure that they are not chewing on things that have been exposed to lead dust. Make sure that they are not playing on a floor that has lead dust. Help them to wash their hands.

PICTURE NUMBER	TEXT TO READ ALOUD
31	Help your parents to keep things clean in the house
32	<p>including the window blinds.</p> <p>Window shades and window sills can collect dust with lead in it.</p> <p>You can help clean up dust by using a wet mop and not a broom.</p> <p>Everyone should help to keep the house clean!</p> <p>If your house has lead paint then your parents can get help in getting it removed – or the house can be repainted.</p> <p>Your Academic Coach can help you if you need information for your parents.</p>
33	<p>How else can you protect yourself from lead poisoning?</p> <p>A very important thing you can do is eat a healthy diet.</p> <p>If you eat good foods there is less damage from lead poisoning.</p>
34	Make sure that you eat lots of fresh fruits
35	and vegetables.
36	Eat some milk, cheese, yogurt, and eggs.
37	Raisins are a very good snack!
38	Eat cereal with milk and fruit.

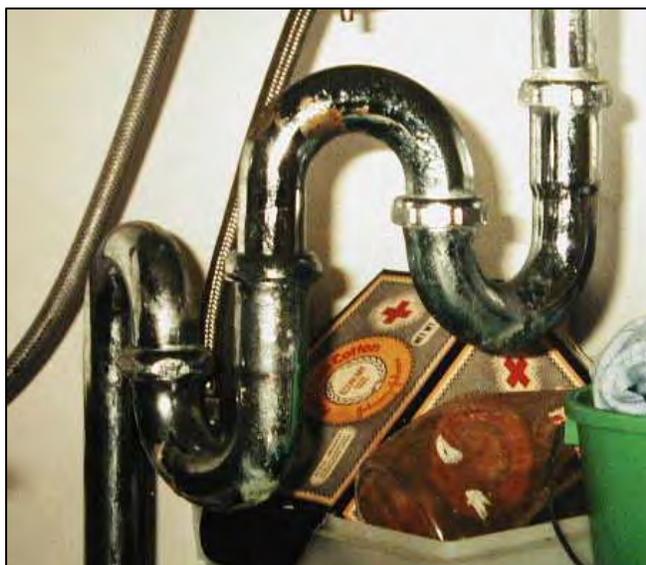
PICTURE NUMBER	TEXT TO READ ALOUD
39	And try to have protein every day, like fish
40	or beef and chicken
	<p>Your job is to make sure that your body is strong and healthy.</p> <p>So remember:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wash your hands ▪ Eat a healthy diet ▪ Look around to make sure that you and your family are not exposed to lead. ▪ Share this information about lead poisoning with your friends and your relatives so that they can also keep their children safe. ▪ And you can always talk to your Academic Coach if you have any questions

Lead Poisoning Photo Information Series
(Student Program)

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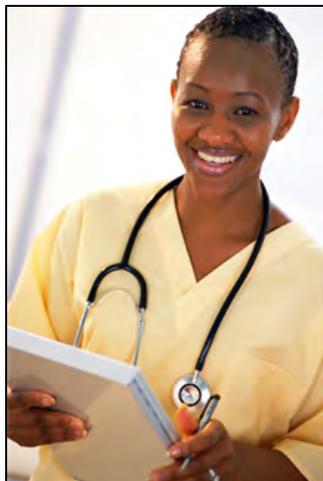
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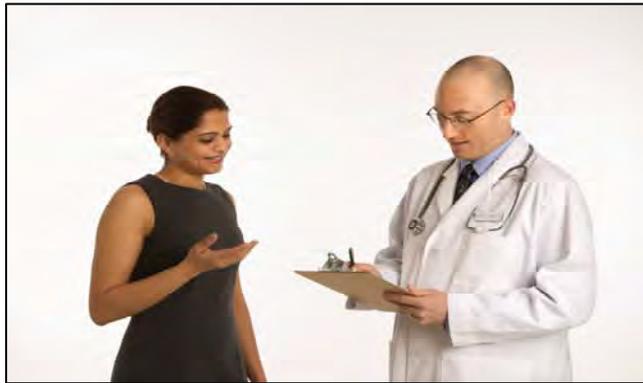
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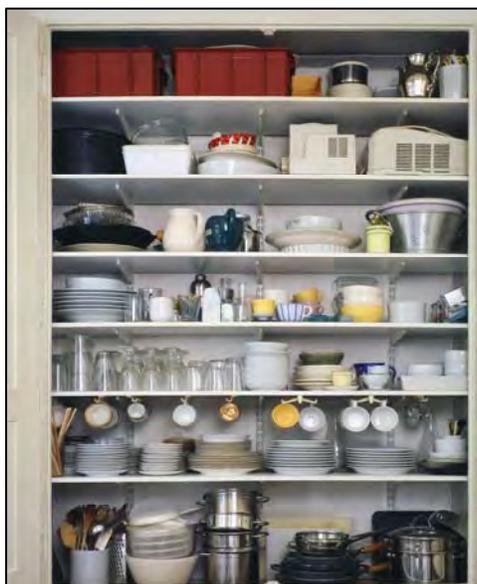
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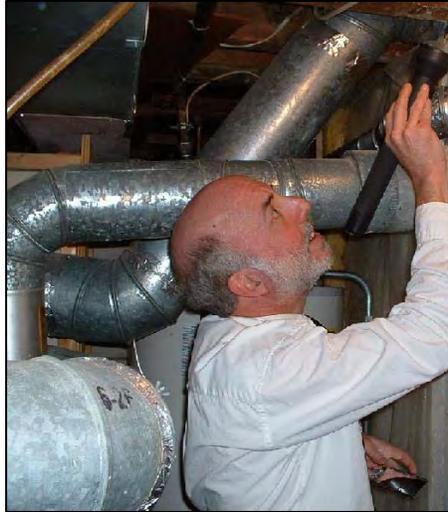
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39.



40.





MODULE 7
INTERESTS AND TALENTS

MODULE 7: Interests & Talents



PURPOSE

The purpose of Module 7 is to familiarize students with school and community opportunities to develop interests and talents.

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Become familiar with extra-curricular activities to determine interests and talents
- Learn about opportunities for involvement in sports in American education
- Become familiar with community-based after-school and weekend programs



SUPPLIES

***Handout 7 – 1:
What Do You Enjoy?***

***Handout 7 – 2:
After School Plans***

Video

A Day in School
(Elementary, Middle
or High School)

Sports equipment:
basketball; hockey
stick and puck (field
and ice); soccer ball;
baseball and glove;
Frisbee; swim cap;
volleyball; football;
chalk (gymnastics)

Ballet slippers
Musical Instruments
Cooking equipment
Costume and wig

Brochures from local
community-based
programs (YMCA,
Boys/Girls Club, sports
organizations, etc.)



MODULE 7: Interests and Talents

VOCABULARY

Elementary Vocabulary

Baseball
Basketball
Frisbee
Swimming
Vacation Break
Volleyball
Soccer
Football
Talent
Interest

Secondary Vocabulary

Baseball
Basketball
Frisbee
Swimming
Games (sports)
Volleyball
Vacation Break
Football
Talent
Interest
Practice
Soccer
Coach
Permission



Key Points – Interests and Talents



- 1. *Students can develop interests and talents in the classroom, after school, and at community centers on the weekend and during school vacations.***



For many of the refugee students, enrollment in American schools opens up many opportunities to investigate new areas of interest. They may discover skills and talents that they did not even know they had.

Or they may have a chance to further develop interests and talents that they were already exploring in their native countries.

Students should be informed that they can participate in extracurricular programs after school during student organization and club meetings. They can join or try out for athletic teams. They can walk or take the bus to community organizations that provide recreational activities, classes, clubs, and special events that expose students to a variety of new areas of interest. Many organizations provide after-school activities in the community, and may also be open on the weekends and in the evenings. They may also provide vacation camps and summer programs.

Encourage students to expand their education beyond the school day. Encourage them to try many new activities, even if they have no experience or no one to attend with them. They will not only learn new skills and develop new interests and talents, they will meet new friends.

Give examples of peers and adults who have taken classes that have resulted in a hobby or profession. Perhaps a teacher is an amateur photographer after taking a photography class, a student works at a local restaurant after joining a cooking class, or another student has decided to pursue acting as a career after trying out for a school play.



- 2. *A variety of programs are offered by schools and by community organizations.***

Module 7 provides information about programs in the school and surrounding community that are designed to provide entertainment, fun, and skill development for the students. The programs can include sports, music, dance, and art, as well as service and volunteer opportunities. Depending upon the facilities and the interests of the local community, the programs can emphasize competition, parental involvement, skill acquisition, academic support, or simply enjoyment.

For example, community centers may offer basketball clinics, cooking classes, dance programs, and youth groups. Schools may have a number of clubs, music groups, dances, and theatrical productions.

Provide students with specific information about the programs available in the area, including:

- ✓ Schedule of the program
- ✓ Possible transportation options
- ✓ Fee required, and methods for fee reduction or waiver
- ✓ Where equipment and supplies can be purchased or obtained for free
- ✓ Permissions required from parents and physicians
- ✓ Level of competitiveness
- ✓ Skill emphasis
- ✓ Parental involvement
- ✓ Community support
- ✓ Systems for enrolling, trying out, attending



Students may be easily deterred if they are unfamiliar with the style of uniform required, or are hesitant to participate in an activity that may not be accepted by their families for religious or cultural reasons. Explain the value of participating in programs that build skills and enhance social experiences, but inform students that they must discuss their interests with their parents.

There may be a temptation for the students to become involved in a number of different programs, particularly if the student is excited about trying many new things. Make sure that students understand that schoolwork should be completed and grades should be satisfactory before they participate in after-school activities.



3. School programs may be offered specifically to cultivate talents.

Occasionally students may demonstrate a unique talent. A teacher may spot it or a parent may point it out to the school. The talent could be related to such areas as visual arts, sports, mechanics, or music, but students could also show a talent for service work or leadership. Inform students about opportunities to enroll in classes for

Module 7 Interests and Talents



the gifted, or how to obtain specialized instruction in specific areas of talent (e.g., individual lessons, internships, advanced placement).

Provide information about where students can attend classes to expand upon their skills, perhaps at local museums or postsecondary institutions. Invite representatives from the Big Brothers Big Sisters program to talk to students. Connect students with piano teachers, soccer coaches, camp directors, and so forth.

Observe participants in the Refugee Academy and find ways to cultivate their interests and talents. Perhaps they can try out for a sports team, join a Math Olympics or similar team, compete in the College Academic Bowl, or run for office in the school. Many of the students in the Refugee Academy will not know that these options are possible.



When reviewing the possibilities, keep in mind that students may need detailed explanations. For example, to tell the students that they can “try out for football” assumes that they know what football is and what it means to “try out.” They will not only need descriptions, they will need pictures, demonstrations, examples of equipment and uniforms, and anecdotes from instructors who can present with enthusiasm, and from peers who joined a program and enjoyed themselves.

ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY #1: WHAT ARE YOUR INTERESTS?

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (120 minutes)

In this activity:

Students will discover the variety of extracurricular programs that are available for them in school and in the local community.



The purpose of this activity is not only to inform students about the many choices that they will have in pursuing interests and talents, but to expose them to classes, clubs, special events, tutoring, and other programs that focus on topics that will be brand-new to many of the students.

Take time to describe the programs in detail, encouraging students to identify activities that appeal to them, even if they have never tried any of the activities before.

- Distribute *Handout 7-1: What Do You Enjoy?*
 - Discuss each activity, showing “tools of the trade” such as ballet slippers, musical instruments, basketball, and so forth. (See the Supplies list for suggestions.) Explain:
 - What the school offers
 - What the community offers
 - Benefits of participation
 - How to get involved
 - Levels of difficulty
 - Sign-ups versus tryouts
 - Parental involvement
 - Community involvement

- Schedule and time invested
 - Requirements
 - How to improve
 - Recognition
- For as many activities as possible, introduce a guest coach, teacher, or community organization director who can provide information about available activities.
 - Academy instructors can demonstrate interests and talents such as:

- Playing guitar
- Making a video
- Sketching a picture
- Tap dancing
- Cooking



Show that enjoyment is the benefit, regardless of the level of talent.

- Invite students to discuss the activities, observing:
 - Comfort level with each activity
 - Past experience
 - Evidence of talent
 - Uncertainty about interests
 - Uncertainty about trying something new
 - Insecurity about skills
- Complete *Handout 7-1: What Do You Enjoy?* with additional illustrations of special interests.
 - Ask students what they have seen adults or their peers do that requires skill or talent. For example, students may pass a karate studio on the way to school, or watch a volleyball game in a park, or observe an artist sketching buildings in the neighborhood. Students may not realize that they can pursue those same interests in clubs and classes.



Show the video ***A Day in School*** (Elementary, Middle or High School) to provide new information and to encourage students to pursue new interests and cultivate talents.

Use the ***Guide to the Videos*** for introducing the video and for follow-up discussion.

ACTIVITY #2: AFTER SCHOOL

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (30 minutes)

In this activity:

Students will meet with the instructors and discuss plans for participating in after-school activities.

Students can meet with the instructors in small groups, or individually with their Academic Coach.



- Divide students into groups and with each student discuss *Handout 7-2: After School Plans* individually, helping them to make plans for participation in an extracurricular activity.
 - Discuss:
 - Benefits
 - Expectations of schools
 - Fee coverage
 - Transportation
 - No pressure
 - Possible parental resistance
 - Friends attending together

Ask students to discuss *Handout 7-2: After-School Plans* with their parents.



JOURNAL TOPIC

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12

How will I learn new things in school and after school?



SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Take field trips to sports sites, club meetings, special events in the community, and classes at local activity centers.
- Arrange for experiences in dance, specific sports, art projects, and other skill-based activities that are offered by schools and community organizations.
- Invite students to talk about their involvement in extracurricular activities, and to demonstrate the skills they have learned.
- Introduce students with demonstrated talents to special programs and teachers.
- Invite instructors to demonstrate what they teach. Encourage them to reassure students that many of the skills do not require fluency in English, just a desire to learn and try new things.
- Talk to local community organizations about how to modify curriculum and instruction so that refugee students can feel comfortable in their programs. If possible, identify volunteer translators who can assist in instruction during community programs.
- Give the students the opportunity to try on uniforms, experiment with the tools that artists use, look through the lens of a camera, and participate in other experiences that might pique their interest.



MODULE 8

GETTING HELP

MODULE 8: Getting Help

PURPOSE

The purpose of Module 8 is to encourage students to recognize school personnel and peers as a source of information and support.



OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Understand the role of teachers as a source of information and support
- Understand the role of the Academic Coach as a source of personal support
- Understand the role of communication between parents and schools
- Understand the role of peers as a resource for information and support



SUPPLIES

***Handout 8 – 1:
Teachers***

***Handout 8 – 2:
Academic Coach***

***Handout 8 – 3:
Parent Note***

Guest students
(see Activity #3)

Videos:
***Refugee Student
Interviews and
A Day in School***
(Elementary, Middle
or High School)



MODULE 8: Getting Help

VOCABULARY

Elementary Vocabulary

Aide
Questions
Problems
Succeed
Newcomer
Nice
Name
Home
Family
Parent
Mr., Mrs., Ms.

Secondary Vocabulary

Aide
Guidance
Interpreter
Problems
Succeed
Report Card
Assignment
Grades
Study
Nice
Schedule
Name
Mr., Mrs., Ms.
Family
Parent
Home
Trouble
Communication



Key Points – Getting Help



1. Teachers are resources and want students to succeed.

Some refugees may not have attended school in their native countries, and may not know the role of a teacher. They may have misconceptions about teachers and they may be afraid of them.



Other students may have had teachers they remember fondly and find it difficult to adjust to teachers in American schools. Still others have experienced teachers who were primarily disciplinarians and they may assume that all teachers in American schools will behave the same way.

The purpose of Module 8 is to explain to students that all teachers are different in their styles and expectations, but they ultimately do want students to succeed. There are, of course, a few exceptions, but primarily teachers will not only dispense knowledge, they will provide guidance and support to students who make the effort to achieve.



Many teachers will reach out to students who are struggling in school, or who are having difficulty behaving in class, concentrating on their work, or getting along with other students. They want students to succeed, and will provide information and guidance when students need assistance. Even when most teachers discipline students it is for the purpose of reining in negative behavior so that students can focus on succeeding in school.

Refugee students should know that if they follow school rules and treat teachers with respect, they will build good relationships with teachers. If they work hard in class and alert teachers when they need help, they will find that teachers will respond positively and provide assistance.



2. The Academic Coach provides individual guidance, information, and support.

During the first session of the Refugee Academy, the Academic Coaches introduced themselves and explained their role during the school year. However, the students were more than likely overwhelmed with information during the first session as they attempted to adjust to their new environment.

In Module 8 the instructors should remind the students again about how the coaches will help the students during the Academy and throughout the school year. They should provide students with *Handout 8-2: Academic Coach* which has the name of the

coach and contact information. The students are to show the handout to their parents and post the information for reference for the entire family.

The instructors should give the students a copy of *Handout 8-2: Academic Coach* (or a business card) for the students to keep in their wallet or notebook. The students should know that any time during the school day they can ask for a meeting to be arranged with their personal Academic Coach.

 **3. Schools communicate with parents to encourage student success.**

In *Module 13: Keeping Families Informed*, the students have the opportunity to learn about a number of different ways that schools facilitate communication between the teachers and the parents. But before they learn about the specifics of school-to-home communication, the students may need to be introduced to the notion that the schools will communicate with the parents on a routine basis. This may be a new concept for many students.



The refugee students may not realize that parents will be told that they can call the teacher at any time, and that teachers may contact the parents if they have any concerns about a student’s achievement or behavior.

Module 8 provides information on how schools communicate with parents. The students should know that teachers will not only send home report cards, they will also invite parents in for conferences, call home if necessary, and send home handouts that describe their classroom rules and assignments. They may send home interim reports that describe the progress of students or problems in class.

Students should be reassured that the main reason teachers contact parents is to identify and implement strategies that will lead to student success.

Scheduled events such as Open House (when parents visit the school in the evening), parent-teacher conferences, Education Week (when many schools invite parents into the classrooms during the school day), and concerts, science fairs, and school plays all allow parents to see what their children are learning in school.



 **4. Peers are a natural source of information and support.**

A valuable source of support for students is peers. It is important that the Academic Coaches work with teachers and administrators to provide peer support for refugee students.



Many teachers do assign a classmate to help a new student during the first few days of school, or they may have a “buddy” or “mentoring” system to help new students learn about the school environment and procedures. However, the

system is often informal and dependent upon the ability of the students to communicate with each other. Some students feel uncomfortable or embarrassed if they are forced to accompany a refugee newcomer to classes. Others may try to be helpful but find it frustrating if they do not know the language or customs of the refugee student.

In some circumstances the teacher will assume that a child from one part of the world will automatically be helpful to another refugee student from the same country or a country nearby. For example, a student from Vietnam who is already enrolled in the school may be enlisted to help a new student from Korea. Although the students may have some similarities, it cannot be assumed that they will instantly bond or will have shared the exact same background. It may be frustrating for both students to be linked together, thus reinforcing the stereotypical notion that the culture and language of the countries are the same.

New students can certainly benefit from learning from their refugee peers who have been in the school for a while and can share helpful information. But new students need the opportunity to connect with American students, not only to “learn the ropes,” but to possibly form new friendships.

Younger students seem to adjust more readily to the newcomers and generally make efforts to make friends and help out, especially with teacher encouragement. Secondary students may be uncomfortable or even wary about being assigned to a new student. They may be well intentioned in their efforts to help, but if the refugee student cannot communicate or is shy or afraid, then students often do not know how to handle the situation. They may prefer to be with their own friends and do not want to be associated with someone who is different from them. Instructors should consult with teachers and guidance counselors about students in the school who would comfortably assist a new student, and would introduce them to others, show them how to function in the school environment, and appreciate the culture of the new student.

Peer support should start right away. Begin by making connections between students in the Refugee Academy. The students who are enrolled in the Academy can share information, keep an eye out for each other, and support each other during difficult adjustments. Encourage the class members to form support partnerships and groups, meeting with the Academic Coach during the school year. They should branch out beyond their peers in the Academy, but if systems are set up so that they can remain in contact, it can be reassuring to know that peers have something in common that they can share. Coaches may want to establish a regular meeting time for the students to have a reunion and follow-up meetings.

Then invite peers who will be in their classes to visit the Refugee Academy and meet with the refugee students. Explain to the classmates of the refugee students how difficult it is to adjust to a new school, especially if the student has difficulty speaking the English language. Show the visitors how to be of assistance in a way that is respectful and helpful. Encourage them to help the students out when school begins. Talk to teachers and guidance counselors to determine who would be the best students to invite. Include peers who will demonstrate an interest in the Academy students and will follow through in helping them when school begins.



It is important to point out to the refugee students that, unfortunately, not all of their future classmates will be helpful. They may deliberately confuse or embarrass the new students. Some students will tease or supply false information. For example, common misinformation provided to new students includes inappropriate slang words, behaviors that are against the rules, and offers to sell the students items that are either non-existent or off limits for students.

Explain to students that they should first trust their judgment about whether they think they are being told the truth. If the situation feels uncomfortable and embarrassing, then they are probably not being given reliable information. Suggest that they observe other students carefully to see their reaction, watch to see if others engage in the activity being promoted, and politely listen until they are certain that they are getting good advice from a classmate. In time they will know who to trust.

ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY #1: KNOW YOUR TEACHERS AND ACADEMIC COACHES

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (60 minutes)

In this activity:

Students will learn about the many roles that teachers play in educating students. For some students, the information about teachers will be completely new. Others may have preconceived notions about the expectations of teachers and their impressions may not be positive.



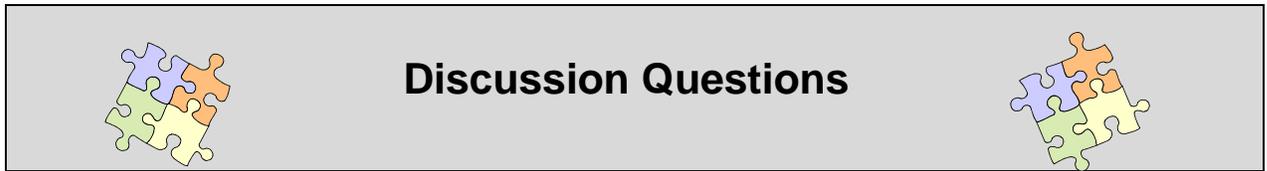
Keep reminding students that teachers are in their classrooms to provide information and assistance so that the students can learn and achieve.

Explain that some teachers are in “self-contained” classrooms (primarily in elementary classrooms where most academic subjects are covered in one classroom) and will be the student’s teacher all day, with the exception of classes in Art, Physical Education, Library, and Music. Some students may leave the classroom for a short time to meet with a speech teacher, or music lesson teacher, or to participate in an English as a Second Language class.

At the secondary level the students will have different teachers for different subjects and the students will rotate from class to class. Again, this may be a new concept for students and they may find it confusing. Reassure them that it does not take long to know the teachers and to get used to their different styles. Provide examples of how teachers approach their instruction in different ways. For example, some teachers lecture, others promote class discussions, and others demonstrate with drama and flair, engaging their students in activities and projects. The style may be determined by the content and academic level of the course, but the personality of the teacher will also influence what the class is like.

Some classrooms will have preservice or “student” teachers, substitute teachers, or classroom aides. The sudden arrival of a substitute teacher can be disarming to a new student. Explain that substitutes are temporary, but they are qualified and should be treated with respect. Explain how *all* teachers are to be treated and addressed.

Distribute *Handout 8-1: Teachers* and discuss the information on the handout.



When you went to school before America, what did your teachers do?

- Some students may not have had teachers or will describe their teachers in a negative manner.
- Students may miss their old teachers and feel a sense of loss as the topic is being discussed. Encourage them to talk about what they liked about their past teachers.
- Stress the role of the American teacher as someone who will provide knowledge and directions, but will also guide students.
- Most teachers are friendly and helpful.
- Students should seek out teachers when they need help.

If you have to ask a teacher a question, what can you do?

If you do not understand what the teacher is saying, what can you do?

- Review classroom rules about raising hands, and when to approach the teacher's desk.
- Teachers can be approached after class, during recess or study hall, and after school, or a parent can write a note asking the teacher to meet with the student.
- The Academic Coach, ESL teachers, and translators are also resources for the students.
- Do not be afraid to ask teachers for help.

Distribute two copies of *Handout 8-2: Academic Coach*

- Assist students individually or as a group in completing the handout. Students should also write the information in their journals.
- They are to take home *Handout 8-2: Academic Coach* home, show it to their parents, and post it in the house where it is visible.
- They are then to get the parent's signature or mark on *Handout 8-3: Parent Note* and bring it back to the Academy the next day.

ACTIVITY #2: VIDEOS

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (30 minutes)



Show the videos ***Refugee Student Interviews*** and ***A Day in School*** (Elementary, Middle or High School) to reassure students that school personnel are available for information and support.

Use the ***Guide to the Videos*** for introducing the video and for the follow-up discussion.

ACTIVITY #3: PEERS AS SUPPORT

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (45 minutes)

In this activity:

Students from the school district are invited to participate in the Refugee Academy. They can provide information to the new students and become a familiar face to the refugee students.



The instructors can observe the class interaction to see possibilities for emerging friendships. The activities can further facilitate the development of new relationships.

If mentors or “buddies” have been established, they should meet with their assigned students.

Ask guest students, **one at a time**, to:

- Give their first name only.
 - Discuss the interpretation process.
 - All students will find the names of other students unusual and hard to pronounce. Point out that it works both ways. American students may have difficulty saying names of the refugee students, and vice versa.
- Name one activity in school that they enjoy.
- Name a favorite teacher and tell why.
- Divide students into pairs or small groups, depending upon the availability of interpreters and instructors as facilitators.
- Ask students to discuss the following questions, presenting one question at a time to the entire group. After each question is discussed, summarize the answers, stressing peers as positive resources.

- How will students who speak English help students who are learning English?
- Will American students laugh at students who do not speak English very well? If they do, what can be done?
- What if a new student does not understand what is happening in class?
- Are teachers nice?
- What is the best thing about school?
- How can you know if an American student will help a new student?
- What if a student is mean to a new student?

Although racism, teasing, and bullying are sensitive topics, it is necessary to forewarn refugee students about the possibility that they will be treated badly by some students. Supportive peers can be extremely helpful when this topic is discussed. Ask them to describe treatment that should not be tolerated, how to handle it without making it worse, and who to turn to if the treatment is uncomfortable or becomes intolerable.

- What if a new student knows that another new student needs help?
- What is the most fun in school?
- As a large group, ask the guest students to fill in the blanks:
 - In school, always remember _____.
 - In school, be alert for _____.
 - You will like American schools because _____.



JOURNAL TOPIC

Grades K-5

Draw or write about who can help you in school.

Grades 6-8

Draw or write about questions that you have about American schools, and how you will find the answers.

Grades 9-12

Draw or write about people in the school who can help you, including students.



SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Visit the office of the guidance counselor and other school personnel.
- Organize games with guest students that involve informal communication, teams, or projects. For example, cleaning up a playground, playing baseball, or participating in Project Adventure can help to connect students in the Academy with their new classmates. (Project Adventure Inc. is an outdoor trust-building physical education program. See www.PA.org).
- Invite adults from the community who demonstrate support for refugee students. Connect students with organizations and civic leaders who have been refugees themselves, or who are involved in programs that provide a safe haven for newcomers.
- Introduce students to crossing guards, local shop owners, librarians, and other adults in the nearby

community who can be a resource for the students. Take a walk around the neighborhood if students will be walking to school, and introduce the students to people who can help them if they need assistance.

- If possible, invite classroom teachers to come to the Academy and introduce themselves. A familiar face can help immensely when a refugee student enters school for the first time.



MODULE 9
STUDY SKILLS

MODULE 9: Study Skills

PURPOSE



The purpose of Module 9 is to assist students in developing study skills.

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Learn basic strategies for developing study skills
- Learn techniques for organization and concentration
- Understand the significance of homework and strategies for completing homework successfully
- Understand how to establish a home environment for successful studying



SUPPLIES

Handout 9-1:
Homework

School Supplies including: pencils, paper, notebooks, folders, binders, and other resources to assist students in getting organized

Three file folders per student

Sample plain or decorated cardboard boxes filled with school supplies (see Activity #2)

Empty cardboard boxes large enough for school papers

Supplies to decorate boxes including: wallpaper books, markers, colored paper, tape, glue, scissors, wrapping paper, paint

Combination Lock

Access to student lockers, if appropriate (see Activity #2)

Piles of books and papers on table (see Activity #2)

Optional: small spiral assignment notebooks for all students, or school-assigned notebooks



MODULE 9: Study Skills

VOCABULARY

Elementary Vocabulary

I think I can
Concentrate*
Ask
Focus*
Organization
Pay Attention
Locker/cubbies
Where is it?
Study
Study Skills
Plan
Hard
Easy
Try

*Advanced vocabulary
often used by teachers

Secondary Vocabulary

I think I can
Concentrate*
Ask
Focus*
Organization
Pay Attention
Locker
Where is it?
Study
Study skills
Plan
Hard
Easy
Try

*Advanced vocabulary
often used by teachers



Key Points – Study Skills



1. *The keys to study skills are organization and time management.*

Even the most enthusiastic students may become overwhelmed by the number of school assignments that have to be juggled. The purpose of Module 9 is to assist students in planning for multiple tasks. They will learn about basic study skills that will help them stay on track and meet deadlines.

Before discussing study skills, determine how the Refugee Academy students will be assisted in completing classroom and homework assignments until they are comfortable with the English language and can keep up with class work.

The first concept that the students of the Refugee Academy should learn is that there are “study skills.” Since many of the students will be adjusting to school for the first time in their lives, or at least adjusting to multiple classrooms and assignments, they may not know that there are systems to studying.



Some of the strategies for developing basic study skills such as making sure supplies are handy, making lists of tasks to be accomplished, and reviewing with a partner seem routine to most students, but can be new ideas for refugee students. They may not realize that they will be more successful if they study in short increments, rather than in one long session. They may not know that fatigue or emotions can impact on their ability to concentrate or that constant interruptions can result in mistakes.

Instructors should explain to students that there are three items that will be essential in helping them stay organized and focused: an assignment notebook, a specific storage place for supplies and papers (at home and at school), and a school calendar. Show them how each of those items can affect time management and organization.

Demonstrate how to fill out the assignment notebook. Show how a locker or cubby can be neat and accessible. Use a school calendar to show how due dates and reminder dates can be written in by the students.

Instructors should also explain to students that teachers will have different methods of alerting students about assignments. Teachers may write homework on the chalkboard, they may pass out a syllabus at the beginning of the year, or they may announce assignments at the end of the class period. Most elementary teachers have a routine system, but they still depend upon the students to keep track of their assignments.



No matter what the teacher’s system is, students should have *one place* to write down assignments. When they are given a due date that is days or weeks away, they should write down reminders in their assignment notebooks and on their school calendar. Writing it

down in a notebook is the first essential step to managing the time it takes to complete assignments.

The students should also be informed about the amount of time they could easily waste looking for textbooks, assignment sheets, and supplies in their lockers, at home, and in their desks. Stress that *one place at home and one place at school* should be designated for school resources. Point out that the one place should not be “the locker” but “the red notebook in the locker.”

It should be recognized that many refugee students will not have a separate room or desk at home for their study materials. In Module 9 students have the chance to make a box that is designated just for them at home. It should contain their papers, assignments, textbooks, and supplies. It will have to be cleaned out routinely, but should at least provide a central location that will save them time when they start to work on their homework.

It should also be noted that the concept of a calendar might be new. Take the time to show how the students can look at the date of assignments and connect to the dates on the calendar, writing down what is due. Reassure students that teachers in the English as a Second Language (ESL) classes and Academic Coaches and translators will assist them in keeping track of their assignments. Some students may be enrolled in classes that are specifically designed for helping students in staying organized and getting their work done on time.



2. Plan ahead for studying at home.

No matter where students live, they will be distracted when they try to study at home. They may have family members nearby, the television or radio on in the background, or headphones on with music playing loudly.



Students should be informed that they should turn off any electronics and try to ignore the sounds around them, but the reality is that they will be easily tempted to turn on their favorite television show, or listen to music as they study. Adults are usually more uncomfortable with the distractions than the students themselves. Many of the students are used to lots of background noise. Some students feel that they can study better if they are listening to music. Others cannot find a quiet place to study and can easily ignore the noise around them.

Instructors should explain to students that they will learn best when they can concentrate on their work. They will also save time and get the work done more quickly if they can resist being distracted. Recognize that students tend to prefer “multitasking,” for example, combining schoolwork while using electronic devices to listen to music and talking to friends by instant messaging. Keep emphasizing that they will do better work if they concentrate solely on the task at hand.

Instructors can help students plan for how they will study at home. Without asking about specific living conditions, ask students for suggestions about where they can study. How can they set up study areas that are not distracting? Where can they keep school supplies so that they are readily available? If home is particularly distracting, discuss different options such as the local library, after-school study time, and community centers.



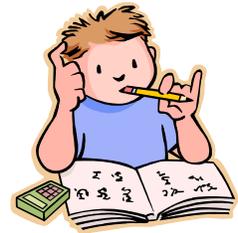
Encourage students to use their home study time to get their assignments completed, *and* to think ahead to the next day. They should routinely ask themselves if anything is due the next day; can they get part of a project done that has a long-term deadline; or are there supplies they are supposed to take to school the next day? Study time should include preparing for the next day at school.



3. Teachers respect effort.

Instructors should inform students that if they are struggling with an assignment or they did not have enough time to get it done, they should at least try to get some of it completed.

Teachers respect students who put forth effort. In fact, some teachers would prefer that students at least attempt to do an assignment even if it is difficult. That way the teacher can see why the student is having difficulty and can help the student better understand the assignment.



It is important to keep reinforcing that teachers would rather see a serious attempt at work, rather than see no work at all.



4. Save time by following directions.

The instructors should discuss the topics of directions and assignments with the English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers to determine the best process for helping students who do not speak English.



So much time is wasted when students cannot or do not follow directions. Instructors should inform students that they should not only write down assignments given by the teachers, but make sure that they understand what they are supposed to do. Encourage students to raise their hands and ask for clarification if they are not sure. Peers may be able to help them figure out what they are supposed to do for a class assignment or for homework. They can ask their ESL teachers or approach the teacher after class and ask for clarification.

ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY #1: STUDYING AT HOME

Grades K-5 (45 minutes)

In this activity:

Students will learn more about homework.

They will discuss each item on *Handout 9-1: Homework*. For many students, the concept of homework will be a new one, and they will need specific guidance in how to prepare for studying at home.



Distribute *Handout 9-1: Homework*.

- Discuss each item, coloring as each is discussed.
 - Do not study in front of the television
 - Do not attempt to complete assignments in the morning before school
 - Plan on taking short breaks every 15 or 20 minutes, or if the work is too upsetting and frustrating.
 - The study area should be well lit, and, if possible, in an area with minimal disruption.
 - If possible, pick the same time every day to complete homework.
 - Some students like to tackle the hard assignments first and then quickly finish the easy assignments. Others like to get motivated by completing the easier assignments, leaving time to work on the harder ones. Remind students that they will make more mistakes if they are tired or hungry, and should plan to do their homework when they will be most alert.
- Students in grades 3-5 can practice organizing multiple assignments. Explain that they have a series of homework assignments and ask them how they would go about organizing their study time. They may tackle the tasks in a different order. The emphasis should be on planning and prioritizing. Ask students how they will decide what to do first. Assignments might include:

- Math worksheet
- 20 minutes of reading
- Diorama or other project

Grades 6-8, 9-12 (60 minutes)

Distribute *Handout 9-1: Homework* and ask the class what they think the pictures mean.



Discussion Questions



Why is it important to find a quiet place to study?

- Recognize that it may not be possible for students to find a quiet study place at home. Suggest alternative study sites such as a local library or community center. Encourage students to inform family members about how important it is to be able to work without being interrupted. Some family members, especially younger siblings, will not understand. Talk to the students about how to study without getting distracted.



Can your family help you study at home?

- Many family members will not speak English and will not know how to help the Refugee Academy students. Students can get help from their classroom teachers, peers, ESL teachers, Academic Coaches, and translators.

What will happen if you are successful in school?

- Discuss the feeling of pride from doing anything well, and how family members would be proud of student success. But also discuss the possible negative reactions to success, by people who may be jealous or afraid of the results of the success. Encourage students to stay on task and work for achievement.
- Some students may experience peer pressure to slack off or act out in class. Remind students that they will want to feel pride in their work, resulting in a sense of confidence and achievement. Hard work can pay off when they pursue employment or higher education. This may seem obvious to the instructors, but many students, not just refugee students, do not understand the impact of schoolwork on their future. Give the students examples of well-known, successful adults who believe that they succeeded because they worked hard in school.

What if you can't concentrate or focus on your work?

- Students should balance studying with a special activity or reward for hard work. Give examples of how students can break up the study time with a snack, exercise, or other activity before returning to their homework.
- Procrastination can be a problem for a lot of students particularly with subjects that they do not enjoy. Procrastination can be battled by completing one step at a time. Discuss the importance of *getting started* on assignments that may seem hard or boring. Even if students just organize their papers, work one or two problems, or make an outline, they will discover that they will be more motivated to continue the work because they have managed to get started on it.
- Sometimes students are so stressed about their homework that they cannot concentrate and may get frustrated or upset. *Module 14: Coping with Stress* provides ideas about overcoming anxiety about schoolwork. Some tips include working on an assignment with a friend, family member or tutor; exercising every 10 minutes to break up the study time; establishing a reward chart for completion of phases of an assignment; and writing or drawing pictures about personal goals and how to achieve them.

If you have a test on Friday, when should you start studying?



- Before discussing this question, make sure that students understand what a “test” is and why teachers take them seriously. *Module 10 Taking Tests* addresses strategies that can be used to prepare for taking tests.
- Discuss the importance of planning ahead and not “cramming” for an exam. Assignment notebooks should include times for studying well before the exam.
- Encourage students to use Study Hall, study groups, ESL classes, and other opportunities to prepare for tests, in addition to individual review of study material. Ask students to explain how they would plan to study for:
 - A Math test every Friday
 - A Social Studies unit test
 - A test on a book discussed in English class.

Remind students about teachers who can help them prepare for upcoming tests.

ACTIVITY #2: GETTING ORGANIZED

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (45 minutes)

In this activity:

Students will prepare a storage box to keep at home. It will be a central location for their school assignments and supplies.



The activity will also allow the students to work together to create a Study Box that appeals to them. Although this may seem like a craft project, encourage the students to start thinking about where they will keep the box so that it will not be disturbed, and how they will keep it organized.

- Show students a plain cardboard box filled with schoolwork (pencils, notebooks, textbooks, homework). Tell them they are going to make a “Study Box.”
- Show the students how they can decorate the box so that it is their own personal home storage box for school supplies and assignments.
- Provide paints, stickers, glitter, colored paper, markers, and other craft supplies.
- If possible, provide assignment notebooks, file folders, pens, or other supplies to get the students started in filling their Study Boxes.



Discussion Questions



Where will you keep your Study Box at home?

- Discuss how to keep the Study Box accessible yet away from other family members, pets, etc.
- The Study Box should be kept in the same place so that it will be used routinely by the students. Suggest that they discuss the location with their family members.
- The box can also be used as a communication tool for parents. The students can put assignments, notes from the teacher, school announcements, and other

forms of communication in the box. The family can go through the backpack and the box every night to see what is going on in school. For older students, a separate folder of school announcements can be established to be shared with parents.

What will be in the box?

- Students should identify what should always be in the Study Box, such as pens, pencils, paper, calculator, etc.
- The contents will change, but students should clean out the Study Box routinely so that everything is up to date.
- Students should keep teacher classroom rules and assignment sheets (or syllabi) in the Study Box for future reference.

How will you organize the box?

- Discuss various ways of organizing the box so that papers will not get lost.
- Set a day of the week when the Study Box will get cleaned out.

How is the box different from your backpack?

- Explain that the backpack is for storage in school and transporting paperwork and textbooks. Assignments should either be in the locker, cubby or student's desk; in the backpack; or in the Study Box at home.

How is the box different from your locker or cubby (or space assigned to the students)?

- Discuss how the locker or cubby should be organized.
- Discuss how students may not have access to their locker during the school day, and will have to plan when they can easily exchange books and papers in their lockers. The Study Box will contain papers and supplies that are needed for homework.
- Many refugee students find lockers frustrating, when they should be a good resource for storing and organizing schoolwork. If it has not been done before, help students to practice using a locker combination. Practice storing items in the locker so that they can be found and removed easily.

Is this a good storage system?

- Show storage systems that are not effective, such as:
 - A coat with papers in pockets
 - A parent handout at the bottom of a backpack

- A messy locker
- An overflowing Study Box
- Piles of books, papers on a table
- Stuffed file folders
- A blank calendar

ACTIVITY #3: FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS

Grades K-5 (60 minutes)

In this activity:

Students will have the opportunity to experience following directions. The instructors will point out how much time is saved when students follow directions closely.

Instructors should also show students how to record directions on paper so that they can be followed later.

Emphasize resources for clarifying directions, such as peers, ESL teachers, Academic Coaches, and classroom teachers.



- Ask the students to follow the instructor's directions. Give simple tasks to complete in the room, gradually adding more and more tasks.



- Tell the students that they are allowed to ask for clarification. For example, ask one student to open a window, another to open the door, another to close the window, two others to sharpen pencils, and the entire class to put their hands in the air.
- Follow those directions with a series of directions that would require concentration. For example, ask the class to stand up, walk around the room, pick up a textbook along the way, and then replace it when they reach the same spot again, while saying the words "here we go" as they are walking.
- As the students are following directions, provide occasional distractions. After a few directions, speed up the process.
- The purpose of the activity is to show students that they may receive many different directions at once in confusing circumstances. The exercise should be fun, so instructors should watch for students getting stressed or frustrated.



Discussion Questions



Was it hard to concentrate?

- Discuss the impact of distractions and the pressure to speed up when following directions.
- Point out the importance of asking for clarification.
- Discuss how difficult it may be at times to understand the directions and to get help with clarifications in time for completing an assignment. Encourage students to call peers after school, to e-mail teachers if they have access to teacher e-mail addresses, and to at least make the effort to try the assignment. Remind them that teachers appreciate initiative and effort and, as long as the student concentrates in class and writes down assignments, the teacher will assist students in completing work successfully.



JOURNAL TOPIC

Grades K-5

Draw a picture of your personal study area.

Grades 6-8

Draw or write about your plans for studying at home and at school. Explain who you will go to if you need help with schoolwork.

Grades 9-12

Draw or write about how you will organize your study time. What will you do if you don't understand something?



SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Organize a school locker or cubby.
- Purchase assignment notebooks on a field trip to a local store.
- Practice combination locks.
- Practice prioritizing sample assignments, especially at the secondary level. Ask students to think about why they would tackle one assignment earlier than another, and how they can be prepared for a test by studying well in advance *and* the night before.
- Teachers of English as a Second Language can discuss the role of ESL in helping students with organizing and completing schoolwork.
- Help students to set up a filing system for multiple subjects. Provide file folders and markers. Students can learn the names of the subject areas and establish file folders for "homework," "projects," and other assignments.

- Invite successful community members who have come to America from a variety of countries to talk about how they adjusted to American schools. Ask them to emphasize the systems that they set up to stay organized, and how they managed to concentrate on schoolwork while adjusting to a new environment. If the adults struggled in adjusting, they should share what they would recommend for coping and adjusting, now that they look back at their experiences.
- Discuss specific strategies for developing study skills that help students concentrate. For example, students can make flash cards, checklists, and practice tests. They can highlight notes, outline reading material, discuss possible test questions with peers, and study old exams. These and many other strategies may be new to the students, so include even the most basic approaches to help them study more effectively. Encourage ESL teachers to incorporate study skills in their lessons.
- Instructors can use the activity *Completing Assignments is Rewarding!* Found in the **Mini-Academy Curriculum** on page 37. In this activity create a personal assignment notebook that will help them organize their studying.
- The video ***A Day in School*** (Elementary, Middle or High School) shows students using school supplies in their classrooms.



MODULE 10

TAKING TESTS

MODULE 10: Taking Tests

PURPOSE

The purpose of Module 10 is to prepare students for the process of test-taking in school.

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Understand the purpose of school assessments
- Understand the methods of assessments in school
- Learn techniques for test preparation and test-taking



SUPPLIES

***Handout 10 – 1:
Test Taking***

***Handout 10 – 2:
Practice Test***

**Flash cards or
photographs** for
True-False class
quiz

Sample tests

**Bubble sheet
answer keys** for
all students

Samples of district
**mid-term reports
and report cards**

**Gold stars and
stickers**



MODULE 10: Taking Tests

VOCABULARY

Elementary Vocabulary

Test
Quiz
Questions
Multiple Choice
Bubble Sheet Answer Key
Grade
Score
Placement

*Letters *a, b, c, d* (for multiple choice test)

Secondary Vocabulary

Test
Quiz
Pop Quiz
Grade
Score
Multiple Choice
True-False
Bubble Sheet Answer Key
Essay
Questions
Placement
Midterm
Final
Report Card

*Letters *a, b, c, d* (for multiple choice test)



Key Points – Taking Tests



1. **Teachers give tests to determine student level of understanding of knowledge and skills.**

Before discussing tests with the students in the Refugee Academy, it is going to be necessary to explain the different types of tests that are given in American schools. All of these tests, or *assessments*, have similar formats such as multiple choice, essay, and true-false questions, but the number of tests that occur may be overwhelming to the students.

In addition to *standardized tests* and *classroom tests*, there are *quizzes*, *pop quizzes*, *exams*, *Regents exams*, *midterms*, *unit* and *chapter tests*, and *finals*. There are also *Advanced Placement tests*, *Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Tests (PSATs)*, *Scholastic Aptitude Tests (SATs)* and other tests that students can take if they are planning on going to college. More than likely, the refugee students will also experience placement tests to determine grade and academic levels, and other forms of assessment to determine progress and academic gaps.

It is not necessary to define every type of test, but it is important to inform students about the purpose of the tests. Explain that teachers administer tests to determine what the students have learned and what else needs to be taught. Reassure students that test results will not only identify topics that the students need to learn, but they will also reveal what the students already know.



The students should be aware that during all types of tests they should refrain from talking to other students, never copy answers from other students, and come prepared with the supplies that are required, such as pencils, pens, and calculators. They should also know that some tests are timed and they may not be finished when the teacher instructs them to stop and put down their pencils.

The Activities in Module 10 will assist the students in becoming familiar with the format of tests such as multiple choice, essay, or true-false questions, and will give them a chance to practice taking tests.



2. **Teachers give some tests to determine placement.**

Most refugee students will have to take a series of tests to assess their knowledge and skills. Inform students that the tests will help the teachers discover what the students have learned prior to enrolling in American schools. The tests will also help the teachers plan for the educational program of the students. For example, a

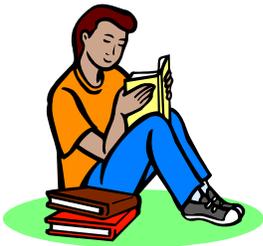


student who is learning English may be skilled in mathematics or may have excelled in science in their school in their native country. Placement testing will help teachers determine their skill level and where to place them.

Some of the students in the Refugee Academy will not be pleased with their placement. Academic Coaches can talk to the students, parents, and teachers to determine if the student has been placed properly, and can explain the rationale for the placement.



3. Start early to prepare for tests.



Although there will be the occasional surprise test, students will usually be informed in advance that they are going to be tested on class material. Encourage students to prepare for tests by studying well before the date of the test. They should make notes in their assignment notebooks and calendars about upcoming tests, and should review sections of the study materials in advance. They may need assistance from a teacher in the English as a Second Language (ESL) program to prepare for tests.

Explain to students that if they miss a test they will be able to take a “makeup test,” and if they do poorly on the test, some teachers will allow them to study more and then take the test again.

Emphasize that tests can be stressful, but students will feel less anxious if they are prepared. If they keep up on their studies, ask for help when they start to get behind or confused, and work with teachers, tutors, and ESL teachers to prepare for tests, they will feel more confident and will increase their chances of doing well on the test.

ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY #1: TAKING TESTS

Grades K-5 (90 minutes)

In this activity:

Students will learn about the different types of tests and the many aspects of taking tests.

While reviewing the handout, discuss the difference between standardized tests and tests assigned by teachers. Explain that students will be required to take placement tests because they are new students and teachers need to assess skills and determine where to place the students.

It may seem obvious, but the phrase “Do your best” cannot be said enough.



Distribute *Handout 10-1: Taking Tests* and discuss each illustration, asking students if they have experienced taking a test. Explain the test-taking process to students:

- Students will sit at a desk or table and should not talk to anyone while taking the test.



- They will need pencils, and may need a pen or a calculator.
- Explain that “cheating” consists of sharing answers, copying from other students, bringing notes into the classroom, or stealing copies of the tests or answers before the exam.
- Some tests are timed. Discuss how to manage time when taking a test.
- Explain how tests are graded. This discussion may get complicated because some teachers have very elaborate grading systems. Provide the general background on percentage or letter grades. Scores on standardized tests will be discussed with the students and parents, and will be accompanied by written materials.



Discussion Questions



Because you are new to our school, we need to find out what you have learned before. Has anyone taken a test at this school? What was it like?

Can teachers help you when you take a test?

What if you do not know the answers to the questions on the test?

What if you are tired when you take the test?

What if you have to go to the rest room during a test?

What if the student next to you knows the answers and you don't?

What will the teacher do with the test when you are done?

How can you prepare for a test so that you are not nervous when you take it?

Discuss the **true-false test**. Explain the difference between something that is true and something that is false.

- Hold up photos and ask a question about something in the photo that is clearly *true* or *false*. For example, show a picture of a bus and state, "This bus has windows."
- Ask the class to answer the question, saying *TRUE* or *FALSE* out loud.
- Ask the students to each make a statement that is either true or false about something in the room. The answer should be obvious, although students may have difficulty at first.
- Ask the class to answer the question, saying *true* or *false* out loud.



Introduce the concept of **multiple choice**, including the letters *a*, *b*, and *c*. Using the same photos that were used in the true-false activity, ask questions with three possible answers, labeling the answers with *a*, *b*, and *c*. (A lesson on letter identification may be necessary, depending upon the age level of the students and their familiarity with the alphabet.)

For example:

This bus has:

- (a) A cow on top of it
- (b) A roof on top of it
- (c) A banana on top of it

- Repeat each choice. Ask the students to select the correct answer.
- This process will take time because it will require language comprehension (or waiting for a translator to rephrase the question) and listening skills. Most tests are not given orally, so the purpose of the activity is to understand the concept of multiple choice, not to get the answer correct.
- Continue the exercise until the class is comfortable with the concept of choosing an answer.

Distribute ***bubble sheets*** and explain how they are filled out. Distribute pencils and practice filling out the bubble answer keys. Do one step at a time, calling out lines to fill in and bubbles to color.

Grades 6-8, 9-12 (90 minutes)

Distribute *Handout 10-1: Taking Tests* and discuss each illustration, asking students if they have experienced taking a test. Explain the test-taking process to students:

- Students will sit at a desk or table and should not talk to anyone while taking the test.



- They will need pencils, and may need a pen or a calculator.
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What if the student next to you knows the answers and you don't?

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How can you prepare for a test so that you are not nervous when you take it?

Discuss the **true-false test**. Explain the difference between something that is true and something that is false.

- Hold up photos and ask a question about something in the photo that is clearly *true* or *false*. For example, show a picture of a bus and state, "This bus has windows."
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*Distribute **bubble sheets** and explain how they are filled out.* Distribute pencils and practice filling out the bubble answer keys. Do one step at a time, calling out lines to fill in and bubbles to color.



Review calendars for dates of midterms and exams, reviewing the terms.

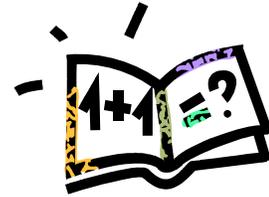
- Discuss examples of midterm reports and report cards.
- Discuss studying for tests at home.

ACTIVITY #2: TAKING A TEST

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (30 minutes)

In this activity:

Students will have a chance to take a test, using the different formats discussed in Activity 1. *Handout 10-2: Practice Test* consists of multiple choice, true-false, and fill-in-the-blank questions.



Distribute *Handout 10-2: Practice Test*.

- The instructors should determine whether the students should practice taking the test as a group, or whether they are ready to try it on their own.
- Discuss how it feels to take a test, and review the importance of test preparation in reducing test anxiety.

ACTIVITY #3: TEST PRACTICE

Grades K-5 (30 minutes)

In this activity:

Students will practice taking a test by reviewing vocabulary that has been introduced during the Refugee Academy.



Since the purpose of the Activity is to assist students in understanding how to take tests, the tests used in the Activity should not be graded. The students may want to talk about how they did on the tests, but do not point out the grades of individual students, and do not compare students.

- Review vocabulary from previous Modules. Tell the students that you will be “testing” them after the review. (The number of words will depend upon the class level of English comprehension and indications of test anxiety.)
- Ask each student to answer a vocabulary question. For example, hold up a book and say, “What is this?”
- Choose words and definitions that are easy to remember, used often, and very familiar to the students. The goal is to have every student get “100” on the test.
- An alternative would be to ask students questions about study skills, or about preparing for the upcoming school year. For example:
 - What are some of the supplies that you need for school?
 - Who is your Academic Coach?
 - Where will you store your papers and books?
- Demonstrate test-preparation techniques (e.g., clues for remembering, reducing stress, quizzing by friends).
- Divide the students into pairs to quiz each other.
- Distribute stars, stickers, or other awards for getting answers correct.



JOURNAL TOPIC

Grades K-5

Draw a picture of what you will do when you have a test to take in school.

Grades 6-8

Draw or write about your plans for preparing for tests in school.

Grades 9-12

Draw or write about your plans for preparing for tests in school. How will tests help you learn?



SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Analyze completed report cards from other students (names should be blocked out).
- Invite ESL teachers/guidance counselors to discuss test-taking, including protocols, placement, and cheating.
- Give students the chance to correct tests that have been completed by the instructors. Discuss the process of grading tests and how scores are determined.
- Provide students with the opportunity to take tests online.
- Review samples of different types of tests that students may experience once they are taking their classes. Gather tests from classroom teachers and show the students how the formats are generally the same. Explain to students that during the Academy they concentrate on the *format* of tests so that if they study *content* they will be prepared to answer test questions in any format.
- Invite ESL teachers to discuss essay questions with the students.

- Explain to students about the role of the New York State Regents examinations in high school graduation. Students who are enrolled in Regents-level courses may be required to purchase a Regents review book. They should be aware of the expectations of teachers in Regents classes, and the schedule of the exams.
- Invite a specialist in study skills and test preparation to talk to the class about preparing for tests and overcoming test anxiety.
- In the video ***Refugee Student Interviews*** refugee students talk about taking tests. Use the ***Guide to the Videos***.



**MODULE 11
TECHNOLOGY
AND SCHOOLS**

MODULE 11: Technology & School



PURPOSE

The purpose of Module 11 is to familiarize students with technology commonly used by students in American schools.

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Become familiar with technology available to all students
- Understand computer security
- Have opportunities to become familiar with the use of computers in the library and classroom
- Become familiar with all types of technology commonly used by students



SUPPLIES

Examples of technology used by students and teachers (computer, laptop, iPad, cell phone, iPod, LCD projector)

At least **two computers** for instructor communication

Pre-selected Websites (games, interactive videos)

Software programs, clip art, drawing, puzzles

Software programs with languages of the Academy students

Copies of **School Technology Policy**

Local Hotline Numbers

Video
A Day in School



MODULE 11: Technology and School

VOCABULARY

Elementary Vocabulary

Computer
Cell Phone
Camera
iPOD
Print/Printer
Bad/Danger
DVD
Camera
Privacy
Technology
iPAD (or equivalent)
Kindle (or equivalent)

Secondary Vocabulary

Computer
Cell Phone
Digital Camera
iPOD
Word Processing
Print/Printer
Security
DVD
Privacy
Technology
iPAD (or equivalent)
Kindle (or equivalent)
Cyberspace
Cyberbullying



Key Points – Technology and School



1. Technology is used routinely by students and teachers.



Undoubtedly the students in the Refugee Academy have become aware of the use of technology by American students. Cell phones, laptops, personal digital assistants (PDAs), portable MP3 players, desktop computers, and other electronic devices are part of the daily routine for many students, at least in school. Not all students can afford the latest “gadgets,” but they do see teachers using different forms of technology in schools. Computers have become more mainstream in instruction, and students are often expected to be able to use the Internet and word process their assignments on a computer. In some schools, students have the opportunity to chart science experiments and create publications on the computer. In math classes, they are required to be skilled at using a graphing calculator.

The level of technology will vary considerably in each school, but most schools have computers in some of the classrooms, or at least in the school library or computer center. In addition, public libraries and local community centers may have computers that students can use after school.

Students in the Refugee Academy will need to know that computer skills are crucial in completing class assignments; conducting research; expanding knowledge about any subject, including current events and entertainment; and communicating locally and globally. Even if the technology resources are limited in the school, encourage students to seek out locations that have computers so that they can build their skills.



2. Computer skills will be crucial for completing class assignments, conducting research, and communicating locally and globally.

For students who have not had the chance to see a computer, let alone learn how to use one, the technology can be exciting but intimidating. Reassure them that the initial steps in learning how to use a computer may be confusing, but they will learn quickly. They will need to know where they can access computers, and how they can get assistance in learning how to use them.



The students may be required to complete assignments on a computer, but even if they are not, they will soon discover that computers can be essential in completing class assignments. It is important that the refugee students not only learn how to word process and access the Internet, they need to learn how to research effectively. They need time to explore useful Websites;

search for information on a variety of topics; experiment with tools that will assist them in learning English and completing assignments; and practice charting, drawing, and creating photos and illustrations on the computer.

Computer technology is clearly going to be part of their lives in the future, and it is important that they catch up as quickly as possible. How much students learn is up to them, but computer skills are the gateway not only to achievement of knowledge and expanded career options, but to social acceptance in school.

In addition, students can also connect with their native countries by researching and presenting information about where they lived before coming to America. If possible, they can connect with other students in their native countries. They can show their classmates what they experienced in the past, and assist their new peers in learning about the world outside the classroom and neighborhoods.

The students will also need to know about the security issues of computers, and how to protect their privacy and safety. While showing students the capabilities of computers, review the school policy on the use of computers in school, and discuss the importance of security. Stress that students cannot determine from electronic communication such as e-mail, chat rooms, or instant messaging whether the contacts are who they say they are. Discuss how to be safe when using a computer, and how to report concerns.

Instructors are well aware that their students, no matter what their backgrounds, are usually far more advanced than the adults in experimenting with technology. The Activities in Module 11 require instructors to demonstrate a variety of electronic devices. If necessary, invite experts in technology, including students, to share information about the many uses of technology. Most important, determine how students in the Academy can access computers so that they can start learning about them as soon as possible.



3. *Refugee students can be the victims of cyberbullying.*

Instructors should be aware that cyberbullying has become a significant concern, especially among middle and high schoolers. Some students do not hesitate to mock and tease other students by creating fake information, texts, and photos, and posting them on Facebook and other websites. The messages are often cruel. Because current technology allows messages to be quickly forwarded and disseminated (often worldwide), it is frequently difficult to stop or erase a negative message. Cyberbullying can consist of nuisance phone calls, spreading rumors, written texts (including “sexting”), modified photographs, e-mails, videos (such as those on YouTube), and comments on blogs and sites that are frequently used by students.

Refugee students may be the subject of teasing and harassment through cyberbullying. But they may also perpetuate a cyberbullying situation by joining other students in forwarding messages. In an effort to fit in, they may copy the negative behaviors, not fully comprehending the impact of cyberbullying.

Although the topic of bullying in general is discussed in Module 15 – Staying Safe, it is important for technology safety to be discussed with refugee students. Activity #3 addresses the topic of cyberbullying. Instructors should stress these points:

- Never open a message from an unknown person
- Never forward a text, e-mail, or other message that is critical of someone else
- Never create a message, photo, or website page that mocks, criticizes, insults, or threatens someone else (see Module 16 – Hate Crime on the legal aspects of creating these messages)
- If a message that appears to be cyberbullying is received or witnessed cyberbullying, do not delete it and show it to an adult.

Instructors can alert all adults who interact with refugee students that new refugee students are frequently the target of bullying. All complaints should be taken seriously, even if the bullying behaviors occur often and students appear to be “just fooling around” See Module 15 – *Staying Safe* for more information about the negative impact of bullying.

NOTE:

Implementation of the following activities will depend upon the availability of technology, knowledge of instructors, and school resources.

Instructors will need to arrange for students to be able to try out computers, or at least to be able to observe computers in use.

Specialists in technology can be invited to display and demonstrate various types of technology, including different types of computers.

Always emphasize security in the use of computers.

ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY #1: AMERICAN STUDENTS AND TECHNOLOGY

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (30 minutes)

In this activity:



Students will learn about a variety of different types of technology. They will have the opportunity to see the capabilities of the electronic devices.

Representatives from local technology stores or school-based instructional technology specialists may have to assist the instructors in carrying out the activities.

While sharing information about technology, it is important for the instructors to keep emphasizing local access to computers, and safety and security when using computers.

Inform students about how they can learn more about computers by enrolling in local classes and taking the time to practice and experiment in the use of computers.



Display a number of different types of technology, including handheld electronic devices; desktop, laptop and notebook computers; and instructional resources such as LCD projectors, laser pointers, and so forth.



Discussion Questions



Do you know what any of these are? (This introductory question allows the instructor to assess the knowledge level of the students.)

- Explain the uses of each example.



Do you use any of these at home or at school?

- Inform about access in the school and in the community.

How much do these cost?

- Discuss costs for electronic devices (including peripherals) and alternative free access to technology.

Is technology fun?

- Point out the entertainment value of computers, even on educational Websites. Demonstrate games, pen pals, news reports, drawing programs, online videos, instant messaging, clip art, and Websites with content that would interest the students.
- Show the students Websites about their native countries.

Do you have privacy when you use any of these?

- Warn students about blocking access to personal information, the weaknesses of information storage, and the negative uses of technology.
- Discuss how they can protect themselves, and what to do if they feel that a contact is questionable.

ACTIVITY #2: DEMONSTRATING TECHNOLOGY

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (120 minutes)

In this activity:



Students have the opportunity to learn more about different forms of technology that they may encounter during classroom activities.

To ensure that students are familiar with the technology that is used routinely in schools and by their fellow classmates, select from one or more of the following activities.

- Take digital photos of the class, download and print.
- Demonstrate pre-selected Websites for drawing, games, clip art, interactive movies, personal Web pages, etc.
- Demonstrate e-mail and instant messaging and pre-arrange opportunities for students to communicate with peers, friends, and relatives across the country, and other classes.
- Connect students to pre-selected Websites for global pen pals, focusing on the native countries of the refugee students.
- Demonstrate music players, showing how to legally download music and books.
- Show a PowerPoint presentation.
- Teach math problems using an LCD projector.
- Visit a computer lab or school library computer center and provide basic instruction, pairing up Academy students or other classmates who are familiar with computers.
- Take the class to an outside location, coffee shop, or site where laptops can be used.
- Conduct a science lesson, using the computer to record and graph results.
- Practice using a graphing calculator.
- Demonstrate translation programs on the computer.
- Demonstrate assistive technology for students with special needs.

- Visit an electronics store and prearrange for demonstrations of various types of technology.
- Visit video, television, or music studios to show students how technology is used in the workplace.
- Work with the students to create a Refugee Academy newsletter with clip art illustrations and pictures of the students. The text can be translated, using online translation programs.
- Show students Websites that are in their native language.
- Ask students from the school to bring their handheld electronic devices and demonstrate how they use them every day. Discuss how much they cost, where they can be obtained, the pros and cons of different brands, and how to earn money to purchase them!
- The video ***A Day in School*** (Elementary, Middle or High School) shows students working at computers, libraries with computer labs, and computers in classrooms.

ACTIVITY #3: CYBERBULLYING

Grades 6-8, 9-12 (30 minutes)

In this activity:

Students will be informed about cyberbullying and steps they can take to protect themselves from being targeted by bullies online and on the phone.

Since students cannot always control the actions of other students who bully anonymously using the Internet, refugee students should be reminded to *tell a trusted adult* if they are uncomfortable or upset after viewing a message or image on their computer or cell phone.

Note: The instructor will need a laptop, iPad, or cell phone to start off this activity. At the end of the activity, the instructor will show a picture of either the instructor smiling or a smiling face. This picture should be readily accessible on the electronic device being used.

- The instructor should open up a laptop, iPad or cell phone in front of the class and pretend to be very interested in what they are viewing. The instructor can laugh, read, and click a few buttons, continuing to show interest until the class notices and expresses curiosity. (Note: It doesn't really matter what the instructor is looking at, and the students should not be allowed to peek.)
- The instructor should suddenly look alarmed, shocked, then upset – and slam the computer shut or turn off the phone.
- The instructor should announce:

I just saw something on the Internet that really hurt my feelings!
I don't know how it got there.
I don't know who did it!

Before the students become too concerned, the Instructor should say:

- I was *just* pretending, but what if it were true?
Does that ever happen?
- Although many refugee students may not be familiar enough with computers, be prepared for students to share stories about what they have heard or experienced. Some refugees who are not at all familiar with technology may not comprehend the misuse of computers.

- The instructor should explain that sometimes students tease and insult other students by using a computer or cell phone. They may show pictures or videos, or write messages that are mean. They may think that is funny, but:

It is wrong.

It can hurt feelings.

It is called cyber bullying (cyber means “involving computers or computer networks”)

It is not allowed and can even be against the law.

- Ask students what they should do if they see something on the computer or cell phone that is mean – even if it is not about them personally. Reinforce the following:
 - Never open or respond to messages from cyberbullies
 - Tell a trusted adult (discuss who that might be)
 - Never open or respond to messages from cyberbullies
 - Save the messages so adults can see exactly what was said (and perhaps figure out who sent it)
 - If they are with other students who are cyberbullying, do not participate. Try to start another activity to distract them. If that doesn’t work, leave the situation.

- The Instructor should open the laptop (iPad or cell phone) again, and carry out the same dramatic reactions. This time the instructor should *not* close the laptop and ask the students:

Oh no! There is something on my laptop that hurts my feelings! What should I do?

- Discuss what students should do, reviewing the steps (do not respond, save the message, do not join in, and tell an adult).
- Review the terms:

stranger	online	Facebook	chat room
privacy	website	cyberbullying	password

The Instructor should tell the students that the answer to the following questions is “NO”. They should say “NO” every time. Note that many students may be used to rote responses to teachers. Although this is a serious topic, the students should be enjoying this exercise while getting the point. The instructor should make sure they understand every point that is made. Simply saying “NO” will not ensure comprehension of the messages. Stop and discuss.

Ask: Should you give your real name to someone on the computer if you don’t know them?

Should you ever give your address or phone number to anyone online?

If someone calls you a bad name online, should you write back?

Should you call *them* a name?

If they *do* say bad things about you, should you pretend it didn't happen?

If someone says something about you that isn't true, should you write the truth?
Find the person and fight them?

Should you ever share your passwords with anyone else besides your parents or guardian?

Should you ever give away credit card numbers online unless you have permission from your parents or guardian?

If you are feeling sad or lonely, should you tell someone in a chat room all about yourself?

Are all of the people who talk to you on the Internet the same age as you?

Are they all your friends, even if they are nice to you?

- The Instructor should congratulate the students on being smart about technology. Remind them of what was just discussed and review the points again.
- Then tell the students to say “YES” to the following questions:
 - If you see something online that makes you uncomfortable and upset, will you go to an adult for help?
 - If someone asks you for help online – even if they are from your home country – should you ask an adult to help you?
 - If you are sad or lonely, will you talk to a *real* adult about it, not a stranger online?
(Note that there are hundreds of chat rooms just for teens. They are often visited by adults who pose as teens. Explain to students that the Internet is a valuable resource for information about a problem. If they cannot find an adult to talk to, they can find a hotline number online to call. A *real* person will answer and help them. If possible, provide local hotline numbers for suicide prevention, domestic abuse, and other problems that require adult intervention.)
 - Will you enjoy using technology, but be very careful and safe?
- Congratulate the students again. If possible, the screen of the laptop, iPad, or cell phone can be shown to the class. It should have a picture of the instructor smiling or a big smiley face.



JOURNAL TOPIC

Grades K-5

Draw or write about plans for using the computer.

Grades 6-8

Draw or write about concerns about computers and how you expect to learn how to use them or how you will use them for schoolwork.

Grades 9-12

Draw or write about how you will use computers in your schoolwork, and how you expect to become comfortable with the use of computers and other technology.



SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Discuss computer security, covering topics such as:
 - Sharing personal information
 - Internet scams
 - Inappropriate/unsafe sites
 - Spam
 - Shutting down the computer
 - Theft
- Review the school policy on computers.
- Demonstrate technology used in English as a Second Language (ESL) programs.
- Tour the schools to identify the location of computers and discuss the schedule and the rules for using them.
- Visit the public library and ask the librarians to explain the use of the computers after school.



MODULE 12
SCHOOL SAFETY
AND SECURITY

MODULE 12: School Safety and Security

PURPOSE

The purpose of Module 12 is to inform students about strategies for staying safe in school and in their communities.



OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Become familiar with school safety
- Understand school policies about safety and security
- Learn strategies for self-protection



SUPPLIES

***Handout 12 – 1:
Zero Tolerance***

***School Law
Enforcement
official guest
speaker***

***Prepare for a fire
drill***

***Video
A Day in School
(Elementary,
Middle or High
School***



MODULE 12: School Safety and Security

VOCABULARY

Elementary Vocabulary

Fire
Safety
Dangerous
Fire Drill
Lockdown
Neighborhood
Emergency
Bothering
No
Help
Police
Firefighter
Evacuate

Secondary Vocabulary

Zero Tolerance
Fire
Gun
Weapon
Knife
Cigarettes
Alcohol
Graffiti
“Against the Law”
Police Officer
Firefighter
Safety
Security
Dangerous
Fire Drill
Lockdown
Emergency
Bothering
No
Help
Evacuate



Key Points – School Safety



1. *School is a safe place.*



Module 12 focuses on basic safety issues in school, such as fire drills and “Zero Tolerance” policies.

The topic of school safety is a difficult one to discuss with students. They need to be reassured that school is a safe place, but they may be witnessing activities that make them uncomfortable or fearful, and they may be experiencing treatment that does not make them feel very safe.

Throughout Module 12 it is important for the instructors to concentrate on the positive aspects of school safety. Emphasize what students can do to stay safe and who they can turn to for assistance.

Instructors can start by explaining that school administrators establish systems for keeping students and employees safe. Some schools may have metal detectors, locker searches, resident police officers, and “lockdown” drills. Others may have policies and disciplinary procedures in place. They are all designed to keep students safe. Reassure students the adults in uniforms are in the building to help them and keep them safe. Their past experiences may make them wary and afraid.

The students may have heard about or witnessed incidents in schools that would lead them to believe that American schools are unsafe. Emphasize that the incidents are rare. School personnel and law enforcement officials are paying close attention to possible safety concerns, and work hard every day to make schools safe and secure.

For many new students, the topic of safety can include the subject of gangs. Instructors may decide that the topic is relevant to the students in the Refugee Academy, and an expert in the topic should come to the Academy and talk to the students. There are community leaders, law enforcement officials, and counselors who are well versed in the subject and can provide the students with crucial information about avoiding gangs.



Module 12 does not address the topic of bullying and gangs in detail, because they are specific to each school and require instruction by experts. However, if the instructors of the Refugee Academy feel that students may be significantly impacted by gang activity in the neighborhoods of the schools, the subject must be addressed. Explain to the students that joining a gang may feel like being part of a “family” , but there are more positive alternatives. Invite experts on gang activity to visit the Academy and talk directly to the students. Alert students to methods that are used to recruit students into gangs, and how to handle pressures to join a gang. Above all, encourage the students in the Refugee Academy to discuss their concerns about gangs with the Academic Coaches.



2. Refugee students may be teased and bullied.

Refugee students may be treated poorly by some students in school. It is necessary to warn the students in the Academy about this possibility, if they have not experienced it already. Explain the possible reasons for the teasing and bullying. Emphasize that only a few students will participate (more than likely with a group surrounding them for support) and they do not reflect the attitude of the entire school body.

Not all refugee students will be teased or bullied, but it is possible that they will be treated poorly, and it should be discussed.

Acknowledge that whenever students are “different” in the way that they speak, look, dress, or behave, they may be subject to teasing from their peers. Although they never deserve it and it should never be condoned, the refugee students can learn strategies for protecting themselves. The strategies vary from changing a schedule for walking home from school, gathering with friends, keeping valuables in a safe place and not at school, and developing humorous responses that indicate that the teasing is ineffective.

Talk about the significance of ignoring students who are teasing. Walking away and not responding can be a more powerful message than engaging. As one student explained when discussing her first few weeks in an American school, “I learned how to turn my back on the kids who were mean, and turn toward the kids who were nice to me.”



The students should be aware that if their learning is being disrupted by a student or group of students who are bullying or harassing, they need to report their concerns so that they can focus on the purpose of school. They may be hesitant to tell, but their personal safety may be at stake, and they may have difficulty concentrating on their studies. Point out that if a bully manages to disrupt the education of a refugee student, then the bully has “won.” Refugee students can succeed if they are not worrying about how they will be treated.

There are a number of resource materials for instructors on bullying and harassment in school. If the instructors of the Refugee Academy determine that the students may be victims of bullying, then it is essential that the topic be discussed openly and honestly so that students are prepared.



3. School rules, especially “Zero Tolerance” rules must be followed for school safety and security.

Instructors should review school policies about safety and security and stress the importance of following the rules. Activity #4, to be used with middle and high school students, discusses Zero Tolerance policies in detail.

Students in the Refugee Academy may see other students ignoring the rules, or erratic enforcement of the rules. The rules may be different than in their native countries, and they may have trouble adjusting to them.

Remind students that administrators and teachers are always paying attention to safety issues. If they see a note with a dangerous message, it is not regarded as a joke, even if it was intended as such. If they hear a threat, witness suspicious behavior, or are told disconcerting information by a student, they take it seriously. They will check lockers, backpacks, coat pockets, and handbags if they are concerned about the safety of their students.



Stress to the students that they need to take the Zero Tolerance rules seriously and obey them at all times.

Module 15: Staying Safe addresses the topics of bullying, drugs and alcohol and gangs, and how students can avoid becoming involved in unhealthy and harmful activities.

ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY #1: PREPARE FOR EMERGENCIES

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (90 minutes)

In this activity:

Students will practice exiting the school for a fire drill, and will learn what to do during a lockdown. Many refugee students will be frightened by fire drill alarms. The sound of the alarm may trigger terrible memories. They may be accustomed to hiding inside when there is an alarm, rather than going outside.



Talk about emergencies and why the alarm may ring. Explain that there are drills throughout the school year to prepare for the extremely rare possibility that there might be a fire or need for a lockdown.

Before ringing the fire alarm, explain that the class is going to talk about emergencies.



Discussion Questions



What does “emergency” mean?

- Define “emergency,” then explain systems for handling emergencies in schools.
- Describe the sound of fire alarms, and the different codes for lockdown. Explain when drills may occur and what students should do when there is a drill.

Who can help you in an emergency?

- Explain that students may fear alarms, police in uniforms and the sounds of sirens, but they should be interpreted as indications of help on the way.
- Discuss how to call 911 and when a 911 call should be made.
- Practice asking for help in English

What if there is a fire in school?

- Explain the exit systems.
- Practice fire drill procedures, including exiting from the cafeteria, halls, gym, and other classrooms.
- Take attendance at each drill so that students know the procedure.

What if the teachers want you to stay in your room to be safe, or what if they tell the class to evacuate?

- The instructors will have to determine how much they want to discuss “bomb scares,” evacuations, and the reasons for school lockdowns. The students will undoubtedly hear about these issues, but it may be necessary to address them in general terms, depending upon the age and background experiences of the students in the Academy. The subject can be very upsetting to some refugee students, but necessary to at least discuss so that they are prepared should an evacuation or lockdown occur. Without going into details, explain that students will be told what to do by their teachers.

Why do we practice for something that will probably never happen?

- Explain to students that it is important to know why an alarm is ringing and what they are supposed to do. A sudden alarm can cause unpredictable responses in refugee students, including flashbacks, anxiety, fear, and confusion. By practicing, the students can become familiar with the routine.
- Explain to students that they should listen to adults and follow exactly what they are told to do. If they are confused, they can ask a classmate to guide them.

What if there is an emergency at home or in your neighborhood?

- Explain to students how to call 911 and have them practice asking for help.
- If students are in an emergency situation, they may need a translator. Practice what they can say to request a translator.

ACTIVITY #2: BE SAFE

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (45 minutes)



Show the video ***A Day in School*** (Elementary, Middle or High School).

Use the ***Guide to the Videos*** for introducing the videos and for follow-up discussion.

ACTIVITY #3: WHO CAN HELP?

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (45 minutes)

In this activity:



Students will learn about who can help them when they do not feel safe.

Activities related to safety and security may give students the impression that they should always be afraid for their safety. Stress throughout this activity that students just need to be prepared. The chances are slim that there will be an actual emergency, and adults stand ready to help them.

Point out that students can avoid emergencies if they play safe, obey school policies and procedures, and report concerns to parents, school officials, or law enforcement.

Remind students that they are protecting their peers if they tell adults that they have heard or witnessed something that makes them concerned or suspicious. Peer pressure and fear of reprisals will make them hesitate to tell. Reassure them that schools strive for confidentiality and many districts have established confidential hotlines, but even if it is not possible to keep the source completely confidential, students need to talk to a trusted adult if the well-being of others is at stake.



Discussion Questions



Who will you tell if you see dangerous activity, an accident, or a fire?

Who will you tell if you see someone hurting another person?

Who will you tell if someone is bothering you?

(Grades 6-12) Who will you tell if you see something suspicious? (Define suspicious.)

What if you are afraid to tell?

ACTIVITY #4: ZERO TOLERANCE

Grades 6-8, 9-12 (30 minutes)

In this activity:

Students will discuss the specifics of rules of Zero Tolerance in schools.

As the topic is discussed, the instructors should provide students with different ways to resist peers who may try to get them to break the Zero Tolerance rules.



Distribute *Handout 12-1: Zero Tolerance*.

Discuss:

- The definition of the phrase “zero tolerance”
- Each item on the handout
- Reporting concerns
- Reluctance to report and the importance of telling an adult
- Student rights if there is a problem
- Translators, coaches, advocates who are resources in emergencies
- Drugs and alcohol on the school campus and in the community; New York State laws about drug and alcohol use and consumption
- School suspension policies, including suspension from athletic teams
- School records and employment and college applications
- Law enforcement personnel in school and as a resource for students and their families



JOURNAL TOPIC

Grades K-5

Draw a picture or write about how you would help someone who needed your help. Then draw or write about what you would do if you needed help.

Grades 6-8

Draw or write about how you would respond if someone was bothering you or pressuring you to do something you didn't want to do. How do you choose the right friends?

Grades 9-12

Draw or write about how exactly you would resist something that you knew was against school rules and against the law, but you didn't want to lose your friends who were pressuring you. How do you choose the right friends?



SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Tour police and fire stations.
- Tour schools to discuss evacuation.
- Invite instructors in self-defense to talk to the Academy students about basic methods of protecting themselves. (This should be done if it is possible that students will be physically bullied on the way to school, or if they need to develop assertiveness skills to better protect themselves.)
- Invite a school counselor to facilitate discussion about worries, flashbacks, and past experiences with danger, with the intention of reassuring students that schools are safe environments.
- Invite the school police office and hall monitors to meet the students.
- Invite experts to talk to the students about gangs. (See Key Point 1.)



MODULE 13
KEEPING FAMILIES
INFORMED

MODULE 13: Keeping Families Informed

PURPOSE

The purpose of Module 13 is to inform students about the importance of school-home communication.

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Identify ways to keep families informed of school events
- Understand the purpose of keeping families informed about academic progress
- Understand methods of keeping the school informed about events at home and personal concerns that affect success at school
- Understand the role of the school nurse-teacher



SUPPLIES

***Handout 13 – 1:
School-Home
Communication***

***Handout 13 – 2:
School Events***

**School Nurse-
Teacher supply box:**
lunch card, mittens,
gloves (optional: one pair
of gloves per student);
medicines stored in
nurse's office (aspirin,
asthma medicine, etc);
thermometer, tongue
depressor, Band-Aid,
jacket, hat, boots,
crutches, soap, towel)

**Sample
announcements**

Announcements to be
delivered over the public
address system

Videos:
***Refugee Student
Interviews,
Refugee Parent
Interviews, and
A Day in School***
(Elementary, Middle or
High School)



MODULE 13: Keeping Families Informed

VOCABULARY

Elementary Vocabulary

Lunch Card
Free Lunch
Permission
Announcements
School Nurse
Boots
Soap
Washcloth
Jacket
Hat
Gloves

Secondary Vocabulary

Lunch Card
Free Lunch
Permission
PA System
Announcements
Newspaper
Communication
Heat
Housing
School Nurse
Thermometer
Band-Aid
Crutches
Soap
Washcloth
Jacket
Hat
Gloves
Boots



Key Points – Keeping Families Informed



- 1. Schools inform students about school events in many ways; it is also the responsibility of students to inform families.**

Prior to discussing school-home communication with the students in the Refugee Academy, the instructors should determine what methods the schools use to inform parents about school policies and events. Methods may include:

- Flyers and notices for students to take home (or to be mailed home)
- Newsletters, either mailed to homes or posted on a school district Website
- Field trip announcements and permission slips
- Letters from the principal or school district
- School newspapers and local newspapers
- Parent-teacher conferences
- Open House and other evening programs for parents
- Education Week, which may include tours and classroom visits
- Academic Coach meetings and phone calls
- Public address system announcements for students
- Homeroom teacher announcements

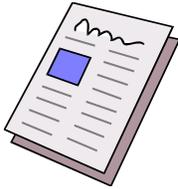


Inform students that school administrators and teachers keep information flowing to parents, but the students have to participate in the process. They should bring notices home, write down events in their school calendars, and keep parents informed about upcoming school events.

It is well known that most school notices end up in the bottom of a backpack or locker, or on the floor of the school bus. Since schools have annual calendars, explain to students that they should review the calendar with their parents and highlight events that parents may want to attend.



2. Monitoring academic progress is the responsibility of the school, family, and student.



Students should also keep their parents informed about their academic progress, but if they do not, there are phone calls from teachers, interim reports, graded papers, parent-teacher conferences, and report cards that all indicate how the students are doing in school.

Instructors should describe these methods of communication to the students, explaining that parents will be informed that they can call teachers anytime for an update on student progress. Parents will also be given information about the dates of report cards. Interim reports, usually sent halfway through a marking period or after a midterm exam, are typically sent in the mail to parents.

Suggest to students that if they are concerned about their progress or grades, they should talk to the teacher to try to figure out how to improve the situation.

Even if the teacher still feels that the parents should be involved, the students will have demonstrated interest in getting help from the teacher. Remind students that teachers appreciate effort, not just achievement.



3. Communication between schools and families can be limited due to language barriers; resources are available.

The students are going to be the key to communication when family members do not speak English. Inform the students that they will be responsible for explaining school-related information to their parents. If they need assistance, they can consult with their Academic Coach, English as a Second Language (ESL) instructor, translator, guidance counselor, or classroom teachers.



It is a big responsibility for students to try to adjust to their new school, learn a new language, make new friends, and also keep their families informed. Family members may be overwhelmed and distracted with adapting to their new lives and looking out for the welfare of the family.

It is especially difficult if the students themselves are bewildered about school. They may be embarrassed by their parents, or feel pressure from their parents to either adapt to their new life, or resist changing cultural traditions. The students, often at a young age, are being pulled in many different directions.



4. *Students who are worried about issues at home can confide in school personnel so that their academic progress is not jeopardized.*

For many students, as they become more fluent in English and more comfortable in the school, it is frustrating to keep parents informed. As students move into middle and high schools, they tend to want to keep their private business to themselves.

Encourage students to share information about their life at school so that parents will know how they are doing and can support them. If students are struggling and having difficulties (academically or personally) they should talk to a trusted adult, who will determine if the parents need to get involved. In addition to the Academic Coach or teacher, the students may want to talk to a guidance counselor, peer who will get advice from an adult, community agency staff in the neighborhood, religious leader, or the school nurse. The school social worker can help students with problems at home, including issues related to food and heat, transportation, clothing, housing, baby supplies, and safety concerns.



Refugee students will not only have to be told many times that help is available. They may not realize that there are state and local agencies that can make sure they have enough food, and can ensure that they will have heat in the winter and milk for younger siblings. Most of the students in the Academy are accustomed to doing without even the basics. To them, speaking up about such luxuries as housing and clothing does not occur to them. Provide the students with flyers, phone numbers, and brochures (usually provided by state agencies in many languages) that describe programs related to food stamps, public assistance, homeowner loans, and so forth.

The students may experience attitudes on the part of their new neighbors and classmates that are not welcoming to refugees in America. They may be told that they should not accept a “handout” and should make it on their own.

They may also be told that they can go “from rags to riches” and follow the “American dream” in their new country. This may be true, but for most refugee students and their families, there will be daily struggles to adjust and be successful in getting food on the table. The students may want to work hard in school, but they will be trying to cope with some of the frustrations that are occurring at home. They may see their parents encountering discrimination and hardships that they did not expect.

Inform the students in the Refugee Academy that there are many adults (and peers) in the school who will listen to them and help them. If they are aware of available services and understand that they are expected to take advantage of them so that they can be successful in their new country, they will feel more comfortable approaching adults in the school for help.

ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY #1: KNOW YOUR SCHOOL NURSE-TEACHER

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (45 minutes)

In this activity:

The school nurse-teacher should be invited to the Refugee Academy to discuss assistance that can be provided by the nurse's office.



- Prepare a box that contains items that represent how the school nurse can help students.
- One by one, take items out of a box to demonstrate types of assistance. Stress confidentiality and privacy.
 - Show a lunch card and describe how to enroll in the free lunch program.
 - Show clothing, (including hats, gloves, and mittens) that has been donated to refugee students.
 - Show medicines and explain school requirements about storing medicines in the nurse's office.
 - Show a phone and tell how the nurse will use it to call parents if a child is sick; the food pantry if a family needs food; and local agencies if a family needs housing, transportation or other services. Show how the nurse will call 911 in emergencies.
 - Show a thermometer, tongue depressor, and stethoscope, used for sick visits and physical.
 - Show a Band-Aid and put one on each student to demonstrate how the nurse will assist with cuts and other minor health problems in school.
 - Show crutches and a sling.
 - Show soap, a washcloth, and toothpaste to indicate that the nurse will help with hygiene.



Discuss:

- How to get to the nurse if student is supposed to be in class
- How the nurse will provide counseling about health concerns
- Personal privacy during examinations
- Respect for cultural traditions
- How to explain problems to the nurse
 - Translator
 - Use of body language and gestures
 - Drawing pictures
 - Bilingual peers
- When the nurse's office will call families
- Frequent visits to the nurse
 - Possible health reasons
 - Stress
 - Getting out of class



Grades 6-12 also discuss:

- Confidentiality rules about health concerns (NYS HIPAA law)
- Sex education resources (health class, nurse)
- Confidentiality rules about sexually transmitted diseases and other related health concerns (pregnancy, menstrual cycle, HIV-AIDS, etc.)
- Personal health and possible causes of health problems
 - Current and past diets, including malnutrition
 - Stress
 - Lack of health care

- Need for immunizations
- Disabilities, either diagnosed or undetected

For all topics of discussion, point out that the school nurse will be busy, but will find the time to talk to students if they indicate that they would like to talk to someone. Explain to students how to approach the nurse (or nurse's aide) and how to bring up sensitive subjects.

ACTIVITY #2: SCHOOL- HOME COMMUNICATION

Grades K-5 (30 minutes)

In this activity:

Students will discuss the many different ways that schools will communicate with parents.

Instructors should discuss how parents will be informed by the school about events and student progress, but that the students are also responsible for informing their families about school-related activities.



Distribute *Handout 13-1: School-Home Communication* and *Handout 13-2: School Events* and discuss the many different ways that schools will communicate with parents. (The students may want to color the handouts.)

▪ The pictures depict:

- The nurse calls home when a child is sick.
- Parents can call the school anytime.
- Teachers call home to talk to parents.
- Schools send home information with the students.
- Schools mail information to homes.
- Announcements are made every morning in school.
- Parents can check schoolwork and report cards.
- Parents can help with homework.
- Teachers may send e-mail.



- Discuss the types of events families will want to know about. (Go over each item on *Handout 13-2: School Events*)

- School play
- Science fair
- PTA/PTO meetings
- Sports
- Music concerts
- Awards
- Graduation
- Book fairs/art shows
- Parent-teacher conferences



Ask students to take *Handouts 13-1* and *13-2* home to their families to discuss. This is their homework. Explain that students will have to keep families informed if they are non-English-speaking, and that parents can attend school events if they do not speak English.



Discussion Questions



Who will you share the handout with at home?

Who will you tell about school events?

How will family members get to the school for events and conferences?

Can students come to school events with family members?

What after-school events can family members attend?

Do your parents need to understand English to attend school events?

Grades 6-12 also discuss:

What if your family members do not act the way you would like them to act when they visit your school?

What if you are concerned that your parents will not approve of your progress in school?

Who can you talk to if your parents cannot provide support to you as you adjust to school?

Follow up by asking students if they shared the handouts with families, checking off the homework assignment.

ACTIVITY #3: VIDEO

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (45 minutes)



Show the video ***A Day in School*** (Elementary, Middle or High School).

Use the ***Guide to the Videos (Binder Two)*** for introducing the video and for follow-up discussion.

ACTIVITY #4: SCHOOL FOR SIBLINGS AND FRIENDS

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (30 minutes)

In this activity:

Students will discuss their siblings who are in other schools.



Assess the number of students who have siblings and/or friends in different schools. Explain that the rules and behavioral expectations are the same in all schools.



Show the video ***A Day in School*** (Elementary, Middle or High School) for different grade levels. For example, if it is a high school Refugee Academy, show the middle school or elementary video, depending upon which video would be of more interest to the students.

The video ***Refugee Student Interviews*** can show students how families are involved in the education of their children. Older students can also watch the video ***Refugee Parent Interviews***.



Discussion Questions



What is similar about all of the schools? What is different?

What do families need to know about a day in school?

What will you do to be helpful to friends and siblings in other schools?



JOURNAL TOPIC

Grades K-5

Draw a picture of a school event that you want to participate in during the school year.

Grades 6-8

Draw or write about school events that you would like to participate in during the school year. How will you involve your family?

Grades 9-12

Draw or write about your responsibilities in providing help to your siblings and other family members. Discuss how you plan to build the confidence and self-reliance of family members.



SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Arrange with students a school event for parents.
- Students prepare displays for parents to see during Open House.
- Review *Handout 1-1: Please Visit Our School* from Module 1 to invite parents to school, or prepare a flyer about an evening parent meeting, to take home to parents.
- Distribute sample report cards and discuss how they will be reviewed by teachers when they meet with parents.
- Invite the school social worker or guidance counselor to talk about services that are available to families.
- Invite peers in the school to discuss how they have handled problems with academics and where they received assistance.
- Visit schools that siblings will attend.



MODULE 14
COPING WITH STRESS

MODULE 14: Coping with Stress

PURPOSE

The purpose of Module 14 is to assist students in developing strategies to cope with stress.



OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Understand the signals of stress
- Understand the causes of stress
- Understand and apply coping strategies
- Understand that school personnel and Academic Coaches are available to assist students in coping with stress



SUPPLIES

***Handout 14 – 1:
Show How You
Feel***

Examples of hobbies:
jigsaw puzzles; stamps;
collections

3 x 5 cards

Funny Video

A dozen silly jokes
(see Activity #1 and
check with translators)

Video:
***Refugee Student
Interviews***



MODULE 14: Coping with Stress

VOCABULARY

Elementary Vocabulary

Nervous
Stress
Relax
Worry
Tease
Cry
Write
Confide

Secondary Vocabulary

Nervous
Stress
Relax
Worry
Harass
Cope
Patience
Tease
Cry
Write
Confide
Trust
Reaction



Key Points – Coping with Stress



1. ***Stress is defined as tension in the body or mind and is an automatic reaction to anxiety, fear, or danger.***

Module 14 is included in the Refugee Academy because it is stressful for students of any age, under any circumstances, to be new in school. Add on the major adjustments that have to be made when refugee students have to adapt to a new *country* and a new school. They have to learn a new language, cope with past experiences and changes in family structure and responsibilities, and achieve academically.

The first thing the students will need to know is that it is normal to feel nervous and anxious as they prepare to enter their new school. Define stress and reassure them that everyone feels stress at one time or another. Some days will be more stressful than others, and students will cope differently, but they should not be alarmed if they feel a combination of excitement and nervous tension.

One of the purposes of the Refugee Academy is to ease the stress of the students and help them feel relaxed and prepared for school. Many of the students will feel disoriented. Everything will be new to them, including foods, language, traffic, clothing routines, and the way that students behave in school. The purpose of Module 14 is to provide the students with tips about how to identify and handle stress, and what to do if they are feeling anxious and afraid.

The signals of stress will vary with students, but they generally emerge as opposite behaviors: withdrawing or acting out. Some students will feel depressed and will become quiet and withdrawn. They may lose interest in eating or socializing, may not be able to sleep, and may suffer from physical ailments such as stomachaches and headaches. They may try to hide physical disabilities and may be experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or other mental health problems.



Other students may try to mask their anxiety by acting overconfident, drawing attention to themselves by being loud and rude, or silly and inattentive in class. They may lose their temper or tease and bully other students. They may join groups that break school rules or break the law.

Adults who experience stress may show it by losing patience quickly, becoming defensive or aggressive, complaining, or crying. Children may demonstrate similar behaviors, but adults may not recognize that the children are stressed. They may see the child as a discipline problem with a “bad attitude.” The instructors should reassure the students that teachers, guidance counselors, and Academic Coaches are aware of the stress of refugee students, will recognize the symptoms of stress, and are available to help them as they cope with adjusting to a new life.

Regardless of the types of stress-related behaviors, the students will be basically trying to figure out how to function in a brand-new environment. They may feel pressured to adapt quickly and succeed academically. They may be frustrated with themselves for not adjusting as fast as they think they should be, or they may think that they are being judged for being “different” and not looking or acting like their peers. The reactions can vary and students will handle pressure in different ways. As long as they know that they can apply strategies to ease the pressure, they can start to manage their stress.

Instructors should be aware that some students in the Refugee Academy are so relieved and happy to be in a safe, stimulating environment that they will not consider themselves to be stressed at all. It is important that the instructors discuss how stress varies for everyone, and no student should feel that they *should* have a lot to stress about. In fact, after participating in the Refugee Academy, the students may not feel nearly as stressed, and will feel prepared to handle any anxious moments.

Note: Module 14 should not be introduced until students in the Refugee Academy have had the chance to talk about the topics in the other Modules, and are comfortable with the instructors and other students. Refugee students have a number of physical and mental health concerns. Instructors should be alert for signs of severe stress, fear, depression or sadness, or the inability of students to cope. Be prepared with the names of school personnel who can be contacted to meet individually with students who appear to be particularly stressed.



2. Daily coping strategies can ease stress.

Stress management takes a variety of forms, but for the students in the Refugee Academy, instructors should recommend daily coping strategies that are easy to carry out.

Instructors can recommend the following that may seem obvious, but may be new concepts to the Academy students:

- *Participate in school clubs and extracurricular programs* to stay busy, to meet new friends, and to experience new activities. This recommendation is especially important for students in middle and high schools, as they are often stressed about relationships in school and need opportunities to connect with their peers.



- *Eat a healthy diet.* Students may get pulled into eating fast foods and unhealthy snacks, not only because it is a tempting, new experience, but because the foods are easy to eat and can satisfy hunger and emotional needs. Students may feel like they fit in because they join their new friends at a fast-food restaurant. They may feel content to have a fattening meal, even if it is not the best food for their health. Instructors should discuss how *feeling healthy and fit can contribute to positive attitude and self-esteem*. Recognize that for many refugee students, being able to eat a variety of foods is a significant experience

for them. They may have very little knowledge of a healthy diet and will need guidance. (See *Module 6: Stay Healthy* for more information.)

- *Exercise routinely.* Refugee students may have discovered the infinite variety of forms of entertainment that do not require moving from the couch. Explain that exercise will help students “burn off” stress, and will help with strength and confidence.



Participation in exercise programs and team sports can help with physical and emotional well-being and can result in new friendships and a positive sense of teamwork and accomplishment.

- *Get organized.* Students will have more sense of control of their new environment if their desks and lockers are neat, their school papers at home are in a central location and organized, and if they write down their assignments. Teachers notice dramatic improvements in student behavior when they have organized their time and schoolwork. The Academic Coach can help students become more organized. (See *Module 3 Transportation and Time* and *Module 9 Study Skills*.)
- *Get assistance* when stress seems to be dictating social activities, choices about the future, and feelings about personal worth. Students should be encouraged to talk to the Academic Coach, the school nurse, the guidance counselor, a teacher, or another trusted adult if they constantly feel sad or worried.

ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY #1: TALKING ABOUT WORRY

Grades K-5 (60 minutes)

In this activity:

Students will have the chance to talk about what worries them.

Instructors should not introduce this activity unless the students are comfortable with the adults and students in the room.



- Draw 3 pictures on a board or poster board, with sad, happy, and worried faces.



Discussion Questions



When do you feel sad?

As students answer the questions, suggest possible stressors such as loss of family and friends in native countries, changes in living conditions and family membership and structure, unhappiness of loved ones, and financial and social strains. Remind students that they are not alone, there are others who are coping with the same issues, and the purpose of the Academy is to build support and friendships for the school year.

Allow students to express their feelings. Do not let one person dominate the discussion, but be prepared to listen to students who want to tell their stories. Take the time to let everyone share their concerns, always emphasizing the things that they have to look forward to, and the people who will help them.

When do you feel worried?

The students will indicate that they are worried about many aspects of their new environment.

Highlight specific worries that they may have about school, followed immediately by information that will ease their minds. It is important to mention the worries so that students will not think that they are the only ones with concerns.

Express confidence that they will be able to handle most situations and will eventually not worry about them, but when they need help they should not hesitate to ask for it.

Possible worries that are typical of refugee students in a new school:

- Getting lost or missing the bus
- Being embarrassed and feeling stupid in front of peers
- Experiencing harassment, teasing, and bullying
- Saying the wrong words or doing the wrong thing in class
- Disobeying rules unintentionally
- Undergoing academic pressure from home and school



- Fearing teacher criticism or corporal punishment, based on previous educational experiences
- Feeling insecure about conditions at home
- Coping with health problems, disabilities, developmental or academic lags that make students feel as if they cannot “fit in”

Students in middle and high schools may also worry about:

- Keeping family history private for fear of misunderstandings or repercussions
- Wearing the wrong clothes
- Falling behind in schoolwork or failing classes
- Experiencing rejection by peers or the opposite sex
- Managing family life; being embarrassed by family members
- Being liked by peers while maintaining cultural traditions

When do you feel happy?

- Give students a chance to talk about what they are enjoying about their new lives in America and what they look forward to. It is important to end with this question so that the students can identify the positive aspects of their new lives in America. Point out what they can look forward to in school.

Distribute *Handout 14-1: Show How You Feel*.

- Ask students to illustrate when they are worried and when they are happy.
- Discuss how worries may appear as signals of stress. (See Key Point 1.)
- Discuss possible ways of coping with worry.
- Discuss *specific* individuals in the school and how and when students can contact them.
- Conclude the discussion by exercising in class. Do jumping jacks to burn off stress, practice breathing to calm down, and tell silly jokes to get everyone laughing and relaxed. (Check with the translators about jokes that the students would appreciate.)



ACTIVITY #2: WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

Grades K-5 (60 minutes)

In this activity:

Instructors will role-play typical student dilemmas that could cause stress.



As the instructors are reacting to situations, their responses should be over-the-top, dramatic reactions. Then repeat the scenario with calm, stress-reducing reactions.

Ask students to pick the best way to handle the situation without getting “stressed out.”

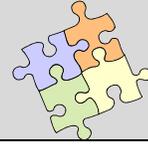
- Two instructors should act out each situation. One instructor is a student or teacher who initiates the situation, the second instructor is a refugee student who reacts. Most of the role playing can be done nonverbally.
- The first reaction should be very dramatic and loaded with signals of stress (yelling, defensiveness, irritability, crying, etc.).
- The second reaction should be a demonstration of how to handle the situation with calm and confidence, and should provide ideas about how to get help.

The situations should be familiar to the students:

- A fellow student steals a ball on the playground.
- A student is called upon by the teacher and is unprepared.
- A student misses the bus.
- A student is unclear about the teacher’s directions and the bell is ringing.
- A student does not have a lunch card or money for lunch.
- A student is teased about her/his clothing.
- A student cannot participate in an activity because of religious reasons.
- A student wants more trustworthy friends.



Discussion Questions



What should you always remember when you are starting to worry and get stressed?

- Friends and teachers will help.
- Students who are mean and insensitive do not represent the entire student body and should be ignored or reported.
- Simple stress-reduction techniques can help alleviate stress.
- If students think ahead of time how they are going to handle situations, they will feel less stressed. For example, students may decide to walk away from students who are bothering them, or to approach a teacher to discuss problems with class work. Once those plans are in place, students should begin to relax.
- Encourage students to have patience. When they meet with their Refugee Academy instructors and classmates later in the school year, they will discover that a lot of what they worried about is no longer concerning them.

Grades 6-8, 9-12 (60 minutes)

In this activity:

Instructors will role-play typical student dilemmas that could cause stress.

As the instructors are reacting to situations, their responses should be over-the-top, dramatic reactions. Then repeat the scenario with calm, stress-reducing reactions.

Ask students to pick the best way to handle the situation without getting “stressed out.”



- Two instructors should act out each situation. One instructor is a student or teacher who initiates the situation, the second instructor is a refugee student who reacts. Most of the role playing can be done nonverbally.
 - The first reaction should be very dramatic and loaded with signals of stress (yelling, defensiveness, irritability, crying, etc.).

- The second reaction should be a demonstration of how to handle the situation with calm and confidence, and should provide ideas about how to get help.

The situations should be familiar to the students:

- A student is called upon by the teacher and is unprepared.
- A student's locker will not open.
- A student misses the bus.
- A student is unclear about the homework assignment and the bell is ringing.
- A student does not have a lunch card or money for lunch.
- A student is asked a question about their native country that shows lack of knowledge or respect.
- A student is teased about his or her accent or clothing.
- A student cannot participate in an activity because of religious reasons.
- A student wants more trustworthy friends.



Discussion Questions



What should you always remember when you are starting to worry and get stressed?

- Friends and teachers will help.
- Students who are mean and insensitive do not represent the entire student body and should be ignored or reported.
- Simple stress-reduction techniques can help alleviate stress.
- If students think ahead of time how they are going to handle situations, they will feel less stressed. For example, students may decide to walk away from students who are bothering them, or to approach a teacher to discuss problems with class work. Once those plans are in place, students should begin to relax.
- Encourage students to have patience. When they meet with their Refugee Academy instructors and classmates later in the school year, they will discover that a lot of what they worried about is no longer concerning them.

ACTIVITY #3: VIDEO

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (15 minutes)



Show the video ***Refugee Student Interviews***.

Use the ***Guide to the Videos*** for introducing the video and for follow-up discussion.



JOURNAL TOPIC

Grades K-5

Draw or write about people you can talk to about your worries.

Grades 6-8

Draw or write about how you will handle problems that cause you to be worried. Who can you talk to about your worries?

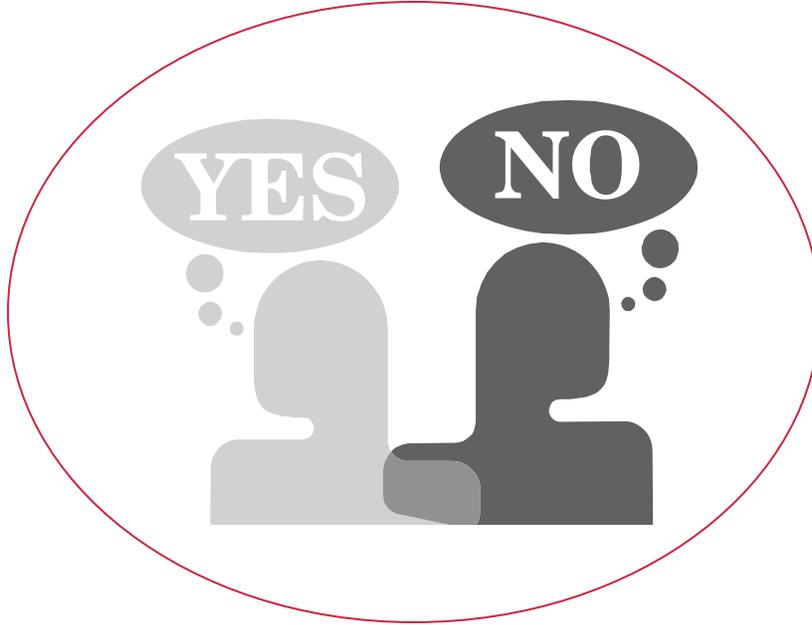
Grades 9-12

Draw or write about how you handle stress and whether you need to change your behaviors. Who can you talk to about your worries?



SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Participate in outdoor or gymnasium stress-reducing physical exercises (tai chi, yoga, dancing).
- Invite refugee students who have been in the school for over a year to talk about their experiences in adapting to the new school, and how they handled stress.
- Show the students an entertaining movie (or video cartoon) that is relaxing and funny. Encourage them to select entertainment that is not going to give them added stress.
- Invite a yoga or meditation instructor (or a qualified student in the class) to teach students how to sit quietly to calm down and focus.
- Play music that is soothing and relaxing and encourage students to draw, dance, sculpt, or participate in other forms of art that are focused on creativity and relaxation. If possible, take students to a pottery studio or ceramics shop to work on an art project.
- Discuss the importance of laughter in coping with stress and finish with the Ha Ha exercise. One student says “ha.” The second student says “ha ha.” The third student says “ha ha ha” and so forth. Keep going around the room, encouraging students to speed up. Laughter is guaranteed.



MODULE 15

STAYING SAFE

MODULE 15: Staying Safe



PURPOSE

The purpose of Module 15 is to inform students about safe alternatives to harmful activities that may be occurring in their schools and neighborhoods.

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Learn anti-bullying strategies
- Learn strategies for saying *no* to drugs, alcohol, and cigarettes
- Learn how to become involved in school activities that are rewarding and safe
- Learn how to identify and connect with trusted adults



SUPPLIES

Say Something

By Peggy Moss

Display Pictures:

Feeling Hurt

Hiding Hurt

Landing

Looking Out

Tennis ball or small object (Activity #2)

Handouts:

Zero Tolerance

No Bullies Allowed

Join the Activity Fair

Home Alone

Home Alone Safety

Tips

After School

Feeling Hurt

Hiding Hurt

Landing

Looking Out

Bully

Friends!

Here's What I Did!



MODULE 15: Staying Safe

VOCABULARY

Elementary and Secondary Vocabulary

Activity	Club
Say no	Home alone
Harm	Supervise
Drugs	Responsible
Alcohol	Holiday
Cigarettes	Snow day
Tease	Neighborhood
Harass	Snacks
Bully	Exercise
Put-down	Homework
Picked on	Nap
Afraid	Safety
Knife	Hurt
Gun	Duck
Weapon	Sad
Graffiti	Clues
Treat	Don't tell
Tap	



Key Points – Staying Safe



1. ***Students will face decisions about negative activities in school, and can learn realistic strategies for saying “no” to harmful activities.***

Refugee children can be among the most vulnerable students in the school, especially if they have not learned English and have experienced trauma prior to enrolling in an American school. They are often lonely and anxious to make new friends and blend into their new communities. They may have heard stories about some of the possible negative aspects of American schools and assume that they have to behave the same way, not realizing that all schools are different and all American students do not participate in unsafe activities. Refugee students may join in any activity that confronts them because they want to fit in, without recognizing that they have many choices about how to spend their time.

Unfortunately, there are peers and adults in their communities who take advantage of the vulnerability of refugee students, for the purpose of doing harm. The harm can be done by teasing or bullying, or by supplying drugs, cigarettes, and alcohol, or by pressuring students to join in gangs and illegal activities. For refugee students who often cannot determine who is their true friend and who means them harm, the results can be unhealthy and dangerous.

For some refugee students, drugs, gangs, violence, and other harmful activities may be a significant presence in their schools and the surrounding community. As the students try to adjust to the demands of a new school in America, they also try to navigate the challenges of a community that may be unsafe.

It will be difficult for instructors to address topics such as bullying, drugs, and alcohol during the Refugee Academy and Mini-Academies. Not only are the topics complicated and difficult to cover effectively in a limited amount of time, but instructors may not be trained or authorized to teach the subjects. In addition, discussion of the topics may offend families of refugee students.

Module 15: Staying Safe addresses the theme that runs through all of the sensitive topics: how students can identify what may do them harm, and strategies for resisting involvement in harmful activities. The extent to which the instructors delve into the specifics of these sensitive topics will depend on the school district policies and programs, access to trained staff, receptivity of the parents, and the amount of time available to cover topics in detail. No matter what the topic and level of detail, **the message to refugee students should be that there are effective ways to resist getting involved in activities that will do them harm.** For example, the school district may already participate in the anti-drug DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) program, and instructors can become involved in guiding refugee students through the DARE activities. Or the Health program may routinely include information about bullying in its curriculum and the instructors can reinforce the information

provided in class. But even if those programs are not available, the instructors can teach the refugee students that they can say **no** to negative activities and that there are specific strategies that will help them to stay safe.

The activities of *Module 15* stress the importance of learning how to say **no** in ways that are useful and realistic. For refugee students, this learning process may be frightening because they may not be familiar with the issues. They may have been told information about American schools that is frightening to them. Or they may feel that if they do not give in to the peers who pressure them, harm will come to themselves or their families. Refugee students need to be aware of the realities of the negative aspects of school, and need to be prepared to resist.

It is essential that instructors consult with colleagues, including guidance counselors and local law enforcement, to determine the issues that may confront the refugee students, the policies and procedures of the school district, and the resources and means of support available to students who do say **no**.



2. The most effective way for refugee students to resist involvement in unsafe activities is to become involved in supervised activities.

It is well documented that students who are busy in supervised activities, particularly right after school, are less likely to become involved in unsafe activities. They develop friends, build self-confidence, learn safe ways to spend their time, experience role models and mentors, and expand their skills and interests. A positive adult presence can influence student decision-making, and provide emotional support to participants in extracurricular activities.



For many refugee students, the opportunity to participate in after-school and community activities is a new concept. They may not know that programs exist. They may not know what it means to participate in sports programs, art classes, clubs, museum visits, and other activities that are established beyond the school day. They may be aware of the activities, but unaware of how to pay for them, obtain the uniforms, learn the rules, use the tools, and other aspects of extracurricular programs that they will need to know. They may feel that they are not welcome at activities sponsored by community agencies and religious groups, and are unfamiliar with terms such as “club” or “retreat” or “tournament.” Most significantly, they may hesitate to enroll in a program because they have not met any of the students and are afraid to step into a new activity with people they do not know.



As a result, refugee students may shy away from activities that go beyond the daily requirements of school. In spite of the efforts of adults to encourage refugee students to join a club or try out for a team, the students may be busy concentrating on learning English and comprehending their new school environment. Older students may be focusing on blending in so that they feel that they belong and do not make any embarrassing mistakes. Every day is a challenge, and joining something new is often an overwhelming concept.

Many refugee students also have complicated family arrangements and responsibilities. They have child care supervision and part-time jobs, or parents who are most comfortable when the students come straight home after school. Some students are safer if they are able to get home immediately after school, instead of walking or taking transportation later in the day.

All of these issues must be addressed by instructors as they recommend to students that they become involved in extracurricular activities. Telling refugee students that it is healthy for them to be busy will not convince them that they should try something new. Their entire day is new, even if they have been enrolled in an American school for some time.

There are **strategies that instructors can employ** to encourage students to seek out extracurricular activities.

- The first step is to gather information about *all* available programs, even if some of them are routinely promoted by the school.
- The next step is to inform students about their options by connecting the information to student interests.
- The crucial third step is to tackle the process of overcoming student concerns and fears and facilitating enrollments.

Module 15 provides activities for paving the way to student involvement in extracurricular activities. Instructors should prepare for the activities by contacting athletic directors, coaches, club supervisors, local religious groups, and community centers and gathering information and the names of potential speakers. Students who participate in the extracurricular activities should be invited to meet refugee students and share their experiences. (See *Module 7: Interests and Talents* in the **Refugee Academy Curriculum**).

As instructors are introducing information about the realities of harmful activities (e.g., drugs for sale on the street, alcohol available at parties) it is important to immediately introduce alternative, positive activities. After the instructor discusses the possibility of students being offered drugs, alcohol, or cigarettes, the instructor should immediately discuss how the students can avoid settings where those negative activities might occur, or how to avoid students who are interested in doing harm to other students, emphasizing the importance of joining extracurricular activities. Specific programs should be identified that have positive, safe activities, and that have enrolled students who are interested in staying safe and healthy. But most important, the *process* of getting involved should be emphasized.

Typical questions that should be addressed are:



- How do students join?
- Where do they go and what will happen when they walk in the door?
- Who else is there?
- How will other students react when they join?

- Is it expensive? (Many programs have sliding scale enrollment fees.)
- Where do they get the equipment?
- What if they don't have the skills?
- What if they don't understand what is going on?
- What if they can't go to every meeting or event?
- How will they get there? How will they get home safely?

The instructor should work closely with Academic Coaches, guidance counselors, and extracurricular supervisors to plan a specific program for each refugee student in the program. Interests and schedules will vary, but unless individualized attention is given to the enrollment process, refugee students will tend to find themselves with idle time, thus increasing their vulnerability.



3. Refugee students are encouraged to confide in a trusted adult if they are concerned about unsafe activities.



Should I tell an adult?

This question comes up every day for many students in school. They witness something unsafe or illegal, hear rumors that are of concern, experience an event that is disarming, or feel pressured to join in an activity that is unsafe. For refugee students, the question of whether to tell an adult is especially confusing. They are working hard to fit into their new environment, and do not want to call any more attention to themselves. They quickly figure out which students have leadership roles, who has allies, and who is treated poorly. Eventually they figure out that their fellow students do not always think that reporting to adults is the best approach to solving a problem.

In *Module 15* the students are informed in every activity that they should not hesitate to talk to a “trusted adult” about concerns about unsafe activities. However, the realities of reporting to an adult should be recognized so that students understand how to approach adults and what might happen when they do.

It is not easy for students to talk to adults during a busy school day. It takes awhile for refugee students to figure out who they feel comfortable with, and who might react in a supportive manner. They may not know who their “trusted adult” can be. Since the repercussions of telling an adult (often regarded as *snitching* by peers) can be frightening, students often determine that it is better to say nothing. If they have become involved in unsafe activities such as the use of alcohol or participation in gang activity, they might not know how to disengage and may believe that adults will just make the problem worse. They might be embarrassed, afraid of the reaction of their parents, or confused about how to get help.

At the same time, there are refugee students who become involved in unsafe activities because it makes them feel as if they belong. If they are included in a group, regardless of the activities of that group, they feel as if they have a “family,” a source of friendship and support. They may feel important because they have been invited to participate and make a contribution to the group, even if the contributions are unsafe or illegal. They may think that they have been included in a group that is respected and admired, either because the other students tend to regard the group with respect, or because the group spins that message to new members of the group.

For some refugee students, becoming involved in unsafe activities just means that they are fitting in. Talking to adults about their activities is definitely not considered acceptable.

It is important to inform refugee students in the Refugee Academy and Mini-Academy that their first responsibility is to look out for their own personal health and well-being. They will be surrounded by adults and peers who will care about their welfare, but the choices that they make about how they use their time will ultimately be up to the students themselves. **The refugee students should be told specifically about what is unsafe and the repercussions of becoming involved in activities that are unsafe.** They need to know that if they are pressured (or tempted) there are adults who will guide and support them.

However, it is not enough to just tell students that they should report any concerns to an adult. The students will soon figure out that there are some adults who focus on punishment. They will know that there is pressure by peers to stay quiet. Instructors should recognize the realities of the pressures, and inform students about how they can seek out assistance from an adult when they feel that their safety, or the safety of their peers, is at risk.

Instructors in *Module 15* should involve guidance counselors, social workers, Academic Coaches, English as a Second Language teachers, school safety directors, law enforcement officials, and principals as they prepare to discuss with students:

- The specific adults who are prepared to listen to student concerns
- Where and how these adults can be reached, especially if the problem is urgent
- How confidentiality will be handled by adults
- What steps adults may have to take to resolve a problem
- What is already being done

Module 15 is about how students can find alternatives to unsafe activities. At the same time, students need to know that trusted adults are readily available and willing to help.

BACKGROUND: REFUGEES AND BULLYING

What is considered “bullying”?

Any behavior that is deliberately intended to hurt, threaten, or frighten another person or group of people is considered bullying. It is usually unprovoked and persistent, often continuing for a long period of time. Bullying is not always visible to others and can be verbal, emotional, and physical in nature. Bullying may appear on the surface to be about anger and hostility, but it is based on the desire to have power and control over someone who is vulnerable.

Who are the targets of bullies?

Since bullying is about power and control, any student who appears to be vulnerable can be a target. Bullies tend to focus on students who are “different” in color, dress, race, behavior, mannerisms, size, physical appearance – and so forth. If the student tends to be timid, withdrawn, and/or anxious, then bullies will zero in on that student. The more the target is visibly affected by the bully, the more the bullying tends to escalate.

Refugee students can become prime targets of bullies because they are often different in appearance and behaviors, may not be able to express themselves clearly, and can appear shy and confused.

What is “verbal” bullying?

Bullying can be physical (hitting, punching, poking, tripping, etc.) but it can also be verbal teasing and harassment. Examples are name-calling, threatening comments, insults, teasing, and mocking – as well as nuisance phone calls, spreading rumors, and written texts, e-mails, photos (including "sexting"), and Facebook entries (referred to as "cyberbullying").

What is “emotional” bullying?

Emotional bullying can involve leaving a targeted student out of activities, openly ignoring a student (or including them only to torment and tease), or purposefully setting up a student to be embarrassed. Any type of bullying can result in students feeling alone and helpless, distraught, physically ill, or depressed.

Who are the bullies?

Bullies can be any students in the school, although the image is that bullies tend to be students who are physically bigger than other students and/or have social status in the school.

Bullies are seeking power and dominance. They like control of the situation. They may not be physically stronger, but feel stronger if they bully verbally or conduct anonymous cyberbullying.

But bullies are not born to bully. There is usually something happening in their personal lives that may cause bullies to take out their anxieties and anger on someone who is vulnerable. If they are struggling with school, have a difficult life at home, or are abused or bullied themselves, they may tend to unload their emotions by hurting someone else.

They may feel threatened if their status is tenuous, so they rally their peers to join them in hurting others. In turn, they get attention – even respect – because they appear to be powerful and in control. They appear to disregard rules and consequences.

It is important to remember that most students who bully are hurting. They do need to experience the consequences of their actions, but they also need specific strategies on how to handle their emotions in a more positive manner.

Students who bully do not automatically know how to change their behavior. They may not even understand the emotional damage that they are causing. In many cases they have never been taught how to treat others with kindness and respect.

They need guidance in how to maintain peer respect while eliminating the bullying. They need opportunities to share their emotions in a safe environment, through counseling and peer support groups. Educators can combine discipline with guidance so that the bullying stops.

What is unique about bullying and refugee students?

In some schools, refugee students are “easy” targets for bullies because refugees are often different in appearance and behavior. Cultural differences in dress, foods, family traditions, gender roles, and hygiene can cause some refugee students to be noticed and become targets.

Refugee students may not understand that they are being bullied. They may not understand verbal teasing and insults because of language comprehension issues. They may have had traumatic experiences in their home country and do not recognize that the hateful actions directed toward them are unacceptable in American schools.

As refugee students negotiate between two cultural worlds, they may conclude that bullying is a normal way of life in the United States.

In fact, they may tolerate bullying because they are used to being treated poorly in their home countries. Past experience may have taught them to stay invisible and not complain. As a result, they may silently tolerate harsh treatment from bullies.

These students may be used to fighting back to protect themselves or to save lives, so they continue to fight if they are bullied. They may be acting on instincts that were honed under harsh conditions in their home countries. They may lash out because they are distrustful, angry, or grieving. For some refugee students, bullying can trigger post-traumatic stress symptoms.

Refugee students can become bullies themselves, join groups of students who bully, or become members of gangs. They may feel as if they are part of a family or support group, even though that group is causing harm to other students.

Some refugee students maintain negative opinions that are learned in their home countries about other ethnic groups. These opinions are later translated into acts of bullying behavior in their American school.

It is important for educators to keep in mind that many refugee students already feel isolated and vulnerable. They may be the primary source of information and support for older family members who are struggling to adjust to a new country. They often cannot turn to parents and other adults within their family for guidance.

When they are experiencing bullying their choices seem to be that they can decide to put up with the bullying, fight back, initiate the bullying to seize control, or try to find someone they trust who can understand and protect them. Any of these choices can cause anxiety. Struggling with these decisions can inhibit their adjustment within the new school environment.

If refugee students wish to tell an adult about what is happening to them, they may not know what to do. They may not be aware of helpful resources, even if they have been reassured that teachers, a local refugee center, or a school guidance counselor can provide assistance.

If students have been told about what to do about bullying, they still may not trust the resources. They may be uncomfortable around a counselor they have not met before, or a school-based police officer. They will need to get to know them in a non-threatening setting. And like most children, refugee students fear that there will be negative consequences from peers if they report the actions of another student — particularly if they have learned in their home country that reporting can lead to drastic reprisals.

As a result the refugee students can become depressed and lose confidence. They can be hurt every day and never say a word about it.

It is a challenge for educators to simultaneously reassure new refugee students that they are safe in their new school — and then introduce information about bullying. But knowledge about bullying provides refugee students with the power to do something about it so that they can comfortably adapt to their new lives in an American school.

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

If refugee students are bullied, then school becomes yet another hostile environment that they have to experience.

- ❑ Be aware of warning signs.
- ❑ Tell refugees that bullying is an exception and not tolerated.
- ❑ Tell refugee students what bullying looks like - and that they do not deserve to be bullied.
- ❑ Recognize that bullying can be based on actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practices, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or sex. Refugee students need the opportunity to talk about how they can maintain their cultural traditions and still feel comfortable in their school.
- ❑ Encourage refugee students to become involved in group activities, but stress that joining a gang is not considered a positive activity. (See Module 5 *So Much to Learn!* and Module 7 *Interest and Talents* for related activities.)
- ❑ Discuss with colleagues how refugee students can be informed and protected.
- ❑ Repeat anti-bullying messages in:
 - ◆ English instruction classes
 - ◆ School assemblies
 - ◆ Meetings with Refugee Resettlement Case Managers
 - ◆ Meetings with refugee families
 - ◆ Classroom presentations
 - ◆ Professional Development programs about refugees.
- ❑ Know the civil rights of refugees - and that bullying based on language or national origin is considered harassment.
- ❑ Establish systems for confidential reporting. Help refugee students identify a trusted adult in their lives.
- ❑ Reassure refugee students that authority figures are safe resources, including school police officers.
- ❑ Respond with sensitivity if a student reports bullying. Take it seriously, even if the incident seems minor.
- ❑ Strategize with the student and provide reassurance. If necessary, refer the student to a colleague who can advocate for the student and take steps to ensure they are safe.
- ❑ Discuss anti-bullying strategies that can be used before and after school with all refugee students.

POSSIBLE WARNING SIGNS

There are many warning signs that could indicate that a student is experiencing bullying. Some of these signs are not obvious. Students are very good at hiding what is going on in their lives. Don't wait too long to look for patterns — trust your instincts if “something isn't right.”

Any of these signs could be indicators of adjustment to resettlement, problems in their personal lives, or bullying:

- damaged or missing clothing or other belongings
- lost items such as textbooks, electronics, clothing, jewelry
- unexplained injuries (or unbelievable explanations)
- complaints of headaches, stomachaches, or feeling sick
- trouble sleeping, frequent bad dreams
- changes in eating habits; very hungry after school because lunch was stolen
- less interest in friends and socializing
- fear of going to school or other activities
- less interest in schoolwork; grades slipping
- avoidance of specific places such as lockers or hallways
- hiding of text messages and computer activities

Some signs may not be as visible, but even one incident may be a clue to something more serious:

- appearing sad or anxious and trying to hide problems
- expressing concerns about measuring up
- feeling; expressing interest in becoming tougher
- making comments about suicide
- unusually angry
- starting to bully others

Bullying often happens to students who are considered “different” by their peers, especially if those students are withdrawn or anxious. Refugee students stand out because of their cultural background and language. They can be bullied because of the way that they dress, their family traditions, or simply because they are newcomers. Their insecurities can make them targets. Parents of refugee students may not be comfortable with the topic or know where to turn for help.

1. Establish a system for providing assistance to students if warning signs of bullying are detected.
2. Inform students how to recognize bullying and protect themselves.
3. Establish a system for students to safely report bullying.
4. Ask them to think about who could be a “trusted adult” they could confide in, should they see or experience bullying. Refugee students are often most comfortable with an English Language teacher, guidance counselor, or refugee center representative.

Sources: stopbullying.gov • <http://www.bullyfree.com> • <http://kidshealth.org>

Gangs

In some schools refugee students will have to face the very real possibility that they will be recruited to join a gang, or will at least be challenged by the presence of gangs in their school and neighborhood. Since refugee students are often anxious to be included in activities in American schools, and they want new friends, they can be tempted to participate in gang activity. In some cases, the refugee students do not realize that a gang is not a new “family,” even though they may feel protected by their fellow gang members. They may feel as if the gang looks out for them, they are making a contribution to a group that they are included in (even if the “contribution” may be harmful or illegal), and the gang membership gives them status in the school community. Their own refugee parents, or the relatives and guardians who supervise them, are often unaware of the significant pressures to join a gang, and have difficulty monitoring the activities of refugee children during and after school.

Module 15 addresses the pressures on refugee students to participate in any activities that can be harmful to them. Because the level and type of gang activity is school-specific, this Module does not include activities specifically on the topic of gangs. In school districts where there is gang activity, the instructors should consult with school administrators and counselors, school and community law enforcement, and other community leaders to determine how to discuss the topic of gangs with the refugee students. Some districts have on-going programs or specialists in gang activities. Some schools invite ex-gang members, representatives from community groups and religious organizations, and other speakers to inform the students about the dangers of gangs and how to resist becoming involved in gang activity.

It is essential that instructors and Academic Coaches raise the topic of gangs with the refugee students so that they are informed, prepared to handle the pressures of joining a gang, and aware of the dangers of some gang activity. For example, they should know about gang symbols and methods of recruitment and communication.

Refugee students should know that supportive families provide protection without putting their children in harm’s way. Refugee students should know about alternative options so that gang activity does not become their source of socialization and after-school activity. Talk to students about positive resources in the community such as clubs, religious centers, after-school programs, sports, and programs that focus on the arts.



NEW YORK STATE DIGNITY FOR ALL STUDENTS ACT

The New York State Dignity for All Students Act (The Dignity Act) seeks to provide the State's public elementary and secondary school students with a safe and supportive environment free from discrimination, intimidation, taunting, harassment, and bullying on school property, a school bus and/or at a school function. The Dignity Act took effect in July 2012.

All public elementary and secondary students have the right to attend school in a safe, welcoming, considerate and caring environment. The goal of the Dignity Act is to create a safe and supportive school climate where students can learn and focus, rather than fear being discriminated against and/or verbally and/or physically harassed. The Dignity Act relates to bullying because bullying is a form of harassment and discrimination.

Refugee students should benefit from the implementation of the Dignity Act because identified in the legislation are those who are subjected to intimidation or abuse based on actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex.

The New York State Education Department has established statewide work groups to address local and state policy, curriculum and instruction, professional development, and outreach related to the Dignity Act.

For more information and instructional resources, see the New York State Education Department website dedicated to the implementation of the Dignity for All Students Act:
<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/dignityact>

Information about the Dignity Act can also be found on the website of the New York State Center for School Safety.
<http://nyscenterforschoolsafety.org/>

WHEN BULLYING MAY BE A CIVIL RIGHTS VIOLATION

Schools that receive federal funding (including colleges and universities) are required by federal law to address discrimination on a number of different personal characteristics. The statutes the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) enforces include:

- ❑ Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin;
- ❑ Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex;
- ❑ Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504); and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Title II). Section 504 and Title II prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability.

School districts may violate these civil rights statutes and the U.S. Department of Education's implementing regulations when peer harassment based on race, color, national origin, sex, or disability is sufficiently serious that it creates a hostile environment and such harassment is encouraged, tolerated, not adequately addressed, or ignored by school employees.

While current law enforced by OCR do not protect against harassment based on religion or sexual orientation, they do include protection against harassment of members of religious groups based on shared ethnic characteristics as well as gender-based and sexual harassment of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender individuals.

A school is responsible for addressing harassment incidents about which it knows or reasonably should have known.

- ❑ Participate in the webinar *Bullying and Civil rights: An Overview of School Districts' Federal Obligation to Respond to Harassment*
- ❑ Read the *Dear Colleague Letter* from Department of Education's Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
- ❑ Read more about when bullying is discriminatory harassment
- ❑ Learn about the OCR civil rights complaint process.

Sources:
stopbullying.gov
<http://www2.ed.gov>

SHARE WITH STUDENTS

ANTI-BULLYING STRATEGIES BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL

PLAN AHEAD

Never walk home alone, and try to have your hands free. Plan your route, including where you can go for safety. Stay alert – this is not the time to listen to your iPod.

If you see the bully coming, change your route immediately. Do not try to tough it out.

STAND TALL

If you are confronted, you may want to cry or yell back, but bullies are hoping for a reaction. Don't show emotions, hold your head up, and keep on walking.

If you are in danger of getting hurt, run. Throw something to distract the bully, if you can. There is no good reason why you should stay and fight, unless you are cornered and have to protect yourself. Get out of there.



PRACTICE CALM WORDS

If you are being bullied, it is usually best to say nothing at all to the bully. Move on. If you must respond, act as if you don't care, keep moving, and say these words calmly:

“Whatever.”

“You are wasting my time. I'm out of here.”

“If you say so.”

“I have more important things to do. See ya.”

DON'T GET PHYSICAL

Keep hands down, don't hit or kick unless you have to defend yourself — and only if you were physically attacked first. There is no good reason to stay and fight. Be smart and get out of there.

TELL A TRUSTED ADULT

Bullying can quickly get worse. If you see or experience bullying, talk to an adult. Think about who you would talk to if you ever need help.

If you are afraid that a bully will find out you told, then ask the adult to help you figure out what to do to protect yourself.

REPORT CYBERBULLYING

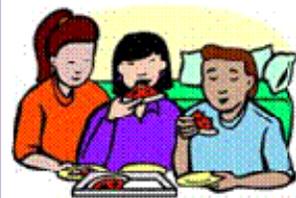
If bullying is online, don't respond. Keep the evidence and tell an adult immediately.

DON'T BULLY

Just because it happened to you doesn't mean that you should bully someone else. You know that it hurts to be bullied. Think about how you can help other kids to be safe.

HERE'S WHAT I DID! TIPS FROM REFUGEE STUDENTS

- ❑ Soccer! I joined a team right away. I made friends and my team protects me. Find a sport or club that you can join. It may take time to feel comfortable, but you will be glad that you did it.
- ❑ I make sure that I wash every day and wear deodorant. My clothes are clean, my teeth are brushed, and I keep my head up and smile. Some kids are not sure how to talk to me at first but I make sure that I look friendly, and it works!
- ❑ I signed up for the school play. I had no idea what was going on at first, but I got to paint scenery and helped pull the curtain. I was busy and surrounded by other people, so I felt safe. It was fun!
- ❑ When I was being bullied I didn't want to tell anyone what was happening to me. It just kept getting worse. Finally I said something to my tutor. It was hard to do, but I'm safer now and the kid has stopped bullying me and other kids, too.
- ❑ My guidance counselor gave me a student "buddy" to show me around. I was nervous at first, but I always know that I can go to my buddy with questions. He helps me with my English and comes with me when I need to talk to teachers. The other kids like my buddy so they are nice to me, too. Ask for a buddy who can look out for you — it definitely works for me.
- ❑ I organized kids from the Refugee Center to walk home with me. It feels good to stick together. We change our route and our schedule so bullies can't wait for us.



ANTI-BULLYING INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

The following resources have been selected for educators to use when discussing the topic of bullying with refugee students. All of the resources have been screened for content and accessibility. Educators should still check to ensure that the content is relevant for students. In some cases, the website provides background information for educators and parents only. Websites that contain materials in languages other than English have been identified.

On occasion, a website will describe a schoolwide program consisting of publications, speakers, or assembly activities. Only those with a strong track record of success, particularly in addressing refugee students as targets, have been included in this list. Educators are advised to look at the *Bullying Prevention Resource Guide — Best Practices* for specific evidence-based guidelines on how to select and implement a schoolwide anti-bullying program.

<http://bullyingprevention.org/index.cfm/ID/2/Best-Practices/>

Another valuable source for screening school or districtwide programs is *Misdirections in Bullying Prevention and Intervention*, prepared by Stop Bullying Now! of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

http://www.education.com/reference/article/Ref_Misdirections/

NEW YORK STATE RESOURCES

The New York State Education Department has developed a clearinghouse dedicated to The Dignity Act, including a Fact Sheet, brochure, and slide show for educators.

<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/dignityact> • <http://www.facebook.com/dignityact>

The New York State Center for School Safety serves as a clearinghouse for schools, families, communities, and government agencies, and has a number of valuable resources for educators. The Please Stand Up! program for middle and high school students focuses on bystander behavior.

www.nyscenterforschoolsafety.org

Individual classes and schools have developed their own anti-bullying instructional activities such as an excellent video created by the Glendaal Elementary School, Scotia-Glenville Central School District.

How to Unmake a Bully

<http://bit.ly/o2ev6o>

ABC's of Bullying

http://pathwayscourses.samhsa.gov/bully/bully_intro_pg1.htm

- Online course for educators provided by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

Bully Free

<http://www.bullyfree.com3>

- Districtwide anti-bullying program
- Contains a series of “tip sheets” for bullied students and other free resources
- Products such as curriculum, lesson plans (K-12), books, posters, bulletin board ideas available
- Good-Bye Bully Machine picture book available for engaging young students and reluctant readers in a story about dismantling an imposing bullying machine

Bully Police

www.bullypolice.org

- Grassroots watchdog organization started by parents
- Contains review of NYS legislation pertaining to bullying in schools
- Provides information about the Bully Police Squad (speakers, videos)
- Contains anti-bullying videos (should be screened)

Bully Project

- Documentary feature-length film available on the Bully Project website (<http://thebullyproject.com/>)
- Screening necessary because of the realistic nature of the stories

Bully-Proofing Your School (BPYS)

<http://www.schoolengagement.org>

- ❑ Created by the National Center for School Engagement, the comprehensive BPYS program focuses on school climate, bystander behavior, and creating caring school communities.

Bullycide in America

<http://www.bullycide.org/CurriculumGuide.html>

- ❑ Guide for educators containing key points, sharing of personal experiences, and classroom discussions based on individual real-life stories
- ❑ Contains music video for students on bullying and suicide prevention

Bullying. No Way!

<http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au/ideasbox/schools/>

- ❑ Australian program for safe and inclusive schooling for refugee students that stresses a gradual inclusion policy, schoolwide awareness projects, buddy systems, and community partnerships — well-recognized model for school districts

Bullying Prevention Curriculum

<http://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/pdf/bullyingprogram.pdf>

- ❑ Created by the State of Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction for grades 3-5 and 6-8
- ❑ Particularly useful because up-to-date issues in cyberbullying and multicultural issues are included

Bullying: We Can All Help Stop It

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/bullying.pdf>

- Publications available in 22 languages that educators can share with parents
- Prepared by the Ontario, Canada Ministry of Education — a useful tool for teachers and administrators

Bullying.org

www.bullying.org

- Website contains an extensive list of resources contributed by groups all over the world
- Lesson plans, videos, handouts, speakers, school programs, etc. are in the section “Helpful Resources”

Challenge Day

<http://www.challengeday.org/mtv/>

- A compelling experiential program for teens as shown on MTV’s docu-series *If You Really Knew Me*
- Website contains outstanding videos geared to teens that show how the program works and firsthand observation of student participants
- A discussion guide is also on the website

Cyberbullying

<http://www.bullying.co.uk/advice/stay-cyber-safe-our-advice-and-tips-0>

- Excellent internet safety tips from a website developed in the United Kingdom, relevant to all students
- This site also includes advice for someone being bullied on Facebook or by cell phone.

Cyberbullying Research Center

<http://www.cyberbullying.us>

- ❑ Provides up-to-date information on the extent, causes, and consequences of cyberbullying among adolescents
- ❑ Contains Bullying and Cyberbullying Laws Fact Sheet; Identification, Prevention, and Response Fact Sheet
- ❑ Background information for educators on cell phones in school, sexting, partnering with parents, and student anti-bullying efforts, as well as current events in the topic of cyberbullying; keynote presentations and staff development programs provided

Don't Laugh at Me (DLAM)

<http://www.operationrespect.org>

- ❑ Created by Peter Yarrow (of the folk group Peter, Paul, and Mary) for dissemination to educators, DLAM resources consist of music, videos, assemblies, and free curriculum guides.
- ❑ Information about professional development workshops is provided in the Operation Respect website.

Eyes on Bullying

<http://www.eyesonbullying.org/pdfs/toolkit.pdf>

- ❑ Excellent free downloadable toolkit for educators on preventing bullying aimed at young children
- ❑ Includes thorough background information as well as activities and tips for students (including an excellent page on bullying actions and victim responses)

MARC Curricula and Games

<http://webhost.bridgew.edu/marc/index.html>

- ❑ The Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center provides programs and curricula on bullying prevention, cyberbullying, and school violence

NY Times Topics

<http://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/04/13/reader-idea-a-student-driven-bullying-curriculum/>

- ❑ Using articles in the New York Times, a middle school teacher has created a successful student-run anti-bullying curriculum.

One World-Our World

<http://www.1wow.org/>

- ❑ Educational kit and assembly opportunity focusing on multi-cultural appreciation and conflict resolution
 - Prepared and presented by former Peace Corps volunteers
 - Includes follow-up classroom activities and instructional materials

Out on a Limb – A Guide to Getting Along

- ❑ Basic introduction to conflict prevention and resolution for grades 2-4 or ESL
 - Interactive video with audio designed for young students
 - Handout entitled “The World in My Eyes” and activity on perceptions
 - Prepared by the University of Illinois Extension
 - Available on a CD

PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center

<http://www.pacer.org/bullying/resources>

- Created by parents of children with disabilities, the PACER website is loaded with free classroom toolkits, information handouts, and educational activities related to bullying
- Spanish and Somali translations

Refugee Children in the U.S. Schools Toolkit

- A series of toolkits created by BRYCS (Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services)
- Includes Tool 4: Refugee and Immigrant Youth and Bullying in School, with information about causes of bullying, the impact of school demographics and climate, newcomers as targets (including bullying by other refugee students, cultural considerations, and best practices)
- An essential tool for all educators, not just those working directly with refugee students

Safe School Ambassadors

<http://www.community-matters.org/>

- School climate assessment tool
- Safe School Ambassadors program guide, created by Community Matters, an organization designed to stop school bullying and violence and empower young people to be effective peacemakers. (Profiled on The Today Show)

Savvy Cyber Kids

www.savvycyberkids.org

- Organization dedicated to educating young children about safety on the internet
- Contains publications, including a cyber bully awareness, prevention, and response curriculum targeted toward pre-school and primary level entitled *Cyber Kids at Home: The Defeat of the Cyber Bully*
- Activity sheets available for downloading

Steps to Respect

<http://www.cfchildren.org/>

- ❑ The Steps to Respect Bullying Prevention Program developed by the Committee for Children
- ❑ Contains sample lessons, including excellent activities about bystanders and taking responsibility
- ❑ Webinars also offered for educators

Stop Bullying

stopbullying.gov

- ❑ Sections for Kids, Teens, Young Adults, Parents, Educators, Community
 - What is Bullying?
 - Recognize the Warning Signs/Risk Factors
 - How Do I Get Help?
 - When Bullying May Become a Civil Rights Violation
 - Cyberbullying (online and texting)
 - Includes webisodes for students

- ❑ Contains a Youth Leader's Toolkit: Stop Bullying Now – Take a Stand, Lend a Hand

http://www.stopbullying.gov/teens/stand_against_bullying/youth_leader_toolkit.pdf

Stories of Us

<http://www.storiesofus.com>

- ❑ Audios and videos that are very realistic, showing how students bully each other, often in the guise of teasing and “joking around”
- ❑ Describes the Promoting Positive Peer Relationships program with curriculum resources

Taking the Bully by the Horns!

<http://kathynoll.wordpress.com>

- Award-winning book and workbook for children and instructors with practical strategies and role-playing activities
- Workshops and videos available

Teens Health: Dealing With Bullying

http://kidshealth.org/teen/your_mind/problems/bullies.html

- Background information on bullying
- Bullying survival tips
 - What If You're the Bully?
 - Steps to Stop Bullying in Schools
 - Surviving Cyberbullying
 - How Can I Stop Bullying?
- Spanish version provided
- Audio of articles provided
- Links to additional sites – click on Who Can Help?

The Unity Project

<http://www.unityproject.org>

- A resilience learning project that partners with after school programs for middle and high school students
- Focus is on empowering youth to transform challenges into opportunities for personal growth and united action
- Students form Action Teams to make changes in their schools

US Department of Education – Office for Civil Rights

<http://ww2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201010.pdf>

- ❑ Detailed description of Civil Rights legislation pertaining to school district responsibilities

ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY #1: HERE'S WHAT I DID!

Grades 6-8, 9-12 (45 minutes)

In this activity:

Refugee students will learn about the possibility of bullying.

Emphasis should be on students getting involved in activities that keep students busy, help them to make friends, and are supervised by adults. The activity should be more about safety than bullying.

- Instructors should explain to students that there may be a student or group of students who are mean to other students. They may want to frighten or even hurt someone who is new or different. Explain that it is wrong.
- Show Handout 15-12: *Bully* if students need a visual image of what is meant by a “bully”.
- Immediately distribute Handout 15-13: *Friends!* Discuss that students will have a lot of new friends. To meet people they should try the activities on Handout #14 – *Here's What I Did!*
- Read the quotes on the next page aloud to the students. For each picture on Handout #14, provide information about:
 - why the suggestion is a good way to meet friends and keep bullies away
 - how the suggestion could be implemented in the local school and community
- The instructor should help students to decide what they personally would like to do to get involved in activities and meet new friends.

ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY #2: How To SAY No

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (45 minutes)

In this activity:



Refugee students will practice 12 ways to say **no** when they are approached by other students and pressured to participate in an activity that is unhealthy or dangerous.

The instructors will have to determine how much detail should be provided to the students about drugs, alcohol, and cigarettes. Some students may need to know the specifics about what various drugs look like, how they are sold, and when the students may be approached by other students and drug dealers. This information should be taught by experts who have experience sharing this information with students. Other students, particularly young students, may just need to know that they should not accept or purchase anything from another student or adult unless they have permission from a known and trusted adult.

The activity also introduces the topic of students who tease, harass, or bully refugee students. Again, the concept should be introduced so that students are aware of the possibility of bullying behavior, but the instructors should determine the level of detail that should be provided. If there is a history of mistreatment of refugee students at the school, then more information should be provided about how refugee students can protect themselves. If the problem does not occur often, refugee students should still be aware of what bullying is (so that they do not think that it is normal and acceptable behavior) and how they can say **no** to students who treat them badly.

The instructors should consult with the Academic Coaches, school administration, and other adults who are familiar with the refugee students to determine how much detail should be covered in this Module. However, all students, regardless of their age or experience in American schools, should learn many different ways to say “no” when they do not want to take part in an activity that is unsafe. The refugee students may have to draw on the strategies in this activity, and they should be prepared.

- Distribute the Handout 15-1: *Zero Tolerance*

The instructor should discuss each item on the handout, explaining that the pictures show examples of items and activities that are not allowed on school grounds and can be harmful or dangerous to the students.

If it has been determined that it is appropriate to provide more details, then the instructor may invite counselors, law enforcement officials, and school social workers to share more information. Examples of drugs, different forms of alcohol, how drugs and alcohol can be mixed with other substances, and other visual examples may be provided.

The illustrations on the Handout 15-1: *Zero Tolerance* represent:

Row 1: Drugs or alcohol, including prescription medications

Row 2: Cigarettes, knives, guns and other weapons, including items fashioned to be weapons

Row 3: Hunting knives and toys that are used for recreational activities, but are not allowed on school grounds

Row 4: Threatening or harassing notes, graffiti and other forms of vandalism

- Distribute the Handout 15-2: *No Bullies Allowed*

After presenting the information on the Handout 15-1: *Zero Tolerance*, the instructor should discuss the term “bully” and explain how refugee students may encounter bullies. The picture at the top of the handout shows an example of an older student physically threatening a younger student, but it is important for students to know that bullying comes in many forms.

The rest of the pictures on the handout represent what student relationships should be like in school. Positive relationships involve sharing, working together, enjoying each other’s company, feeling comfortable and relaxed, and helping each other out.

- *Throughout the activities in Module 15, it is essential that the instructors emphasize that most of the students in the school will be supportive and friendly.* It may take awhile for refugee students to feel completely comfortable around other students, but the instructors should stress that if refugee students are *afraid* around other students then they may be experiencing pressure from peers who mean to do them harm, including teasing, harassment, or bullying.

The instructor should explain:

Teasing comes in the form of comments in front of others; mocking student dress or language; remarks that may not be overheard; or imitating student behavior.

Harassment is constant teasing, sometimes escalating to physical abuse such as pushing, threatening, following students, or ridiculing and calling attention to a refugee student as a source of amusement.

Bullying is when a student is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more students, with an imbalance of power, intent to do harm, threat of further aggression, and intimidation resulting in fear. Bullying can be physical, verbal, social, indirect, or clear and direct.

It is not necessary for instructors to focus on knowing the definitions of the terms, but it is necessary to show that mistreatment of refugee students can appear in different forms. As instructors provide the above definitions, they should give specific examples of how bullying might occur in the hallways, restrooms, and before and after school. Instructors may wish to demonstrate what bullying looks like by role-playing (with adults as the actors).

Examples demonstrated can be:

- Pushing, knocking against a student in the hallway
- Taking books, backpacks, lunch cards, and other personal items
- Taunting a student who is trying to find a seat in a classroom or cafeteria
- Following a student or getting in the student's way
- Physical abuse outside of school

For older students, the instructors can show how bullying and pressure to engage in dangerous activities might be combined. For example, a refugee student may be bullied to try alcohol, hide or deliver drugs, or hand over money, electronics, backpacks, sneakers, or other personal items.

Some refugee students may have already experienced teasing, bullying and pressure to participate in harmful activities. They may volunteer information about their experiences, but until the instructor has determined that the students are comfortable with each other and the adults in the room, it is best to wait before asking students to share their personal experiences. Activity #6 of this Module focuses on how to share information with adults about witnessing or experiencing teasing, harassment, or bullying.

- The instructor should explain to the students that there are twelve ways to make it clear to other students that they will not participate in negative behavior and will not tolerate bullying. The students should be so familiar with the twelve ways that they can call on any one of the strategies if a situation arises.

12 Ways to Say NO!

1. Stay in groups with friends you can trust.
2. When you see trouble coming, walk in the opposite direction.
3. Be polite and say **no thanks** with confidence. Keep going towards a safe place.
4. Keep saying **no** and refuse the same way every time.
5. Change your route or your routine, as long as trusted adults know where you are.
6. Know about places of safety in school, such as classrooms, libraries, and the health office. Know about places of safety in the neighborhood, such as local stores, busy streets, and homes of friends.
7. Change the subject. Make it clear that you are not interested.
8. Give the “cold shoulder” and make a point of not socializing with students who pressure or tease, even if they may be nice at times, or are well liked by other students.
9. Avoid situations that may cause problems. Sometimes pressure to join in or the need to feel included can encourage participation in events that lead to harmful or illegal activities. Find something else to do.
10. Have a backup plan so that if a situation looks frightening, an alternative route has already been planned.
11. Stay calm, be firm, and do not encourage the behavior by reacting emotionally or arguing.
12. Get help from a trusted adult.

After reviewing and demonstrating the 12 strategies, the instructor should assist the refugee students in practicing each of the strategies.

The instructor may have to provide the refugee students with the phrases they can use, and practice them with the students. The phrases are important in case a point has to be made, but, in general, refugee students should refrain from talking and concentrate on moving away from negative situations. It is best to avoid a situation and not engage in a dialogue.

Suggestions for helpful phrases for refugee students to learn in English are:

- No thanks.
- Do not bother me again.
- Not interested.
- Not my thing.
- I told you before, leave me alone.

The instructor may have to discuss how to handle the most stressful hallways in the school, alternative routes home from school, and specific areas around the school that may be more dangerous than others. Activity #2 in this Module discusses how students can seek help.

The instructor, with the school district administration, should determine what to tell the refugee students so that they have a realistic picture, but are not intimidated or convinced that school is an unsafe place to be. Emphasis should always be on the importance of prevention, and on choosing to be friends with classmates who are friendly and helpful.

ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY #3: SAY SOMETHING – HOW STUDENTS CAN STOP BULLYING

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (45 minutes)

In this activity:



Refugee students will learn about their role in stopping teasing and bullying.

This activity is based on the picture book **Say Something** by Peggy Moss (Tilbury House Publishers, Gardiner, Maine), winner of a Teachers' Choice Award from *Learning* magazine.

A young girl observes other students being teased, and although it bothers her, she does not do anything to stop the teasing. Then she has a personal experience that helps her understand how it feels to be teased, and she resolves to do something about it.

The book is appropriate for all ages, including middle and high school refugee students. At the conclusion of the book, there are suggestions for instructors about how to encourage students to step up and stop teasing.

Since refugee students can be teased by other students, the focus on Activity #2 of this Module is to encourage students to look out for one another and say something if they witness teasing. If the students feel that they can protect a fellow student, or can say something that will stop the teasing, they should speak up. If the situation is frightening, they should know how to get help from an adult. And if they are being teased, they should know how to speak up for themselves and get help if needed.

Instructors may want to differentiate between teasing and bullying. Activity #1 in this Module provides information on the definitions of teasing and bullying, but the primary difference is the aggressive nature of the teasing. Bullying consists of repeated and systematic harassment and attacks on others and can be carried out by individuals or groups. Bullying takes many forms, including:

- physical violence and attacks
- verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs, sometimes based on ethnicity or gender
- threats and intimidation

- extortion or stealing of money and possessions
- exclusion from the peer group

Activity #1 in this Module covers the strategies that refugee students can use to say **no** to any activities that are harmful. In this activity, students reflect on how it feels to be teased, and what they can do about it to help themselves and their friends. Emphasis should always be on explaining to students that they should not tolerate anything that makes them feel uncomfortable or unsafe.

- To introduce the book discussion, the instructors should explain to the students that they are going to play a game that shows how one person can make a big difference in changing behavior. To carry out this activity, the students can either sit in a circle on the floor or move their desks so that they are connected in a square or circle. If the desks cannot be moved, it is still possible to conduct the activity with straight rows or clusters of desks, with some modifications.



The students should be told to tap quietly on the floor or on their desk, with their fingertips. Everyone in the class does it together. The instructor can let the students tap for about a minute, and then tell them to stop to listen to the rest of the directions.

The students should know that the point of the exercise is for one student to be able to get the tapping to stop.

A small but visible object selected by the teacher (tennis ball, eraser, paperback book, box of crayons) is to be passed around by the students, either to the student next to them, or to any other student in the room. The students can get up and move to pass the object to someone else.

While the object is being passed around, all of the students are quietly tapping.

The students should know that every participant should have a chance to receive the object, so students should pay attention to who has not had a chance, and then include them in the process of passing the object.

The instructor should explain to the students that every once in a while a student may receive the object and then suddenly hold it in the air. No one will tell the student to do this. The students can decide on their own whether they want to raise the object in the air.

That is the signal that the tapping should stop. The second the object goes in the air, all of the tapping should stop. Everyone sits quietly. The student with the object should wait about 15 seconds, and then continue passing the object around the room. When the passing begins again, the tapping starts up again. The students may want to stop frequently, or they may be hesitant to be the student who stops the tapping. The group may take a few minutes to understand the process, especially if the students are unwilling to raise the object in the air.

The instructor should be part of the activity and should make a point of raising the object in the air to get the tapping to stop, but should not verbally encourage the students to raise the object in the air.

The instructor can continue the tapping exercise for 5-10 minutes, depending on whether the students seem to have grasped the process, and whether all students have had a chance to receive and pass the object.

- When the exercise is over, the instructor should point out how one student, making a personal decision, could stop the noise in the room. The instructor should ask:
 - *For those of you who raised the object in the air, what made you decide to do it?*
 - *For those who did not raise the object, why did you decide not to?*
 - *What did it feel like to be able to stop everyone from tapping?*
- The instructor should discuss how one person can make a big difference in changing the behavior of other people. In the exercise, the students were able to temporarily stop the tapping. In school, one student can have a big influence on stopping behaviors that can be annoying and uncomfortable.



The instructor can explain that the class is going to read a story about one girl who was able to stop behavior that everyone else ignored. She did not think that she had the power to make a difference, but by taking one small step on her own, she changed the school experience of another girl in school.

The instructor should read the book **Say Something** aloud to the group.



Discussion Questions



After reading the book to the group, the instructor can discuss the following questions, pointing out that students who tease others are often looking for attention, or want to feel that they are important. The girl in the story did not necessarily challenge the students who tease, but she took a step to change the school experience of another student and ended up making a new friend.

Why did the girl sit next to the girl who always sits alone?

What does it mean to be “picked on”?

How do you think some of the children felt in the story?

Why do you think that students tease and laugh at others?

What was done to the students in this story to make them feel bad?

Why did the girl in the story notice the children who were unhappy in school?

How is this story like the tapping game?

- The instructor should show the pictures of the story again, without reading the words. The students should look for a picture that shows something that they have personally experienced.

The instructor should go through the book slowly, showing the pictures without reading the words, and then go back through the book and ask the students to tell which picture they identified with.

Each student may choose a different picture. They may choose a picture of a student who looks like them, or a picture of a student who is experiencing teasing. They may choose the picture of the girl sitting in the cafeteria, or the two girls laughing on the bus.

Ask the students to tell why they identified with the picture they selected. This process may be difficult for students if they are new to the school, if they are lonely or isolated, or are afraid to openly admit that they have been teased (or have teased other students). The instructor should invite each child to pick a picture and explain why they selected it, but not force the discussion.

The instructor should talk about how it feels to be teased, without asking for specifics from the students, and without identifying students who get teased in the school. Emphasis should be on how it feels to be teased, and how it feels to witness teasing.

The instructor should then ask the students:

- *Why is the name of this book **Say Something**?*



The students may not realize that the young girl in the story does not really tell anyone about the teasing, but her actions are her way of saying something. By sitting next to the girl on the bus she is announcing that she is not going to let anyone be treated badly, and she is going to befriend someone who needs support and friendship.

Some students will have already learned from their peers that it is risky to interfere with teasing or to report teasing to adults. Even befriending students who are being teased or bullied can be risky. If refugee students feel that befriending another student can cause more harm, then they need to discuss their concerns with an adult. Activity #3 provides information for the students on how to approach adults if they are concerned about their own welfare or the safety of another student.

- Repeat the tapping game, this time by passing around the book **Say Something**. Encourage students to raise the book in the air and say **Say Something** when they want to stop the tapping.

ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY #4: ACTIVITY FAIR

Grades 6-8, 9-12 (120 minutes)

In this activity:

Refugee students will learn about healthy and safe activities that they can become involved in so that they have a positive use of their time after school.

This activity builds on *Module 7: Interests and Talents* in the **Refugee Academy Curriculum**. In *Module 7* students become familiar with the clubs and extracurricular activities that are offered in the school, and they have a chance to think about their personal interests and talents.

In this activity, as part of *Module 15: Staying Safe*, the students will have a direct opportunity to engage in different activities so that they can feel comfortable becoming involved in after-school programs that are healthy and safe. The purpose of the activity is to encourage students to fill their after-school time with activities that are fun and rewarding, rather than unproductive and unsafe.



A number of “stations” will be set up in a large room, each station representing an activity that students might want to learn more about. The stations will be interactive and staffed by students who participate in the activity.

The purpose of the rotation is to expose refugee students to all of the programs that are available in the school and community, and to give them a chance to actually experience the activity.



Note: This activity involves advance planning because the instructor needs to communicate with club leaders in the school, reach out to organizations in the community that offer after-school programs, and organize the Activity Fair.

- For this activity, the instructor should reserve a classroom or large space such as a gymnasium or a stage that is big enough for several clubs and community groups to set up activity stations.

The refugee students will be rotating to the different stations. The size of the space will be determined by the number of stations and the number of refugee students.

- The instructor should gather a list of addresses, phone numbers, or e-mails of all of the organizations in the school and community that provide after-school activities. The list should contain the following:
 - School clubs
 - Religious organizations that offer youth groups, classes, and recreational programs
 - Cultural centers that offer dance classes, cooking lessons, and special events
 - Recreation centers such as the “Y” or Boys/Girls Clubs
 - Sports programs, sponsored by the school and local organizations
 - Karate and fitness centers
 - Music, dance and theater programs
 - Libraries or museums that offer special programs
 - Gardening groups
 - Volunteer organizations that clean up neighborhoods, tutor, or provide assistance in nursing homes, food banks, health care centers, and shelters
 - Mentoring programs



Each of the organizations should receive the Handout 15-3: *Join the Activity Fair!*. The instructor should follow up the mailing with a personal phone call, inviting the organizations to participate in the Activity Fair.

The organizations should be told that they are invited to send student representatives who will demonstrate what they do in the program and what uniforms or costumes they wear, and will provide information about how refugee students can join.

The student representatives should know that the refugee students will have minimal skills in English, so the stations should be self-explanatory, with easy activities and entertaining demonstrations. Since the refugee students will be rotating to several stations, all of the stations should have activities that are short.

- The Activity Fair can be set up in many different ways, depending on how elaborate the instructor wants to make the event. The stations can consist of tables, chairs, easels, and balloons, or it can simply be the student representatives standing together, demonstrating their activity and greeting refugee students.

The Activity Fair may have to be in a classroom with each station marked off by a student desk. Or the desks could be pushed to the side, and the student representatives will take turns involving the entire class or refugee students in a short activity.

The instructor is going to have to assess the time available for planning, the amount of space, the number of refugee students, and the number of organizations that have signed up to take part. Academic Coaches, school counselors, school club supervisors and other school leaders should be involved in recruiting organizations to participate in the Activity Fair.

No matter how the Activity Fair is set up, the following elements should always be included:

- A number of stations so that refugee students can move around and visit each one, or at least have the opportunity to hear a presentation from each organization
- The opportunity for students to engage in an activity at each station.

Suggestions are:

- Learning a dance step
- Trying out sports equipment
- Making a short and easy craft
- Using the tools of the trade, such as gardening or cooking tools, cameras
- Completing the forms for a library card
- Trying on a costume or part of a uniform
- Playing a game such as chess, a board game, or Frisbee
- A large manila envelope for refugee students to collect information at each station
- Information about the programs that the instructor can review with the students

- During the Activity Fair, the instructor, assisted by the Academic Coaches, translators, and other adults, should circulate to ensure that the refugee students are moving to all of the stations. The refugee students should not be forced to participate in the activities at each station, but they may need a little encouragement to try something new.

One of the essential elements of the Activity Fair is the interaction between the student representatives and the refugee students. The adults can certainly help with communication, but it is important that the student representatives encourage the refugee students to join them in future activities.

- After the Activity Fair, it is important for the instructor to review the information provided in the stations, and discuss what the refugee students need to do next to get involved in a new activity.

Since the purpose of the Activity Fair is to encourage students to use their after-school time in positive, productive ways, the instructor should expect the refugee students to identify one or two activities that are appealing to them. It may be difficult to get them to take the steps that are necessary for joining a new activity. The Academic Coaches can work with the students to help them enroll, find transportation, raise funds or waive fees, purchase uniforms and equipment, and feel comfortable the first time they attend a new activity. The leaders of the clubs and organizations should also be notified that they will have a new participant.



Discussion Questions



What station did you enjoy the most?

Did you learn anything new?

What activities would you like to try in the future?

What do you have to do to join the activities that interest you?

What questions do you have about joining?

ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY #5: HOME ALONE

Grades 6-8, 9-12 (120 minutes)

In this activity:

Refugee students will have the opportunity to plan how they will use their time in a positive manner if they are home alone or supervising siblings after school.

Many refugee students are expected to go directly home after school and stay in their home or neighborhood. They may be responsible for siblings or elderly relatives, may have household responsibilities if the parents are working, or may live in neighborhoods where the parents prefer that the students stay indoors where it is safe. For some students, after-school activities are not possible because of transportation or expense, or simply because the students will arrive home when it is dark outside, and the parents are more comfortable if their children come straight home from school.

In this activity, the refugee students will be looking at how to use their time at home effectively. The instructor should be stressing the importance of having a plan on how to use the time productively and safely. Since so many children, particularly those in middle and high school, get involved in unsafe activities between 3:00 and 6:00 p.m., it is essential that refugee students know how to use that time wisely. Even those students involved in after-school activities will have school days when they are home alone.

- The instructor should begin by discussing how the students get home from school and what time they usually arrive at their homes. The following questions should be discussed:
 - *What is the first thing you want to do when you get home from school?*
 - *What time is it when you walk in the door of your home?*
 - *Is anyone else home with you?*
 - *Are you responsible for making sure that a brother or sister gets home safely?*
 - *Are you responsible for supervising a brother or sister when you get home?*
 - *Does an older brother or sister supervise you? Does that work out well?*

- The instructor can then pass out the two-page Handout 15-4 & 15-5: *Home Alone*, discussing each picture. The pictures show the options of how to spend time, as long as the use of time is balanced and homework is completed. The students can add more suggestions.

Discuss the following for each picture:

(Sink)

Students should be told that the very first thing they should do when they get home is wash their hands. This is good hygiene and prevents the spread of disease. They should make sure that they wash if they are going to handle food or play with younger children. They might consider washing a few dirty dishes, too!



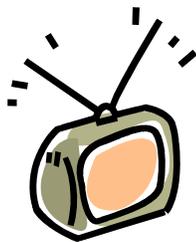
(Milk and crackers)

The instructor should discuss the types of snacks that are healthy. Also discuss the best time to eat a snack so that there is still room for dinner. (Academic Coaches should be alert to homes that need food.)



(Television)

It is so easy for students to settle down in front of the television and stay there. They may prefer to do their homework in front of the television, or eat snacks while sitting on the couch. The instructor should talk about the importance of limiting television viewing to one show that they are permitted to watch. This guideline is extremely hard for students to follow, since their friends watch different shows and it is so tempting to settle in and watch one show after another. Encourage students to pick a show and build the rest of their schedule around it. Discuss with the students what they watch on television after school, and when they work on their homework.



(Sending text messages, working on the computer)

When students use the computer unsupervised they can wander on to websites, intentionally or unintentionally, that are not safe. *Module 11: Technology in the Schools* in the **Refugee Academy Curriculum** discusses the safe use of the computer.



Students should be aware of the importance of withholding personal information, the weaknesses of information storage, and how computers can be used to connect with children in unsafe ways. Some students will be curious to see websites that are inappropriate, or will be encouraged by peers to investigate websites that are not approved by adults. Their parents may not speak English and may be unaware of some of the dangers of computer use. It is essential that the instructor talk about the positive use of the computer for finishing homework, researching assignments, and connecting with friends.

State repeatedly that students should not communicate with someone they do not know and should not share personal information or photographs. This is a difficult message to get across, so it will have to be repeated several times.

(Listening to music)

Students may have listening devices that allow them to play music. Instructors should remind the students that when they have headphones on they may not be able to hear their siblings, and they are closing off potential communication with family members. At times this may provide them the solitude that they need, but they should know when to take the headphones off. For many refugee students, listening to music is one of the best ways to connect with American culture and feel part of the group. It is also a means of connecting with personal heritage if students can listen to music from their native countries.



(Exercise)

Some students may be permitted to go outside when they are home alone, so it is necessary for the instructors to discuss safety when playing in the neighborhood. The students should be forewarned about staying away from groups or locations that are unfamiliar or threatening. If they are approached and feel unsafe or uncomfortable, they may have to find another location (even if it is indoors) to get exercise. The instructor should discuss the types of exercise students can do in their own homes to stay healthy and fit and to work off stress from a demanding day at school. Exercise can also be done with siblings as a form of entertainment.



(Play with siblings)

It is challenging for older brothers and sisters to supervise younger siblings. They may want to be with their friends, or simply left alone after a busy day at school. Many older students, however, are the babysitter for the family. The instructor should discuss the significance of their role in helping a younger child develop. Stress that a babysitter is a role model and often imitated. The older child should know how to interact with a younger sibling, how to set limits on interruptions and demands, how to engage in activities that are fun for all ages, and how to make sure that everyone is safe. The instructor may want to invite students to participate in a babysitting course (such as those conducted by the Red Cross) if there are a number of students who are responsible for their younger siblings.



(Homework, hobbies, and research projects)

There are two pictures that show students working on homework, so that the instructor can point out that some homework should be done right away and other homework may have to be done later in the evening. In this activity, students will have the chance to plan when they can get their homework done.



(Nap)

Some students may discover that they need time after school time to take a quick nap.



(Book)

After school is the best time to read a few pages in a new book, even if the reading is not assigned by a teacher. The instructor should reassure students that they will eventually be able to read books in English. In the meantime, they should select books that have illustrations that appeal to them, and should check out books about their native country and about their life in America.



- The instructor should distribute the Handout 15-6: *Home Alone Safety Tips* and discuss each of the pictures. The students can add more safety tips. These tips are demonstrated by the pictures:
 - No cooking unless an adult has given permission.
 - Leave doors locked and do not open the door to a stranger.
 - Friends are allowed only with permission, and one friend is usually enough.
 - Always supervise younger children, especially when they are on the computer. Check on younger children often, even if they are just in the next room.
 - Plan a project that everyone can work on, or help younger students with their homework.
 - Call an adult to let them know that you have arrived home safely.

The instructor should also discuss how a student can make it easier for older students to supervise them. They should come home when they are supposed to and respect the privacy of the older child. If supervision consists of conflict rather than guidance, the student should talk to the parent or Academic Coach. Some older students resent the responsibility of taking care of a younger child, and need to know how to be an effective role model.

- After discussing the handouts, the instructor can help the students to plan their time after school. The students may have scheduled clubs and after school activities, but they will have school holidays, snow days, and other time off when they will be home alone. It is helpful if all of the students have already thought about the best use of their time when they are by themselves.

Emphasis should always be on the healthy and safe ways that students can spend their time after school. The instructor should remind the students of the possibility that their peers may pressure them to use their time to try drugs and alcohol, or other unsafe activities. Remind the students that if they have a busy schedule, they are less likely to get involved in activities that can do them harm.

The Handout 15-7: *After School* helps students to keep track of what they have accomplished after school every day. Distribute multiple copies of the handout to the students and ask them to check off or circle their after school activities every day for a week. The instructor or Academic Coach can review the handout and discuss with the students how they organized their time, and what they were able to accomplish.

It may be discovered that students are spending a great deal of time on homework, or they may be overwhelmed with the responsibilities of supervising siblings and household chores. Discussion of the handout is an opportunity to find out how the students are spending their time after school, and if intervention by the Academic Coach or counselors is necessary.

All three handouts can also be used in meetings with parents, so that the school is partners with the parents in monitoring the after school activities of the refugee students.

ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY #6: IS SOMEONE BEING HURT?

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (60 minutes)

In this activity:

Refugee students will learn about how to identify trusted adults, how to approach them for assistance, and when it might be necessary to speak up.

Refugee students learn that if someone is being hurt physically or emotionally, the students can take care of themselves and others by connecting with a trusted adult.

The key to this activity is to help students understand that they should ask themselves one question when they observe or experience teasing, harassment, pressure to participate in harmful activities, or bullying. This is the question:

Is someone being hurt?

Instructors can encourage students to trust their feelings when they are uncomfortable or frightened at how they (or other students) are being treated. If their instinct is that someone is being hurt emotionally or physically, then they need to consult with a trusted adult.

Unfortunately, the pressure to stay quiet and look the other way is powerful, and refugee students quickly figure out that if they tell an adult about what they have witnessed, they can be targeted for harassment by their peers. They may also feel that it is necessary to chime in as a bystander, so that they do not antagonize the bullies.

In Activity #1 of this Module, the students learn about 12 ways to *say no* to harmful activities and the importance of not perpetuating them. The instructor should review the information in Activity #1 with the students, so that the students have already prepared themselves to face difficult situations.

In this activity, four laminated pictures are needed for the teacher to display. Copies of the pictures are also included in the Handouts (Section C), should the teacher wish to reproduce the pictures as handouts. They can be used with any age group.

- Instructors should display the picture **Feeling Hurt** (Handout 15-8) and discuss what it feels like to be sad and afraid in school. Discuss the importance of personally asking the question, **Is someone being hurt?** when witnessing teasing or bullying in school.

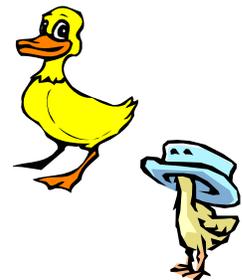
The following additional questions should be discussed:

- ? *How do you think this duck feels?*
- ? *How do you know?*
- ? *Where is the duck?*
- ? *Why would someone feel sad in school?*
- ? *If someone is being teased or bullied, how would they look?*



- Instructors should then display the picture **Hiding Hurt** (Handout 15-9) and discuss how some students may be emotionally distraught, but hide their feelings. The following questions should be discussed:

- ? *Can you always tell when someone is sad or afraid?*
- ? *Why would someone hide their feelings in school?*
- ? *What would be some clues that someone is hiding their feelings?*



Instructors should point out clues, such as students missing school, sitting alone, not interacting with friends, ignoring schoolwork, and not participating in school events.

At the same time, instructors should point out that some students are very good at hiding their feelings. They work hard, participate in school activities, and get good grades, but they are hurting and not telling anyone.

Instructors should recognize that they may be describing students in the room, so it is important to look for students who either respond positively to the topic and need to share how they feel, or for students who seem particularly uncomfortable with discussing their feelings.

- The instructor should then display the picture **Landing** (Handout 15-10). In this picture, the duck is looking for a safe place to land.

The instructor should discuss how there are places to go for help in schools and in the community. The students just need to be able to identify a safe place to land.



The instructor should identify adults in the room such as Academic Coaches who can help students who are sad or afraid. There are additional adults who can be trusted, but since refugee students will not know who they can trust until they actually meet adults who can be supportive and respectful, the instructors should invite school police officers, guidance counselors, ESL teachers, and other adults who are readily available in the schools to personally meet the students.

The instructor can also invite representatives from the local community, including law enforcement, religious officials, community-based agency staff (e.g., Boys and Girls Club coaches) and health workers. The purpose of the invitation is to facilitate a connection so that students will see a familiar face of a person who can be trusted if the students need help in the future.

The instructor should emphasize that any teacher can be a source of support. Ask the refugee students to think about a teacher they enjoy and encourage them to approach that teacher if they need help.

The students should be told how they approach adults in school, when the adults are available to help, and what will happen when they tell an adult about what they have observed or what they are feeling.

It is especially important to tell the students that adults may have to take steps to rectify a situation, especially if the activity is illegal and/or someone is being hurt. Adults may provide guidance and support, but they may also have to formally report incidents.

The instructor should be prepared to explain how confidentiality is handled in the school. Confidentiality is very important and adults will do what they can to be discreet and protect the students, but they may have to consult with other adults to solve the problem. In other words, full confidentiality may not be possible.

The following information should be explained:

? *How to decide if an adult needs to be told*

- Remind students to ask, *is someone being hurt?*

? *How to approach an adult to get help*

- Discuss the best times to approach adults, and, if necessary, how to approach adults without other students knowing.

- ? *Where the adults are located and when they are available*
- Discuss how students can walk in to offices or make appointments, and how they can take advantage of tutoring sessions and meetings with counselors and Academic Coaches to bring up concerns. They may be able to approach teachers before and after class, or after school. If students can e-mail their teachers, inform them how they can ask for help without describing the problem in the e-mail.

- ? *What words to use when telling how a student is getting hurt*
- Students may need to know how to say *I need help* or *can you help me with a problem?*

- ? *How to talk to an adult even if other students say **don't tell anyone.***

- It is critical that refugee students understand that even if they are told not to tell about what they have experienced or observed, even if they or their loved ones are threatened, there are safe ways to inform adults and get help. This topic is particularly sensitive when students are well aware of the repercussions of being called a “snitch” and reporting on their peers.

They are also aware that many students will *not* tell and they may be alone in reporting a problem. Instructors may need experts in bullying, gangs, or counseling to talk to the students about the importance of protecting themselves and their peers by informing adults about problems.

If students feel that adults already know about the problem, they should still inform the adults about their own experiences, particularly if they are pressured to participate in a harmful activity. The adults can provide guidance and support, and will look out for students who are trying not to get involved in negative activity.

- Instructors should then display the picture **Looking Out** (Handout 15-11) to reinforce that there are adults who are looking out for them. Emphasize that adults want students to be happy and safe in school, and need students to help them in achieving this goal.





JOURNAL TOPIC

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12

Who will I talk to if it is really hard to say **no** to things that are not good for me?

What will I say?



SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Visit after-school activities so that students can experience them first-hand. Invite parents and assist them as students sign up for new programs.
- Contact local agencies that can provide uniforms, costumes, and equipment so that students can comfortably enroll in after-school programs.
- Assign club mentors to refugee students who are interested in joining a school club.
- Teach students non-aggressive self-defense tactics, including how to send messages of confidence.
- Implement the activities in the **Mini-Academy Curriculum** that stress the importance of refugee students relying on each other and protecting peers from harm.
- Arrange individual meetings for each refugee student with school personnel who can be a “trusted adult” for future consultation.
- Guide students in creating posters for the school that depict the importance of treating others with kindness and respect. The posters can show the following phrases with a drawing illustrating how it feels to be bullied or harassed:
 - Don’t laugh at me
 - Respect me

- Kindness gets kindness back
 - We are ALL different
 - Don't hurt me
 - It hurts when you are mean
 - Lift me up – don't put me down
-
- Create papier-mâché masks that depict the feelings of students when they are treated well and when they are mad or sad. Display the masks with an explanation: *This is how I feel when you hurt me, or This is how I feel when you are nice to me.*
 - Order the free One World Poster Set from www.tolerance.org featuring artwork and text from *Teaching Tolerance* magazine. The posters contain vocabulary words that will have to be translated or defined, but the messages related to tolerance of diversity are appropriate for all students in all classrooms.



MODULE 16
HATE CRIME

MODULE 16: Hate Crime

PURPOSE

The purpose of Module 16 is to inform students about bias-related or “hate” crime and the importance of reporting bias-related incidents.

NOTE: *Module 15: Staying Safe* provides information to students about coping with harmful activities such as bullying that may be occurring in their schools or neighborhoods.

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Learn about laws pertaining to bias-related or “hate” crime
- Learn how to encourage respect for student differences
- Learn how to help peers overcome prejudices



SUPPLIES

**Public Service
Announcement DVDs:
Don't Hate – Be Kind**

**Know Something –
Tell Someone**

Crayons and Paper

**Display area for posters
and student artwork**

**Handout 16 – 1:
What is Hate Crime?**

**Handout 16 – 2:
Know Something –
Tell Someone**

**Handout 16 – 3:
Who Am I?**

**Handout 16 – 4:
What Do I Like to Do?**

**Handout 16 – 5:
If No One Will Listen
(Lyrics)**



MODULE 16: Hate Crime

VOCABULARY

Elementary Vocabulary

Hate
Hate Crime
Bias
Prejudice
Report
Property
Crime

Secondary Vocabulary

Hate
Tolerance
Hate Crime
Stereotype
Bias
Discrimination
Prejudice
Report
Property
Crime
Race
Ethnicity



Key Points – Hate Crime



1. *Refugee students may experience bias-related or hate crime.*

A hate crime is any unlawful act designed to frighten or harm an individual because of his or her race, religion, ethnic/national origin, or sexual orientation.

Perpetrators of hate crime intend to terrify or harm a specific victim or an entire group.



According to New York State statute, a hate crime is any one of a set of offenses attempted or committed “in whole or in substantial part because of a belief or perception” regarding specific groups of people. The New York law includes race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, age, gender, and gender identity.

Related federal and state laws pertain to the intentional defacement, damage, or destruction of any religious property because of its religious character. Laws also address the obstruction of any person’s free exercise of religious beliefs by force or threat of force. (State laws vary.)

It is not always easy to determine if a crime is bias related, but some overt signals assist investigators in identifying an incident as motivated by hate. Examples are the presence of visible symbols of hatred and bias, and/or reports by victims or witnesses of language and treatment that focus on the victim’s appearance or beliefs.

A hate crime can take two forms: either a criminal act or hate speech. Incidents of either (or both together) can involve physical assault, damage to property, bullying, harassment, verbal abuse or insults, or offensive graffiti or letters.

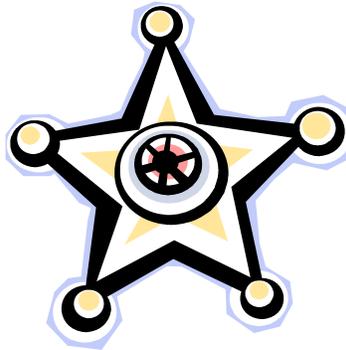
Some hate crimes are committed with the absence of any clear motive other than focusing on the victim’s race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, and/or disability.

According to the American Psychological Association, “Most hate crimes are carried out by otherwise law-abiding young people who see little wrong with their actions. Alcohol and drugs sometimes help fuel these crimes, but the determinant seems to be personal prejudice...Such prejudice is most likely rooted in an environment that disdains someone who is ‘different’ or sees that difference as threatening.”

Law enforcement officials and attorneys understand that prejudicial behavior occurs along a continuum and can involve negative speech, discriminatory practices, bullying and ostracizing, and property damage, as well as more violent crimes such as physical assault. It is up to the judicial system to determine the definition of the crime and the punishment and to decide if a bias-related event is a hate “incident” or a hate “crime.” They will determine if there should be an enhanced penalty because the crime was motivated by bias.

Investigating hate crime is the number one priority of the Federal Bureau of Investigation Civil Rights Program. A hate crime is a traditional offense like murder, arson, or vandalism with an added element of bias. For the purpose of collecting statistics, Congress has defined a hate crime as a “criminal offense against a person or property, motivated in whole or in part by an offender’s bias against a race, religion, disability, ethnic origin or sexual orientation.” Hate itself is not a crime – the FBI is mindful of protecting freedom of speech and other civil liberties.

Source: *Federal Bureau of Investigation Hate Crime Overview*, February 2009



2009 Hate Crime Statistics

Source: *FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Program*

In 1990 Congress enacted the Hate Crimes Statistics Act, mandating data collection on crimes that are motivated by hate, overseen by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

6598	single-bias incidents reported
48.5%	motivated by racial bias
19.7%	motivated by religious bias
18.5%	motivated by sexual orientation bias
11.8%	motivated by ethnicity/national origin bias
1.5%	motivated by disability bias

The largest percentage of hate crime incidents: 31.3% near homes; 17.2% on highways, roads, alleys, or streets; 11.4% at schools or colleges; 6.1% in parking lots or garages; 4.3% in churches, synagogues or temples.

Organized Hate Crime

In *Healing the Hate: A National Hate Crime Prevention Curriculum for Middle Schools*, developed by the Education Development Center for the United States Department of Justice, the authors point out that violence and prejudice are learned behaviors and not inevitable.



Hate groups have been organized that teach members to hate (such as the Aryan Nations, a neo-Nazi group), using indoctrination and paramilitary systems. With intensive recruitment and instruction, new members can become increasingly attached to an exclusive group that promotes power and superiority over others.

An organization whose primary purpose is to promote animosity, hostility, or malice against a specific group on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, religion, disability, or sexual orientation is considered a “hate group.” These groups usually have a similar belief system based on misogyny, racism, homophobia, theology and other views that differ from that of those of the group they have identified to hate. Some hate groups promote xenophobia, or the fear and hatred of strangers such as foreigners (or anything that is foreign). Some stress ethnocentricity, or the belief in the superiority of their ethnic group.

Some hate groups are formed in response to local events or changes in the community. For example, the relocation of a new group of refugees could prompt the formation of a hate group intent on targeting the refugees. As a result, hate crimes are sometimes referred to as “message crimes,” with offenders attempting to send members of a specific group a message, saying that they are unwelcome in school, the neighborhood, the community, or in the United States in general.

Law enforcement officials are aware that certain dates might trigger hate crimes by organized groups intent on committing bias-related crimes, such as:

- ◆ January 15 – Martin Luther King Jr.’s birthday
- ◆ April 20 – Hitler’s birthday
- ◆ November 9 – 10 Kristallnacht (Night of the Broken Glass, when German mobs in 1938 destroyed synagogues; over 91 Jews were killed; 30,000 Jews were thrown into concentration camps; 7,000 Jewish businesses were destroyed; and thousands of Jewish homes were destroyed).

“Hate crime is the violence of intolerance and bigotry, intended to hurt or intimidate someone because of their race, ethnicity, national origin, religious, sexual orientation, or disability. The purveyors of hate use explosives, arson, weapons, vandalism, physical violence, and verbal threats of violence to instill fear in their victims, leaving them more vulnerable to attacks and feeling alienated, helpless, suspicious and fearful.”

Source: *Hate Crime: The Violence of Intolerance*,
Community Relations Service, Washington, D.C.

Hate Crime and Refugees

There is considerable research on who joins hate groups, why they join, and what can be done about educating young people about the groups that they may be joining. Several organizations have been formed to protect people from hate groups, and to work with schools to educate students about the recruitment efforts of hate groups.

In 2008 the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) joined with a coalition of seven national civil right organizations (including the National Urban League, the Jewish Defense League, and the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights) to denounce a series of hate crimes against immigrants and refugees. Their goal is to work together to monitor incidents of hate crimes nationwide, promote hate crime legislation, and reduce prejudice and increase tolerance of differences.

Refugee students can be targets of hate crime because of race, religion, ethnicity or national origin often because the perpetrators are uneducated about refugees, ill-informed about the background or lifestyles of refugees, or are making assumptions about refugees who relocate to the United States.

The purpose of *Module 16: Hate Crime* is to raise the consciousness of refugee students about the existence of hate crime, and inform them about ways to protect themselves from bias-motivated incidents. They will also learn about the importance of reporting hate crime.

One recent crime that is being prosecuted as a hate crime is the murder of Jose Sucuzhanay, an Ecuadorean immigrant who was walking arm-in-arm with his brother in the cold weather in Brooklyn. They were trying to keep warm. Two men allegedly attacked them, shouting anti-Hispanic and homophobic slurs. Sucuzhanay was beaten with an aluminum baseball bat. The crime is considered a hate crime not because the victim might have been Hispanic or gay, but because his alleged assailants thought he was and *attacked him on that basis*.



NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT GLOSSARY OF TERMS

All schools in New York State are required to report violent or disruptive incidents on a regular basis to the New York State Education Department. The following *New York State Education Department Glossary of Terms Used in Reporting Violent or Disruptive Incidents* (August 2008) clarifies how bias-related incidents and crimes are defined in New York State school districts:

BIAS-RELATED INCIDENT

An incident is bias related if it is motivated by hate due to some characteristics or perceived characteristics of the victim including race, gender, religion, color, sexual orientation, ethnicity, ancestry, national origin, political beliefs, marital status, age, social and family background, linguistic preference, or disability. Any act or attempted act is bias related if it is designed to cause physical injury, emotional suffering, or property damage through intimidation, harassment, racial/ethnic slurs and bigoted epithets; vandalism; force, or threat of force, motivated all or in part by hostility to some real or perceived characteristic of the victim. (Note that this definition is taken from the National Center for Education Statistics.)

INTIMIDATION, HARASSMENT, MENACING, OR BULLYING BEHAVIOR AND NO PHYSICAL CONTACT

Threatening, stalking, or seeking to coerce or compel a person to do something; intentionally placing or attempting to place another person in fear of imminent physical injury; or engaging in verbal or physical conduct that threatens another with harm, including intimidation through the use of epithets or slurs involving race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, religious practices, gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability that substantially disrupts the educational process, with or without a weapon.

MINOR ALTERCATIONS

Involving physical contact and no physical injury, with or without a weapon. Striking, shoving, or kicking another person or subjecting another person to unwanted physical contact with intent to harass, alarm, or seriously annoy another person, but no physical injury results. Fights that do not result in physical injury or serious physical injury are reported in this category.



2. The negative effects of hate crime on victims and witnesses can be long-lasting.

Victims of bias-related crimes can experience post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety attacks and nightmares, and a sense of violation and degradation. They may have physical, emotional, even financial hardships as the result of a hate crime.

Effects on the community, including the school environment, can be:

- ◆ Increases in tension related to race, religion, gender, and sexual orientation
- ◆ The possibility of reprisals that can escalate violence
- ◆ Friction with local law enforcement, particularly if they do not appear to respond quickly or with an understanding of hate crime laws.



Refugee students should be aware that even hate “incidents” should be reported, not only to protect the victim, but to protect individuals and groups from future events. Any hateful incident in school harms the entire school community.

Instructors who become aware of a possible hate-related incident should inform their supervisor/director and not try to handle the situation personally. The incident could quickly become a legal issue that should be handled by qualified law enforcement officials and attorneys.

Since refugee students may feel uncomfortable, even frightened, around law enforcement, it is important that instructors provide reassurance and education for the student, and gather other personnel to support the student through any investigations.

Instructors should be aware of the process for referring refugee students to mental health counselors, since victims can experience post-traumatic stress and fear of reprisal. Any communication with parents and teachers should be the responsibility of qualified school personnel.

According to the New York State Education Department division responsible for VADIR (Violent and Disruptive Incident Reporting), incidents of targeted violence at schools are rarely sudden, impulsive attacks. Someone usually knows of the attacker’s plan. Most attackers either talk about their plans or engage in some behavior that causes concern.

Refugee students may not be in a position to hear rumors or engage in conversations with a student who may be planning a bias-related attack. However, as they become acclimated to their new school, they may either observe or experience negative behaviors that send a clear message that they are not welcome on the basis of their race, religion, or ethnicity.

As refugee students become more aware of students who treat them poorly, they can become alert to the possibility of more aggressive behaviors and talk to teachers and instructors if they are uncomfortable or frightened. If the Instructors explain during the Refugee Academy that most attacks are premeditated, the refugee students can play a valuable role in thwarting potential incidents.



Instructors can show that they understand that the topic of hate crime is difficult to discuss. Refugee students have come to America in hopes of finding a safer way of life. It is hard to tell them that they are safe, but have to be alert to the possibility of being treated badly because of their appearance or beliefs. *Instructors should keep emphasizing that most students will be kind and helpful.*

If the refugee students are aware of strategies for staying safe in their school and community (see *Module 15: Staying Safe*) and know of multiple resources for getting help if needed, then they should not be concerned. As one counselor at a Refugee Center indicated, “We don’t want these kids to think that they’ve gone out of the frying pan into the fire. Tell them the facts, reassure them, point out their peers who are wonderful to newcomers, and be there if they need you.”

Even if the students reveal that they have observed or experienced a bias-related incident, they may not want to continue the conversation. The instructor should find time to talk to the students or ensure that a supervisor talks to the students privately. Immediate follow-up is important without adding drama to the situation. The focus should be on reassurance and support, without evidence of shock, disgust, or anger toward the perpetrator.

The refugee students may be concerned about anonymity. However, instructors should not promise to keep information confidential. If students ask the instructor to promise not to tell anyone, the instructor should explain that support will be provided as students share information with authorities. It is not always possible to keep information confidential, for the benefit of the students and for other potential victims.

The instructor should keep in mind that the disclosure of an event may eventually result in a criminal case, so the sooner school personnel can take over the situation, the faster the victim can get appropriate legal assistance. If it appears that the student has an urgent need for safety (or an entire refugee community may be affected) then the school administration should be notified via the instructor’s supervisor. If the supervisor is not immediately available, a school administrator should be told so that appropriate law enforcement and legal advisors can be contacted for support of victims and witnesses.



3. There are systems for reporting and investigating hate crime.

Anyone can become the victim of a hate crime for something they do not have any control over, such as gender, race, ethnicity, religion, or disability. Individuals can be identified with specific groups by their participation in religious organizations, community events, or school clubs, or by the neighborhoods that they live in.

However, these associations can be misunderstood, especially by those who have not been educated about different cultures, or have been taught that anything different is wrong or dangerous.

“Victims of hate crimes rarely do anything to provoke an attack. They are selected simply because of who they are perceived to be.”

Source: *Criminal Justice Training Center, Napa Valley, California*

Victims of hate crime need reassurance from school officials and law enforcement that bias-related incidents will be viewed as serious violations of the law.

Victims are often terrified of retaliation if they report the incident, or even ostracism from their own community if they speak up. They may not trust law enforcement because of past experiences in their native countries, and may fear deportation.

Law enforcement groups across the country have received specialized training for identifying and investigating hate crimes, and many large communities have established units dedicated to bias-related crime.

According to *A Local Prosecutor’s Guide for Responding to Hate Crimes*, “some jurisdictions have appointed one person who acts as a liaison between the police and prosecutors, while others have established a chain of command for sharing information with other law enforcement agencies. For example, the Trial Division of the New York County District Attorney’s Office works closely with the New York City Police Department in investigating and prosecuting bias-motivated cases.” (American Prosecutors Research Institute)

Key elements of law enforcement training can be applied to school personnel, as long as trained administrators follow school policies and procedures. Instructors and Academic Coaches may be in a position to **assist** administrators in carrying out an investigation, and should always provide support to the student involved. Law enforcement guidelines include:



- ◆ Report rumors and student comments, even if they are not presented seriously at the time.
- ◆ Explain to refugee students who confide in a teacher about a possible or committed hate crime that it must be reported to protect the victim and future victims.
- ◆ Academic Coaches and their supervisors should always begin by reporting an incident to school administrators. The school officials will notify law enforcement and follow the policies of the school district. District leaders should always consult with an attorney to ascertain the extent to which federal and state hate crime and civil rights law may apply in the school context.
- ◆ Control and remove other students from the area of the incident.
- ◆ The victim should not be blamed for the incident.
- ◆ Do not make assumptions about the victim on the basis of physical appearance, dress, language, or location of the incident. (Refugees may not be aware that a location is unsafe, may not have a choice about where they live, or may not understand words that are being used to taunt or threaten.)
- ◆ Record the sequence of events, including information about previous threats or warnings.
- ◆ Record specific language, often used as key evidence in hate crimes. This may require assistance from an interpreter. Reports of witnesses about statements and gestures should be recorded.
- ◆ If there is physical damage (e.g., defacing, spray painting), take photographs. Pictures of the victim should be taken by investigators.
- ◆ If literature has been distributed, wait for law enforcement to collect the documents.
- ◆ Provide support and comfort to a student, but for legal reasons let the investigators express regret that an incident happened on school grounds. Reassure victims of hate incidents that they will be supported throughout the investigation and afterward. Many victims will be

concerned about the repercussions of reporting an incident and may not understand the importance of reporting. They may also not understand the impact of an event on their emotional well-being. (See Background Information #3 above.)

- ◆ Take the crime seriously to reduce fear and anger (of both the victim and the community) and to reduce the potential for copycat or retaliation crimes. School personnel can ensure that counselors and interpreters are available if the victim and the witnesses need to discuss the experience.
- ◆ Recognize that perpetrators of individual bias-related crimes may be affiliated with a large hate group in the community or the nation.



4. A discussion about “hate” should be conducted with sensitivity and accuracy.

Even though *Module 16: Hate Crime* is not about the origins and manifestations of hate, some students may want to talk about the topic of “hate” in general. They may have personal stories to tell and want to find explanations for why people exhibit hate. It is not uncommon for victims to ask “why do they hate us?” or “why me?” or “what causes people to hate?”



The Refugee Academy is not the setting for a serious, in-depth discussion of the many facets of hate. However, if a student raises questions that go deeper than basic information about hate crimes, the student should not be ignored. That student may be representing the questions of others in the group, especially if there is tension between students because of hateful experiences in their country of origin.

The refugee students may need reassurance from the instructor that the topic of hate can be discussed openly. They will need to know that hate does not dominate the culture of most American schools and that hate *can* be eliminated.

The following points can be made if students seem anxious to explore the topic further.

- ◆ Hatred of refugees is usually based on fear of the unfamiliar or the unknown. People tend to be wary of something that is different, even if they are generally open to change and new experiences. They need accurate information and may need time to adjust.
- ◆ People are not born with hate. They learn it. If they learn it, they can “unlearn” it. People can be taught that hate is wrong and can be guided into better understanding of people they have learned to hate.

- ◆ People who hate may have developed distrust because of past experiences or historical events in their country. This is true of refugees, too. The instructor should point out that resettling is a good way to move forward and develop trust again.
- ◆ Some people are threatened by groups who don't believe the same things that they believe, particularly in areas of religion and cultural traditions. With education and civil interaction with refugees, people who may be resistant can learn to "tolerate" others instead of automatically hating them. If they express tolerance, it means that they are comfortable with their own way of life, but appreciate that not everyone has the same views or lifestyles.

This concept may be hard for some of the refugee students to understand because they themselves may have learned *intolerance* for other groups. The instructor should focus on the importance of harmony and tolerance as they forge a new life in a new country.

- ◆ Victims of hate can have emotional injury without evidence of physical injury. Instructors should explain that some people do not know that they can inflict emotional damage that is just as powerful as physical damage.
- ◆ Hate can be eliminated, but perhaps only gradually, one person at a time. Refugee students should take their time to form friendships with other students who are tolerant and supportive. They should avoid students who exhibit hateful behaviors and make a point to be civil, pleasant, and proud of their heritage. If they need assistance in coping with someone who shows hate, they should talk to an adult who can help educate and cultivate tolerance.

Facilitating Sensitive Discussions

Instructors and Academic Coaches may have to facilitate challenging conversations around the topic of hate. Some class discussions can become very personal and sensitive. All personal comments by refugee students, no matter how emotional, should be followed by some form of acknowledgment by the instructor.

Instructors should become familiar with the characteristics of the students in the class so that it is easier to determine if it is necessary to stop the class activity and respond to a student's comments. Some students will openly reveal personal information routinely, and a simple acknowledgment of interest and support will do.

"Thank for sharing with us. That must have been hard. Let's talk later so you can tell me more about it."

Some students will suddenly speak up for the first time, requiring that the class agenda be set aside temporarily and revelations discussed. Emphasis in any discussion should always be on moving forward and solving a problem instead of reviewing the details of an experience.

“This sounds like something that others may have experienced. Does this sound familiar? What do you think should be done?”

“Are there suggestions? What steps can be taken to solve this?”

Some students will make statements as fact, not knowing that they have misinformation or have been taught information in a different manner than other groups (e.g., beliefs about religion, sexual orientation, or roles of women in society). The instructor should gently explain that not everyone believes the same things and the result is an interesting mixture of cultures worldwide and in the United States.

The instructor should not question beliefs or attempt to point out the weaknesses in the “facts” provided. Understanding and accepting different points of view should be emphasized, not who is “right” or “wrong” in their beliefs.



This is true even if a student makes a statement that is blatantly prejudicial. It is not the instructor’s responsibility to reeducate the student. In some cases, a gentle correction might be appropriate, as long as the instructor does not challenge the views of the family or refugee’s community.

For example, if a student claims that everyone associated with a specific religion promotes violence, a correction can be made.

“In this country you can have many different beliefs. You believe one thing and someone else could believe something else. It is a good idea to think about why you believe something and check out the facts. The important thing is to accept that we all think differently and it is a safer world if we don’t hate each other.”

Some students reveal information for shock value, or because they do not realize that they are sharing information that indicates a need for counseling. The instructor will have to determine on the spot if the student needs individual attention, if the class should become involved in the discussion, or if there should be minimal reaction followed by a return to the agenda.

“You should know that you are not alone. It takes courage to even mention that situation. Let’s meet after class and we can talk about it some more.”

No matter how a refugee student has revealed something personal related to the general topic of hate (or related to hate crime) the instructor should always provide support or invite the support of other students.

The instructor should be aware of school and community resources for reporting incidents and gathering further information, and should always inform their supervisor or the Refugee Resettlement Case Manager.



5. Refugee students with their schools can help educate students and school personnel for the purpose of promoting cultural tolerance and overcoming prejudice.

Definition of Prejudice

Attitudes or opinions about a person or group simply because the person belongs to a specific religion, race, nationality, or other group.

Prejudices involve strong feelings that are difficult to change. Prejudice is prejudging. A person who thinks, “I don’t want (name of group) living in my neighborhood,” is expressing prejudice.

Source: *What to Tell Your Child About Prejudice and Discrimination*,
Anti-Defamation League

The root cause of prejudice is heavily debated in the literature. Some researchers believe that prejudice is the same regardless of the specific target, while others believe that prejudice is “situation specific,” determined by current events. Others write that prejudice is based on power, economic or political, and can be personalized through group training or individual experiences.

Regardless of the source of prejudice, there are a number of strategies for counteracting prejudice. The general school population should become familiar with the benefits of multiculturalism and the value of the unique characteristics of individuals. Specific steps can be taken to encourage students to be tolerant of diversity and treat their peers with respect. Teachers can employ conflict resolution and mediation techniques, as well as violence prevention by helping students understand attitudes and behaviors that promote violence.

In an attempt to minimize the development of prejudice, well-meaning adults often teach children to ignore differences and focus on similarities. Just as common experiences are part of the “glue” that holds communities together, understanding and respecting differences is essential for successful multicultural societies.

Source: *Close the Book on Hate*, Anti-Defamation League

Students who are refugees should not be expected to bear the burden of eliminating prejudice. It is not their responsibility to change attitudes and behaviors. However, they can facilitate understanding and tolerance by communicating information about their values and culture.

If they are assisted in acclimating successfully to American schools, they will not only feel more comfortable with their peers, they will be regarded as newcomers who are willing to adapt to a new culture. They will have an easier time connecting with other students and forming friendships. As their fellow students get to know them as individual people rather than representations of a refugee group, they can quietly educate while still retaining important elements of their cultural history.

For example, if a student practices a religion that is unfamiliar to peers, it is not necessary to abandon the religion to fit in to a new school environment. But it is quite possible that American students may ask questions, show resistance or disdain, or even taunt and tease about the religion.

Refugee students will need to know how to handle these reactions while still building positive relationships. As friendships build, respect and understanding can grow, and refugee students can begin educating friends about their personal histories and beliefs.



This takes time (and often guidance from adults) but can result in reduced tension and higher tolerance of differences. This module, although focusing on identifying and reporting hate crimes, includes activities that are centered around building positive relationships for the purpose of eliminating prejudice. (See also *Module 2: Making Friends*.)

According to New York State Education Law (for Social Studies), Article 17 (Section 801a) the New York State Board of Regents "...shall ensure that the course of instruction in grades kindergarten through twelve include a component on civility, citizenship, and character education. Such component shall instruct students on the principles of honesty, tolerance, personal responsibility, respect for others, observance of laws and rules, courtesy, dignity and other traits which will enhance the quality of their experiences in, and contributions to, the community."

"A common saying among educators working to promote children's appreciation of diversity is that there is no gene for racism. Thus, they believe that even though children may initially develop and act on intolerant attitudes, they can be educated to value human differences." (Wendy Schwartz, *Anti-Bias and Conflict Resolution Curricula: Theory and Practice*, 1994.)

Researchers and hate crime specialists agree that prejudice reduction and violence prevention are vital to reducing incidents of hate crime. Communities, schools, law enforcement, and other justice system agencies need to work together to promote tolerance and peaceful problem-solving.

Strategies include increasing public awareness about the goals of hate groups and laws related to bias-related crime; active crime prevention plans that include representatives from all facets of the community; and fostering a "zero tolerance" atmosphere in schools. This includes written codes of conduct, support for peaceful conflict resolution, and clear consequences for engaging in bias-motivated behavior.

Instructors should be aware of the policies of their school district and incorporate hate crime education in classroom activities and discussions. *Module 16: Hate Crimes* informs students about the definition of hate crime and the rights of refugee students, but emphasizes the importance of improving communication between members of different cultural groups and reporting bias-related crime.

Instructors and school personnel have the added responsibility of intervening with students who express discriminatory beliefs. This may be challenging, as some refugee students have experienced persecution from different groups (e.g., religious or political groups) or may have learned prejudicial viewpoints about groups from their native countries (e.g., Tutsi and Hutu in Burundi).

Emphasis in instruction should be on the laws that protect refugee students, what to do if they feel that they are being subject to bias-related crime, and how to refrain from perpetuating biased points of view themselves.



ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY 1: DON'T HATE – BE KIND (PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT ACTIVITY)

Grades K-5 (45 minutes)

In this activity:

Students will learn the importance of appreciating cultural differences and the benefits of being kind instead of hating. The public service announcement DVD *Don't Hate - Be Kind* will be used as a discussion tool.

Note: Instructors should review Background Information #4 in this module on facilitating sensitive discussions.



- Explain the word “kind” and ask students if they have experienced kindness since they have arrived in America. Ask for specific examples.
 - A person who is KIND is nice, considerate, and concerned about the needs and happiness of others.
- Explain the word “hate” as the opposite of “love.”
 - Hate is a very strong dislike of something. Hate can cause extreme discomfort, anger, and sometimes acting out in dramatic or violent ways.
 - Ask students to describe foods that they hate to eat or sounds that they hate, such as fire alarms or screeching brakes.
 - Ask them how it feels when they eat a food they hate, or when they hear a sound that they hate to hear.
 - Explain that the word “hate” is often used casually, as in “I hate that sound!” or “I hate sweet potatoes!”

- The use of the word “hate” when applied to people is inappropriate and inconsiderate.
 - Explain that it can be very hurtful to say “I hate you” or to show hate with angry words or by hitting someone. Students should not say “I hate my teacher” or “I hate you” to another person even if they are angry. Sometimes they will not be able to tell that they are hurting someone’s feelings.
 - Some students may feel that students who are mean deserve to be told that they are hated. Ask the students, “How would it feel to be told that you are hated?”
 - Explain that hate will only stop when everyone works hard to be kind and helpful. When it is hard to be kind, it is better to look for situations where kindness is easier, and stay away from people who promote hate.
 - Some of the students will have experienced hate, either as part of a refugee community or in their personal lives at home or in their new living environment. They may have difficulty understanding that hate is not necessary.

Instructors should keep repeating the definition of “kind.”

- Show the public service announcement DVD: *Don’t Hate – Be Kind*
- Explain that sometimes other students or adults may attack people because they are different. This is a way of showing hate and is not allowed in school and in the community.



- Stress that this does not happen often, and that most of the students in the school will be kind and helpful.
- Explain that there might be a few students who have learned to hate others because of the color of their skin, their religion, what they wear, or how they speak. These students do not understand that all people are different and everyone deserves respect.
- These students may tease the refugee students. They may try to cause harm to property (such as grabbing a backpack) or physically hurt a student (such as pushing or tripping).
- Keep repeating that this behavior is not allowed in school, especially if the offender mentions the student’s race, color, ethnicity/national origin, or religion.

- Stress that this behavior should not be accepted as “normal” school behavior, and refugee students should tell a teacher or their Academic Coach.
- For younger students, the instructors should keep stressing that if someone is not kind to them, they should tell their teacher or Academic Coach. Their school does not want anyone to be treated unkindly.
- The students do not need to know the difference between a hate “incident” and a hate “crime.” They need to know that treatment that is uncomfortable or frightening, especially if it is connected to their status as a refugee, should be reported to an adult as soon as possible.
- Refugee students may be hesitant to reveal their concerns, but if they are reminded that they are protecting others as well, they will be more likely to share information.
 - Ask the students to discuss what they can do to show that they are kind to others. Point out that kindness can lead to a positive reaction and more kindness.
 - Demonstrate kindness by asking students to do the following tasks.

After each task below, do an act of kindness. Ask the students: “What did I do that was kind?”

- **Ask a student to:** Drop a book on the floor.
 - Pick up the book, dust it off, hand it to the student.
- **Ask a student to:** Trip over a backpack on the floor.
 - Help the student, ask if they are okay, move the backpack.
- **Ask a student to:** Look for a pencil or pen.
 - Produce a pencil or pen, offer it to the student, smile.



After doing these three tasks, ask the students to demonstrate their own acts of kindness.

- **The instructor can:** Knock over a cup of water.
 - Student demonstrates act of kindness

- **The instructor can:** Look around for the chalk.
 - Student demonstrates act of kindness

- **The instructor can:** Drop a file of papers.
 - Student demonstrates act of kindness

- **The instructor can:** Smudge paint on the chin.
 - Student demonstrates act of kindness

- Explain how acts of kindness can be done with little knowledge of the English language.
 - Ask the students to illustrate an act of kindness that they would like to do for someone else in the class. Discuss the pictures and display them in the school building. Label the display **Don't Hate – Be Kind.**

DON'T HATE – BE KIND (PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT ACTIVITY)

Grades 6-8, 9-12 (45 minutes)

In this activity:

Students will learn the importance of appreciating cultural differences and the benefits of being kind instead of hating. The public service announcement DVD *Don't Hate – Be Kind* will be used as a discussion tool.



Note: Instructors should review Background Information #4 in this module on facilitating sensitive discussions.

- Explain the word “kind” and ask students if they have experienced kindness since they have arrived in America. Ask for specific examples.
 - A person who is KIND is nice, considerate, and concerned about the needs and happiness of others.
- Explain the word “hate” as the opposite of “love.”
 - Hate is a very strong dislike of something. Hate can cause extreme discomfort, anger, and sometimes acting out in dramatic or violent ways.
 - Ask students to describe foods that they hate to eat or sounds that they hate, such as fire alarms or screeching brakes.
 - Ask them how it feels when they eat a food they hate, or when they hear a sound that they hate to hear.
 - Explain that the word “hate” is often used casually, as in “I hate that sound!” or “I hate sweet potatoes!”



- The use of the word “hate” when applied to people is inappropriate and inconsiderate.
 - Explain that it can be very hurtful to say “I hate you” or to show hate with angry words or by hitting someone. Students should not say “I hate my teacher” or “I hate you” to another person even if they are angry. Sometimes they will not be able to tell that they are hurting someone’s feelings.
 - Some students may feel that students who are mean deserve to be told that they are hated. Ask the students, “How would it feel to be told that you are hated?”
 - Explain that hate will only stop when everyone works hard to be kind and helpful. When it is hard to be kind, it is better to look for situations where kindness is easier, and stay away from people who promote hate.
 - Some of the students will have experienced hate, either as part of a refugee community or in their personal lives at home or in their new living environment. They may have difficulty understanding that hate is not necessary.

Instructors should keep repeating the definition of “kind.”

- Show the public service announcement DVD: *Don’t Hate – Be Kind*
- Discuss the importance of respecting everyone in the class, even though everyone is different.
 - Explain how it may be difficult for some American children to accept differences. They may not be kind to students who are refugees. Stress that this does not happen often, and that most of the students in the school will be kind and helpful.
- Distribute Handout 16 – 1 *What is Hate Crime?*
- Show the poster *Know Something – Tell Someone*
- Discuss the definition on the handout.
 - Explain that sometimes other students or adults may attack people because they are different. This is a way of showing hate and is not allowed in school and in the community.
 - Explain that there might be a few students who have learned to hate others because of the color of their skin, their religion, what



they wear, or how they speak. These students do not understand that all people are different and should be treated with respect.

- These students may tease the refugee students. They may try to cause harm to property (such as grabbing a backpack) or physically hurt the student (such as pushing or tripping).
 - Keep repeating that this behavior is not allowed in school, especially if the offender mentions the student's race, color, ethnicity/national origin, or religion.
 - Stress that this behavior should not be accepted as “normal” school behavior, and refugee students should tell a teacher, their Academic Coach, or their Refugee Resettlement Case Manager.
- The students do not need to know the difference between a hate “incident” and a hate “crime.” They need to know that treatment that is uncomfortable or frightening, especially if it is connected to their status as a refugee, should be reported to an adult as soon as possible.
- Refugee students may be hesitant to reveal their concerns, but if they are reminded that they are protecting others as well, they will be more likely to share information.
 - Ask the students to discuss what they can do to show that they are kind to others. Point out that kindness can lead to a positive reaction and more kindness.
 - Demonstrate kindness by asking students to do the following tasks.



After each task below, do an act of kindness. Ask the students: “What did I do that was kind?”

- **Ask a student to:** Drop a book on the floor.
 - Pick up the book, dust it off, hand it to the student.
- **Ask a student to:** Trip over a backpack on the floor.
 - Help the student, ask if they are okay, move the backpack.
- **Ask a student to:** Look for a pencil or pen.
 - Produce a pencil or pen, offer it to the student, smile.

After doing these three tasks, ask the students to demonstrate their own acts of kindness.

- **The instructor can:** Knock over a cup of water.

- **The instructor can:** Look around for the chalk.
- **The instructor can:** Drop a file of papers.
- **The instructor can:** Smudge paint on their own chin.
- Explain how acts of kindness can be done with little knowledge of the English language.
 - Ask the students to illustrate an act of kindness that they would like to do for someone else in the class.
- Discuss the pictures and display them in the school building.

ACTIVITY 2: IF YOU KNOW SOMETHING – TELL SOMEONE

Grades 6-8, 9-12 (45 minutes)

In this activity:

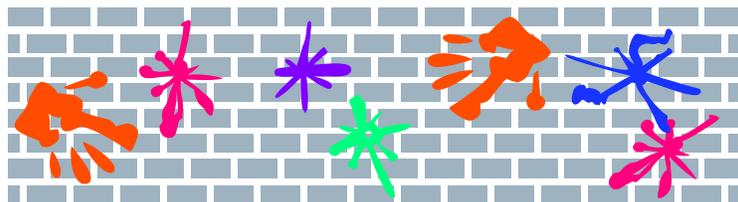
Students will learn the school process for reporting bias-related incidents or hate crime.

This activity should follow Activity #1, and should only be presented to students after they have had a chance to discuss the definition of “hate” and the importance of kindness.

Note: Instructors should review Background Information #4 in this module on facilitating sensitive discussions.



- Even if the students have already seen it, show the public service announcement DVD *Don't Hate – Be Kind*.
- Review the concept of “hate” as discussed in Activity #1.
- Review Handout 16 – 1 *What is Hate Crime?* and show the DVD: *Know Something – Tell Someone*.
- Students play a very significant role in preventing hate crimes.
 - Explain that students are expected to report hate crimes to an adult if they see them or experience them. They are expected to tell adults about rumors they have heard, plans they may be aware of, or threatening acts they have observed.
 - If they see teasing of a refugee, particularly if it appears to be based on prejudice, the students should tell an adult. They can stop the teasing from turning into a criminal action.



- Review the steps for reporting a bias-related incident in their school. Use the Handout 16 – 2 *Know Something – Tell Someone*.

The steps for the student will vary depending on the school, but they generally consist of the following:



1. Tell an adult you trust. Don't be afraid to tell. You will protect yourself and others.
2. Ask a translator, Refugee Resettlement Case Manager, and/or Academic Coach to join you when you are reporting to school or law enforcement officials.
3. An adult investigator will be responsible for gathering information about the incident. Be prepared to provide details, whether a victim or a witness.
4. If there is evidence (e.g., graffiti, photographs, letters, destroyed property, etc.) bring it along.
5. Remember that hate crime should not be considered a minor disciplinary behavior, such as mean students just fooling around. A hate crime is against the law and is not allowed in schools. The investigator will take it seriously and will probably ask a lot of questions.
6. Ask witnesses to join in the reporting process. If they won't join (or try to talk the victim out of reporting), don't push it. The investigators will ask for their names and will interview them privately.
7. Victims and witnesses who report hate crimes are helping the people in the community and are helping to keep the school safe. If students fear the repercussions of reporting, they should tell adults about their fears.

If a teacher, Academic Coach, or Refugee Resettlement Case Manager offers additional support such as counseling, both victims and witnesses should accept the offer. Victims of hate crime can feel sadness, anger, confusion, and depression. Some people cannot sleep after experiencing a hate crime, or they may feel fearful when they go to school. Witnesses can also have these feelings.

Adults in school want refugee students to feel comfortable and safe in school and can help them cope with the aftermath of a hate crime.



- Review the concepts of the public service announcement DVD *Don't Hate – Be Kind*.

ACTIVITY 3: ERASE PREJUDICE – WE ARE ALL DIFFERENT, BUT WE LIKE THE SAME THINGS!

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (45 minutes)

In this activity:

Students will understand how they can help erase prejudice in their school.

This activity should follow Activity #1, and should only be presented to students after they have had a chance to discuss the definition of “hate” and the importance of kindness.



Note: Instructors should review Background Information #4 in this module on facilitating sensitive discussions.

- Even if the students have already seen it, show the public service announcement DVD *Don't Hate – Be Kind*.
- Review the concept of “hate” as discussed in Activity #1.
- Discuss the meaning of the word “prejudice.”
 - For younger students, use the following definition of prejudice:
 - *Strong, bad feelings about a person or a group, based on the way they look. A person who thinks “I don't want those people in my neighborhood” is showing prejudice.*
 - For older students, use the following definition of prejudice:
 - *Attitudes or opinions about a person or group simply because the person belongs to a specific religion, race, nationality, or other group.*
 - *Prejudices are strong, bad feelings about a person or group, based on the way they look or the things they believe.*
 - *A person who thinks “I don't want those people living in my neighborhood” is showing prejudice.*

- Give the following three examples of prejudice. Stop after the three examples so that students won't feel uncomfortable and personalize the examples.

Younger students may be confused because this may be the first time they have ever been asked to think about prejudice. Older students may be aware of prejudice as a concept, but may not realize that prejudice against refugees could exist in America. Still others may be well aware of prejudice in their new country and fearful that they will be victims of discrimination and hate crime.

Review the definition of prejudice again before providing the examples.



The examples of prejudice are:

1. Not liking someone just because they have a different skin color.
 2. Not liking someone because they dress differently than everyone else.
 3. Not liking someone because they go to a different church or temple.
- Ask students to share examples of prejudice that they may have witnessed. Discuss how people sometimes draw conclusions based on little knowledge. Tell the students that they are going to be drawing pictures to show who they are and what they can do. Then maybe people will have a better understanding and won't draw conclusions.
 - Discuss how people are all different, but all deserve respect.
 - Point to individual **adults** in the room.

1) Point out basic characteristics that make them different from one another. For example:

- Abeer has curly brown hair. Amina has long black hair. Abdi has short brown hair.
- Abeer, Amina, Abdi are all different. That is what makes the class so interesting.



2) Then point out their similarities. For example:

- They are ALL nice.
- They are ALL helping you to learn.

So they are also the same in many ways.

We are *all* the same in many ways.

But we should enjoy our differences because otherwise life would be boring!

3) Repeat the example with types of clothing. (Abeer is wearing a sari, etc.)

- Distribute crayons or markers and Handout 16 – 3 *Who Am I?*
 - Ask the students to draw a picture of themselves in the mirror, showing an activity that they like to do. They should include anything different and special about themselves, such as wearing clothes from their native country, eating foods that are not always available in the United States, or celebrating a family holiday.
- Distribute Handout 16 – 4 *What Do I Like to Do?* and ask students to draw something that they have enjoyed since they arrived in America. They may show that they like to play on the playground, go to McDonald's, ride on the subway, etc.
- Display the drawings in the school with the title: **We Are All Different – But We Like the Same Things!**
 - The purpose of the display is to show American students that the refugee students may be different in appearance, but they enjoy doing the same things that American students like to do.



ACTIVITY 4: IF NO ONE WILL LISTEN

Grades 9-12 (45 minutes)

In this activity:

Students will have the opportunity to talk about their feelings related to hate crime by discussing the lyrics of a popular song.

Instructors should review Background Information #4 in this Module on facilitating sensitive discussions.

Note: This activity should be carried out after Activity #2 has been completed.



- **The song “If No One Will Listen” (lyrics below) is a powerful, emotional song. The instructors should screen the song lyrics with their supervisors to ensure that the older students can comprehend the meaning of the lyrics and discuss them comfortably. The lyrics should be translated.**
 - Distribute Handout 16 – 5 *If No One Will Listen* to the students and discuss how they think the words could be about experiencing a hate crime. The song is sung by American Idol winner Kelly Clarkson, and was written by Keri Noble. A CD of the song is available in most stores and on-line, but the students do not need to hear the music if the instructor is not able to obtain the CD.
 - Some older students may need to talk about how they feel when they are treated badly by their peers. They may have experienced or witnessed hate crime in the past and are still angry or sad. They may be hiding how they feel and unwilling (or unable) to talk about their emotions.



In addition, students may personally feel hate because they are angry at people who tease or harass them. They know they have to “just stay here” but are fearful of what might happen to them.

They may also feel they need to speak, but are afraid that no one will care about what they have to say. For example, if they decide to speak up about a bias-related crime, they may be concerned that school officials and other students will not take it seriously.



Explain to students that in this case the chorus is saying that the Academic Coaches, Refugee Resettlement Case Managers, teachers, guidance counselors, and school administrators will be there for them and will like them for “what they really are.”

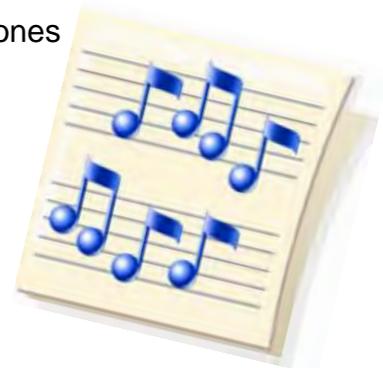
Explain that “after the bombs explode” does not necessarily refer to real bombs, but to events that feel painful, and that victims of crimes often feel alone after a frightening event. If they feel that no one is listening to them (or caring about them) they can turn to any of the adults in the Refugee Academy for emotional support and guidance.

If No One Will Listen

Maybe no one told you there is strength in your tears
And so you fight to keep from pouring out
But what if you unlock the gate that keeps your secret soul
Do you think there's enough that you would drown?

No one can tell you where you alone must go
There's no telling what you will find there
And, God, I know the fear that eats away at your bones
Screaming every step, "just stay here"

If no one will listen
If you decide to speak
If no one's left standing after the bombs explode
If no one wants to look at you
For what you really are
I will be here still



If you find your fists are raw and red from beating yourself down
If your legs have given out under the weight
If you find you've been settling for a world of gray
So you wouldn't have to face down your own hate

If no one will listen
If you decide to speak
If no one's left standing after the bombs explode
If no one wants to look at you
For what you really are
I will be here still.

© Kelly Clarkson, Keri Noble





JOURNAL TOPIC

Grades K-5, 6-9, 9-12

Who will I talk to if I witness or experience hate crime?

What will I say?

How can I inform my teachers and other students about my culture so that they appreciate and respect me?



SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Invite school personnel and law enforcement officials who are familiar with bias-related crime to introduce themselves to the students. They can explain safe systems for reporting hate crime.
- Invite non-refugee students to the Refugee Academy to share information about what they like to do, what they enjoy eating, how they spend time with their families, and what they enjoy about living in America. Stress that everyone in the room is different and yet they all have similar likes and dislikes. This is an opportunity for refugee students to provide information, even if translation is needed, about who they are and what they are looking forward to in their new country. The visitors will become educated about differences and will hopefully build respect and appreciation. The instructor should frequently stop the class and talk about the importance of cultural tolerance and kindness.
- Invite former refugee students to talk about what they like to do, what they enjoy eating, how they spend time with their families and what they enjoy about living in America. Ask them to talk about their experiences with new students, how they handle bias comments, stressing the importance of talking to school personnel about concerns.
- Show the DVDs and posters to class visitors.



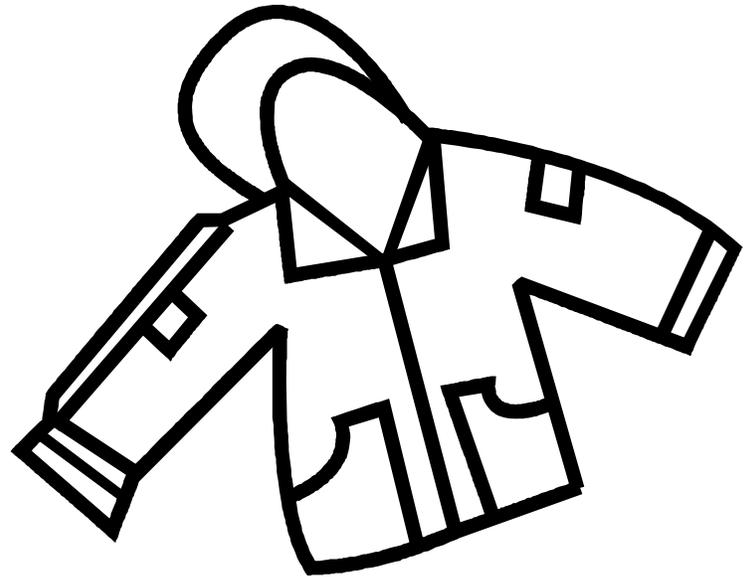
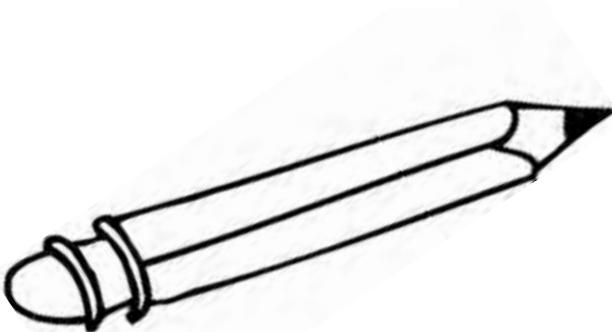
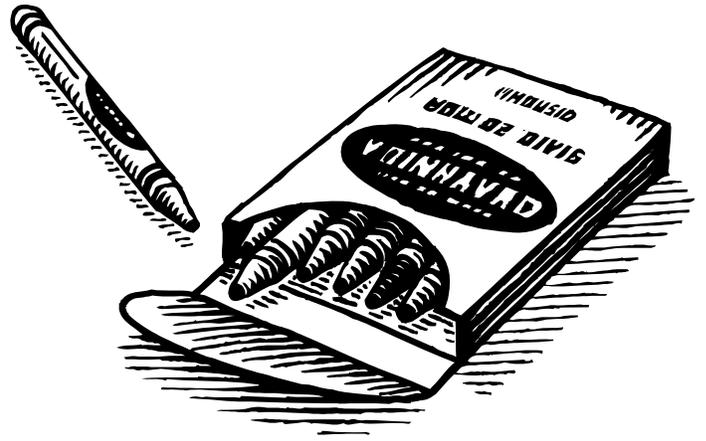
CURRICULUM HANDOUTS

PLEASE VISIT OUR SCHOOL

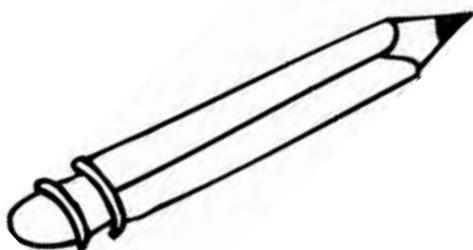








HANDOUT 1 – 2: SCHOOL SUPPLIES (K-5)



HANDOUT 1 – 3: SCHOOL SUPPLIES (6-12)

After School Activities



After School Activities



GETTING TO SCHOOL



School Bus Number: _____

Morning Time: _____

Home Time: _____

Bus Stop: _____



City Bus Number: _____

Morning Time: _____

Home Time: _____

Bus Stop: _____



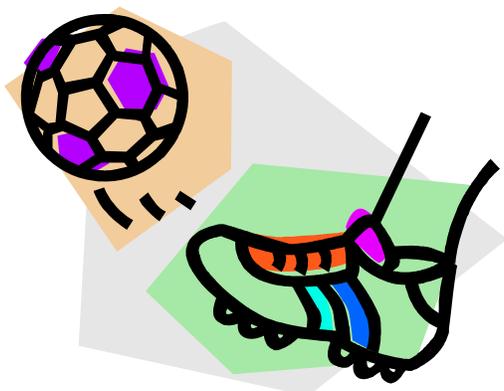
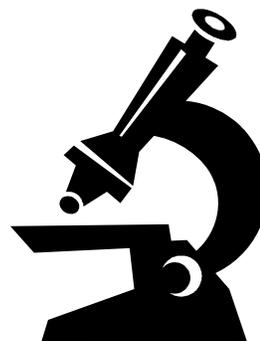
Morning Time: _____

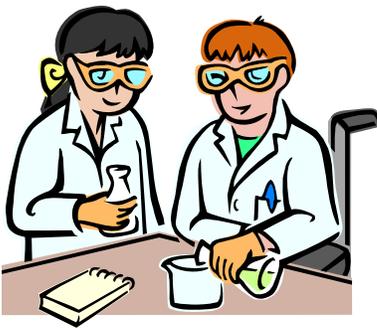
Home Time: _____

Walking to School _____

SCHOOL STARTS: _____

SCHOOL SUBJECTS





2012

January						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

April						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

July						
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8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

October						
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7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

February						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

May						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

August						
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5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

November						
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4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

March						
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17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

June						
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17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

September						
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9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

December						
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						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

2013

January						
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13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

February						
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3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28		

March						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

April						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

May						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

June						
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						1
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9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

July						
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	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

August						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

September						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

October						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

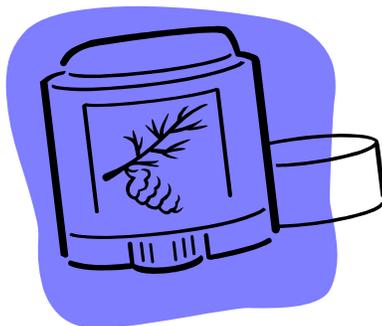
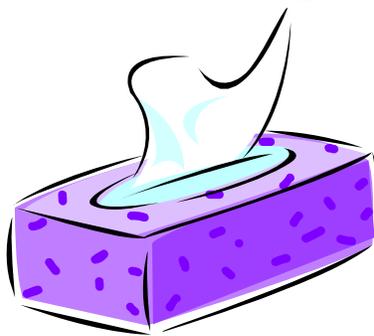
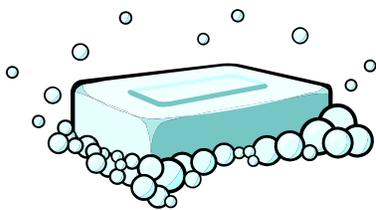
November						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

December						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

STAY HEALTHY!



STAY HEALTHY!



POSSIBLE SOURCES OF LEAD



Lead Pipes



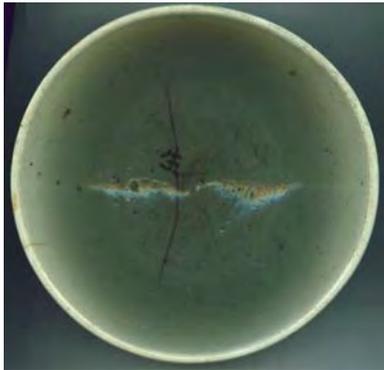
Some Jewelry



Paint Chips



Some Toys

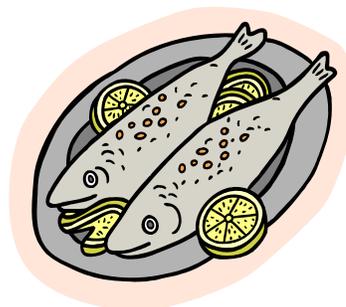
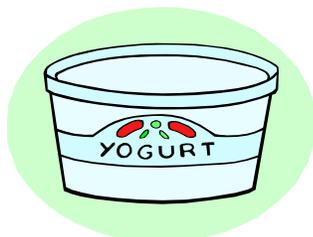
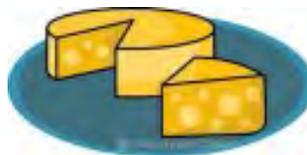
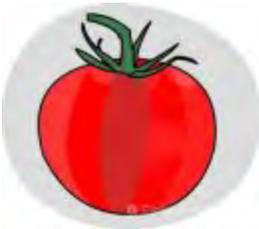
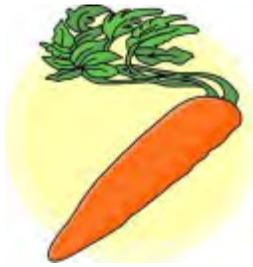


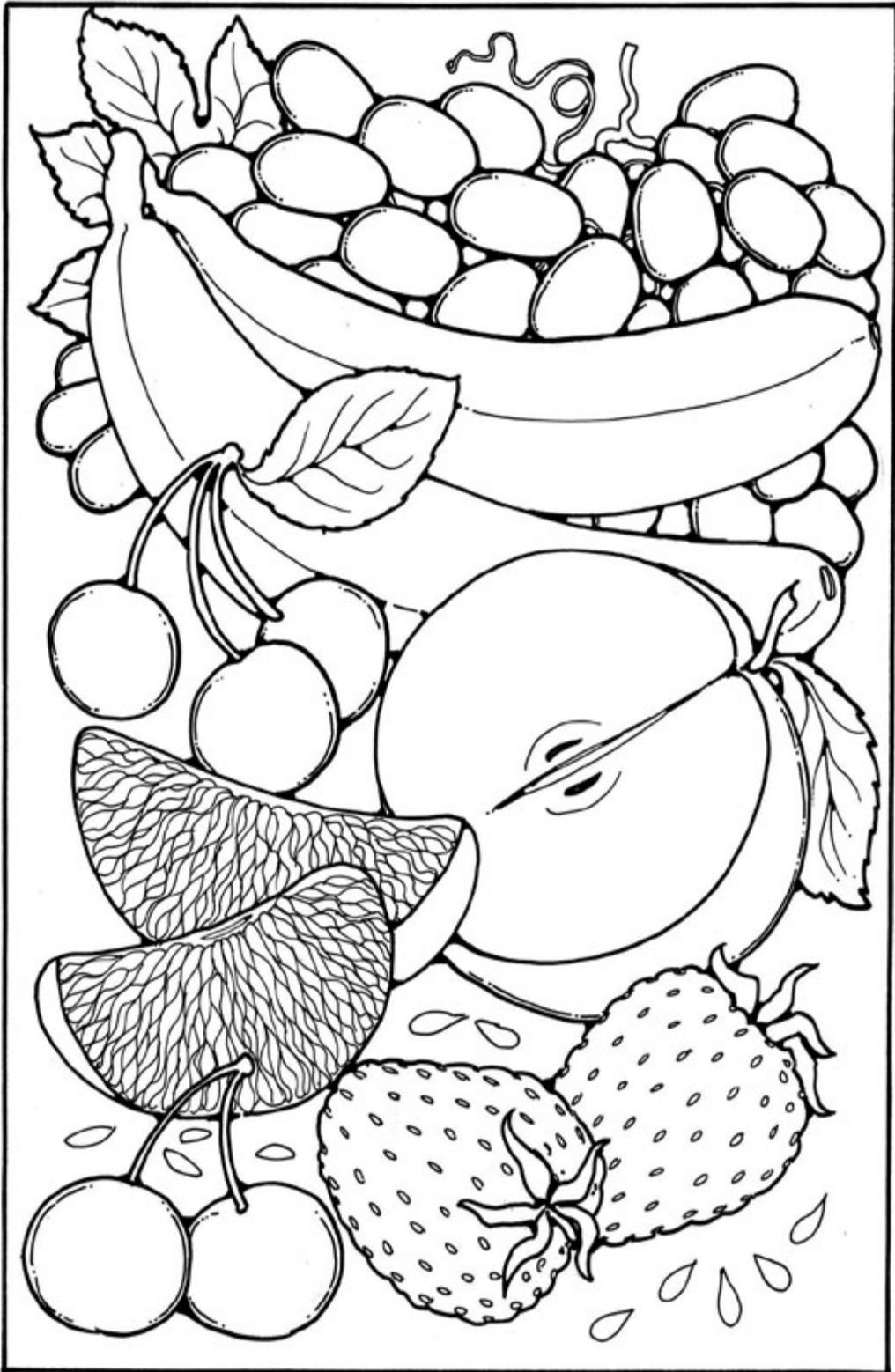
Cracked Pottery



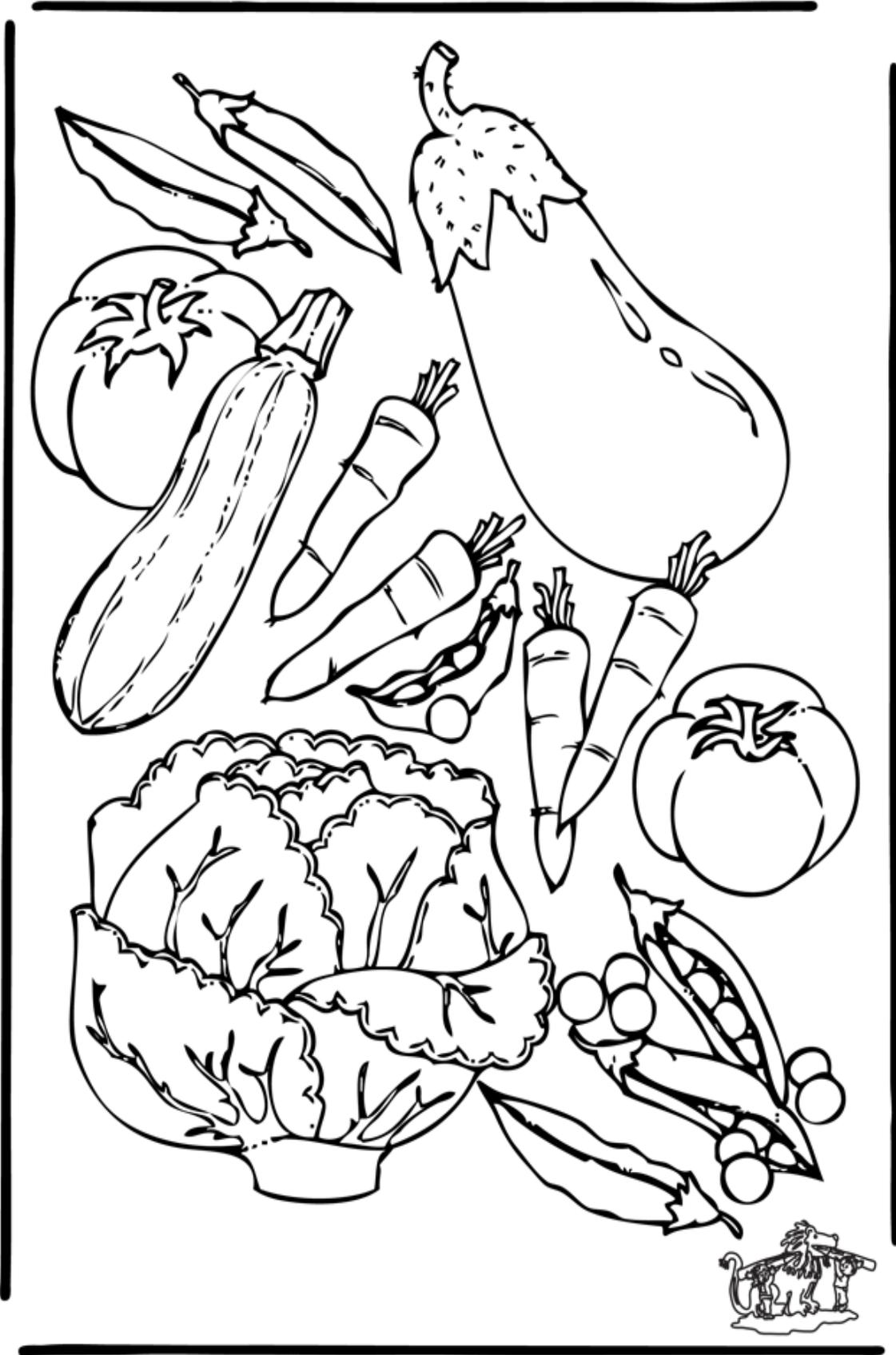
Makeup

FOODS THAT ARE GOOD FOR YOUR HEALTH





© Dandi Palmer '96



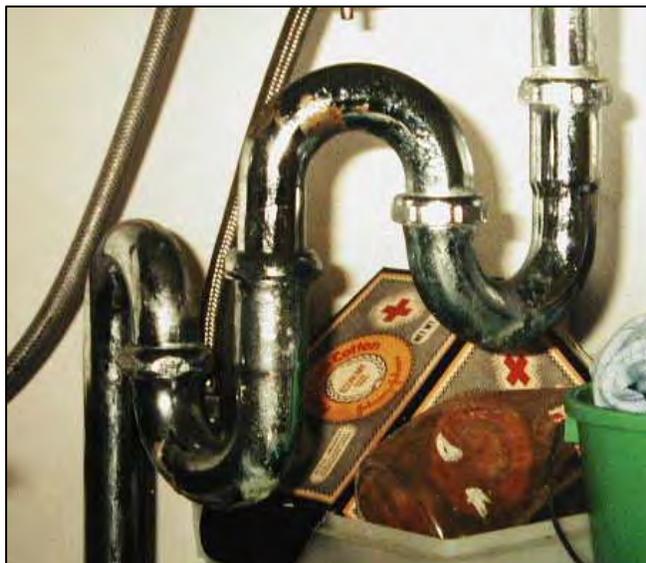
Handout 6-6 – Fruit to Color

Lead Poisoning Photo Information Series
(Parent Program)

1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.



7.



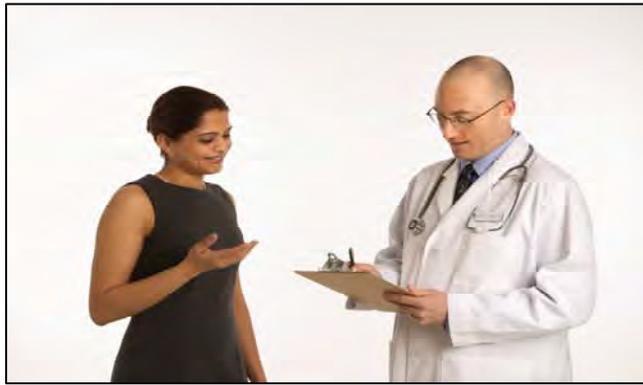
8.



9.



10.



11.



12.



13.



14.



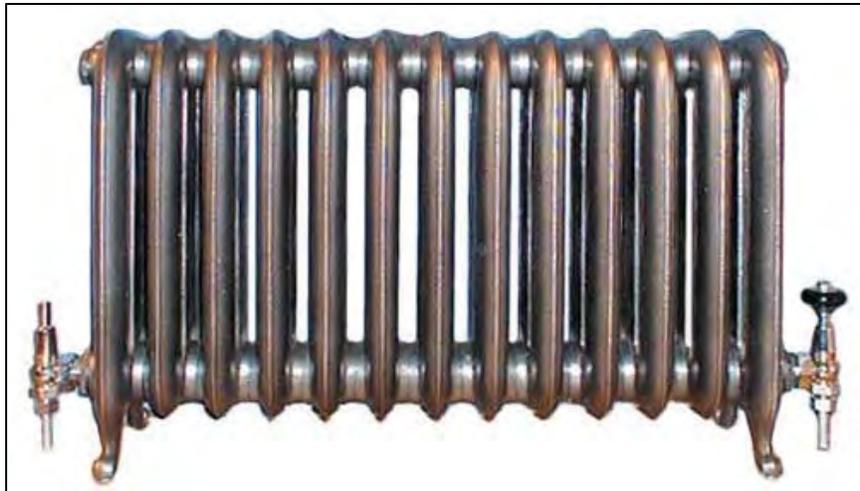
15.



16.



17.



18.



19.



20.



21.



22.



23.



24.



25.



26.



27.



28.



29.



30.



31.



32.



33.



34.



35.



36.



37.



38.



39.



40.



41.



42.



43.



44.



45.



46.



47.



48.



49.



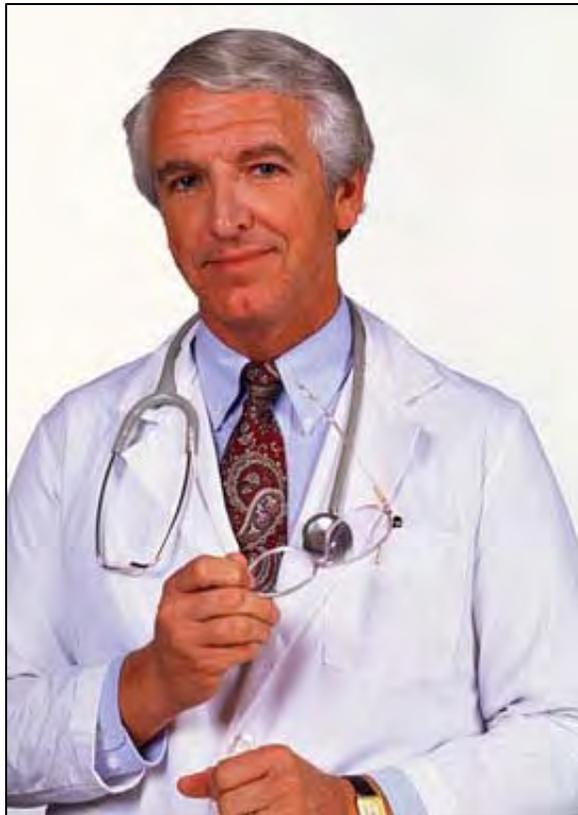
50.



51.



52.



AFTER SCHOOL PLANS

Name: _____

Activity: _____

Time: _____

Contact: _____

Place: _____

Fee: _____

Need: _____ **Permission from parents**

_____ **Uniform**

_____ **Equipment**

_____ **Transportation**

_____ **Snack**

TEACHERS



Help you to
learn



Tell you what
to study



Answer your
questions

Help you with
problems

WANT YOU TO SUCCEED!!

Academic Coach



Name:

School:

Phone Number:

Email Address:

How I can find my Coach?



Name of Student :

MY CHILD SHOWED ME THE NAME OF THE COACH.

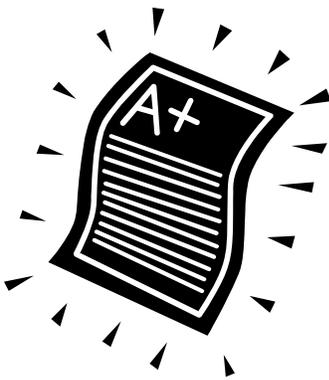
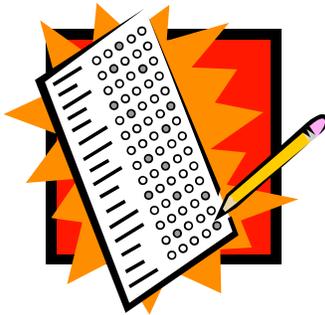
I WILL CALL THE SCHOOL IF I HAVE ANY QUESTIONS.



NAME OF PARENT:

HOMEWORK





NAME _____

1. Candy and cookies are sweet and delicious. True False

2. Television is fun to watch. True False

3. There are many different kinds of music. True False

4. A ball is something that you:

- (a) eat for lunch
- (b) keep in your shoe
- (c) throw and catch
- (d) use for writing

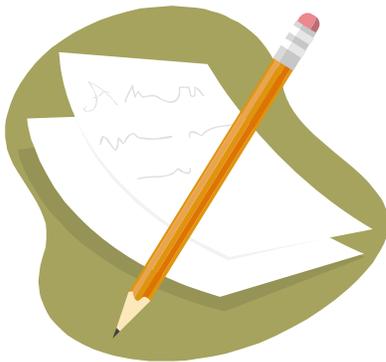
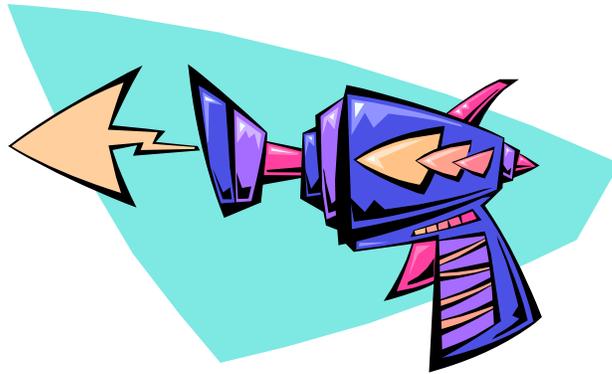
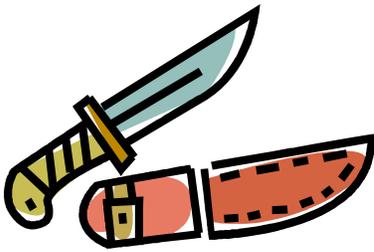
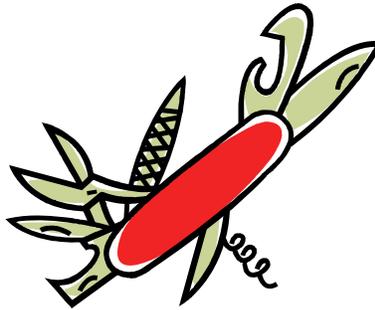
5. A pencil is used for:

- (a) eating soup
- (b) climbing a tree
- (c) blowing your nose
- (d) writing on paper

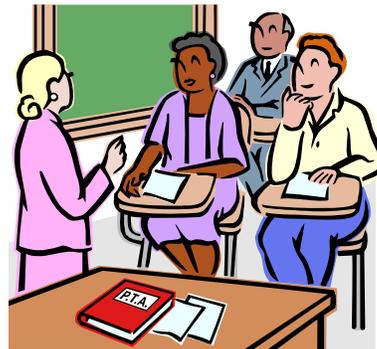
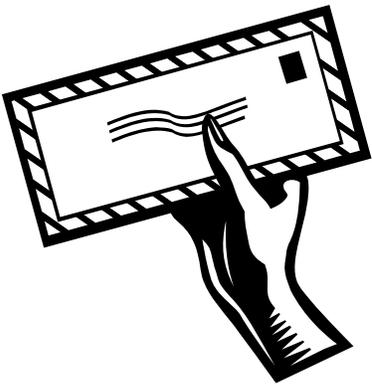
6. Circle the right answer.

An apple is a: book cow fruit sock

A hat is put on your: hand foot head shoe



Handout 12-1: Zero Tolerance



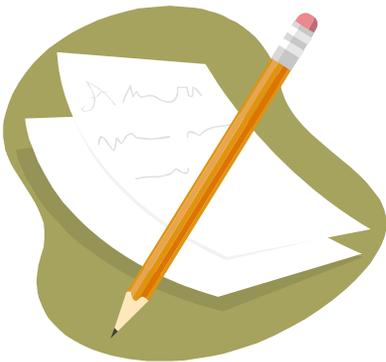
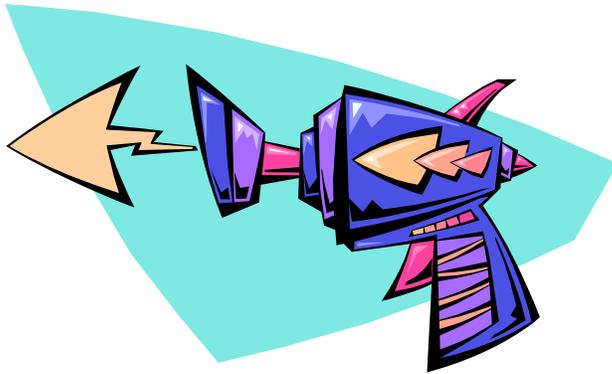
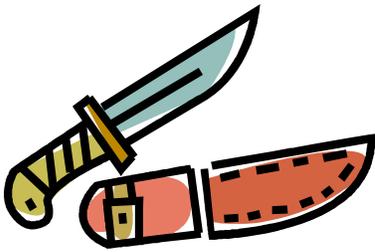
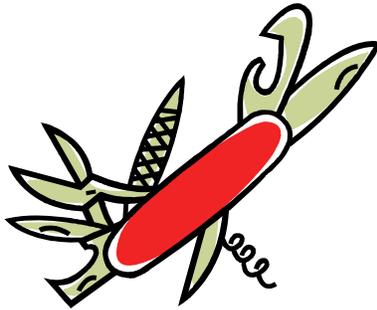
Handout 13-1: School-Home Communication

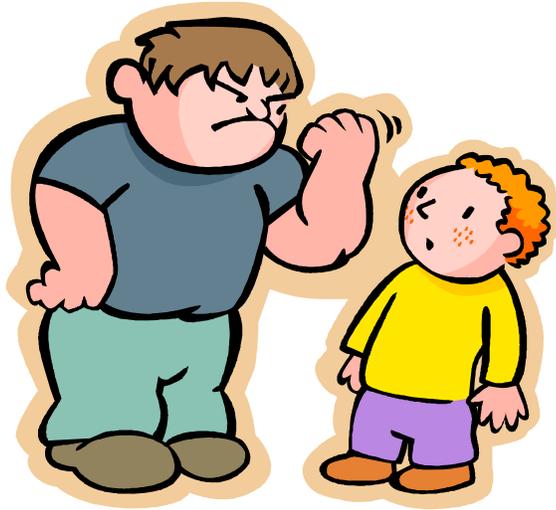




WHAT MAKES YOU HAPPY?

WHAT MAKES YOU SAD?







Join the Activity Fair!

Would you like to
help us inform refugee students
about your programs?

We are having an Activity Fair
so that new refugee students can learn about
after-school activities.

Date: _____

Time: _____

Location: _____

Several community and school organizations will be represented at stations, which students will be able to visit as they rotate around the room.

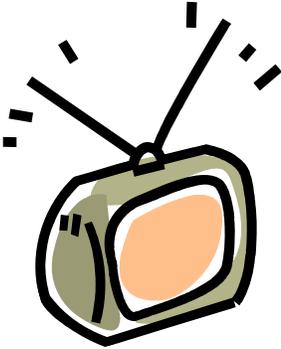
Please send to your station:

1. Students who participate in your programs, dressed in uniforms or costumes. The students will be expected to demonstrate activities, provide information about the programs, and encourage refugee students to join.
2. A short, easy activity that refugee students can try, such as dance steps, a quick craft, a basketball to bounce, a musical instrument, or a game to play.
3. Information about the programs, including schedules, fees, location and transportation, and contact numbers.
4. A sign-up sheet so that interested students can be contacted after the Activity Fair.

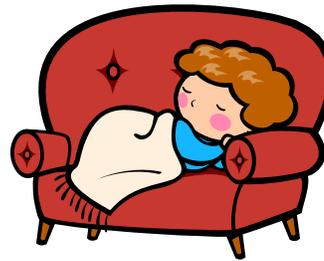
Interested? Please Call

Handout 15-3: Join the Activity Fair!

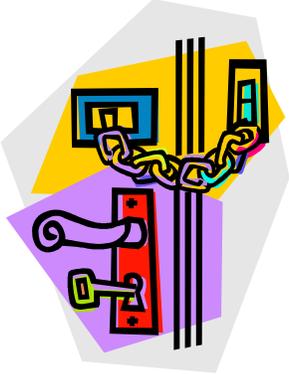
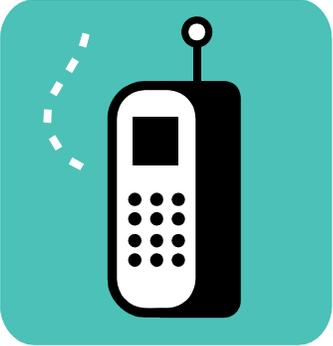
HOME ALONE

HOME ALONE



HOME ALONE SAFETY TIPS

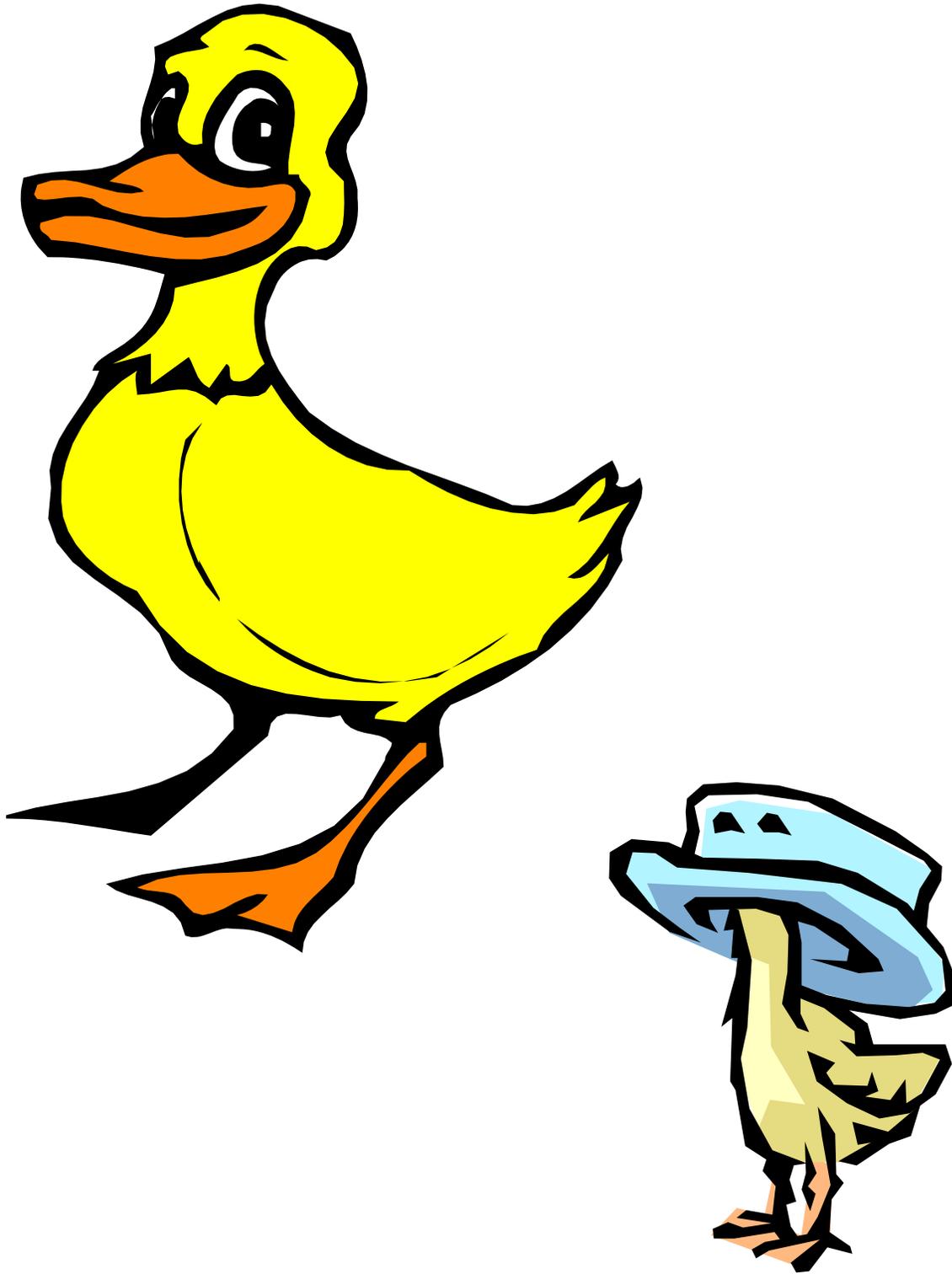
 An illustration of a door handle with a chain lock, symbolizing locking doors for safety.	 An illustration of a child and an adult sitting at a desk, possibly representing a lesson or a safety check.
 An illustration of a child cooking at a stove, representing kitchen safety.	 An illustration of a child sitting at a desk using a computer, representing internet safety.
 An illustration of a child sitting on a stool and a girl standing next to them, possibly representing communication or a safety tip.	 An illustration of a mobile phone, representing communication or emergency contact.

AFTER SCHOOL

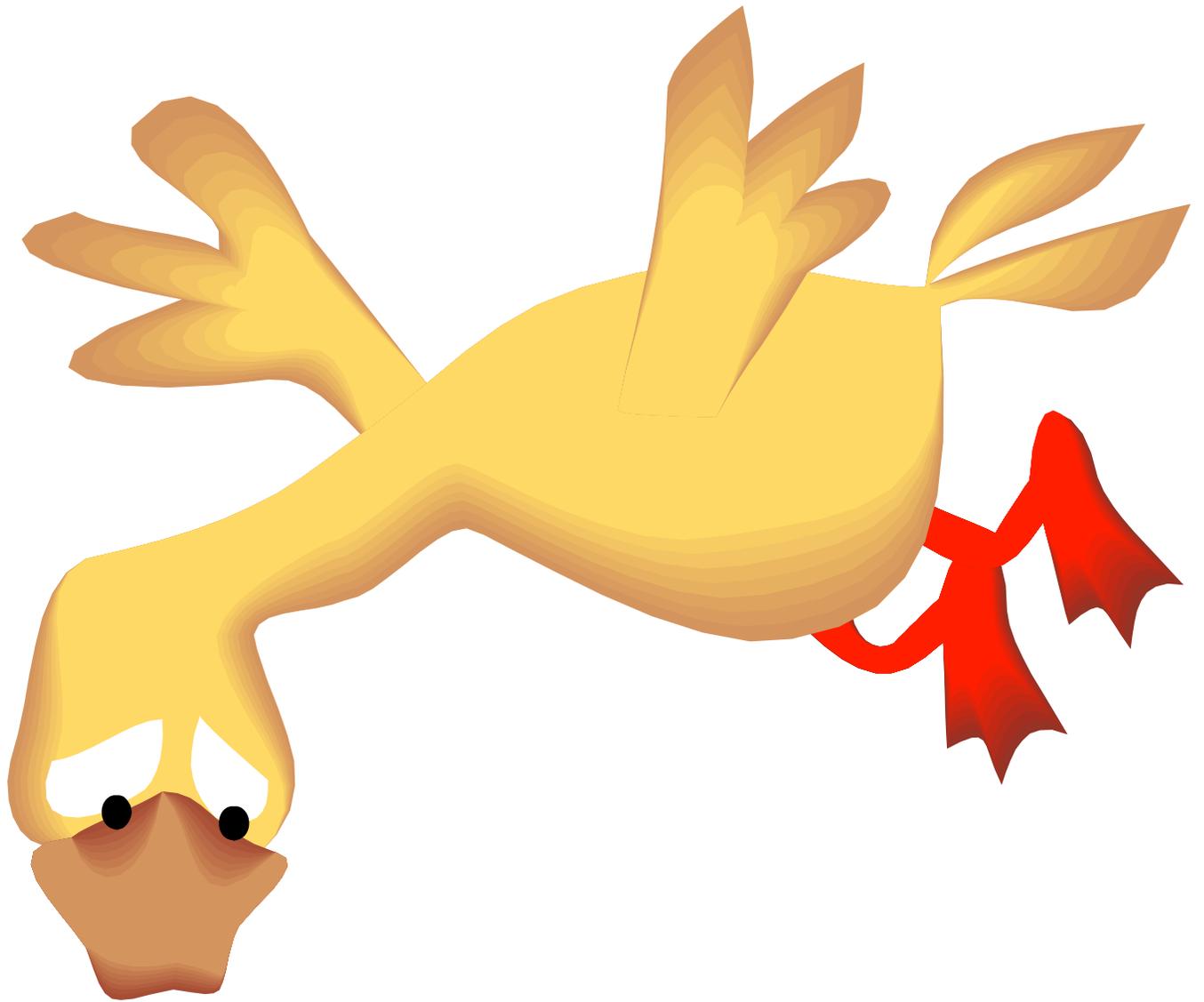
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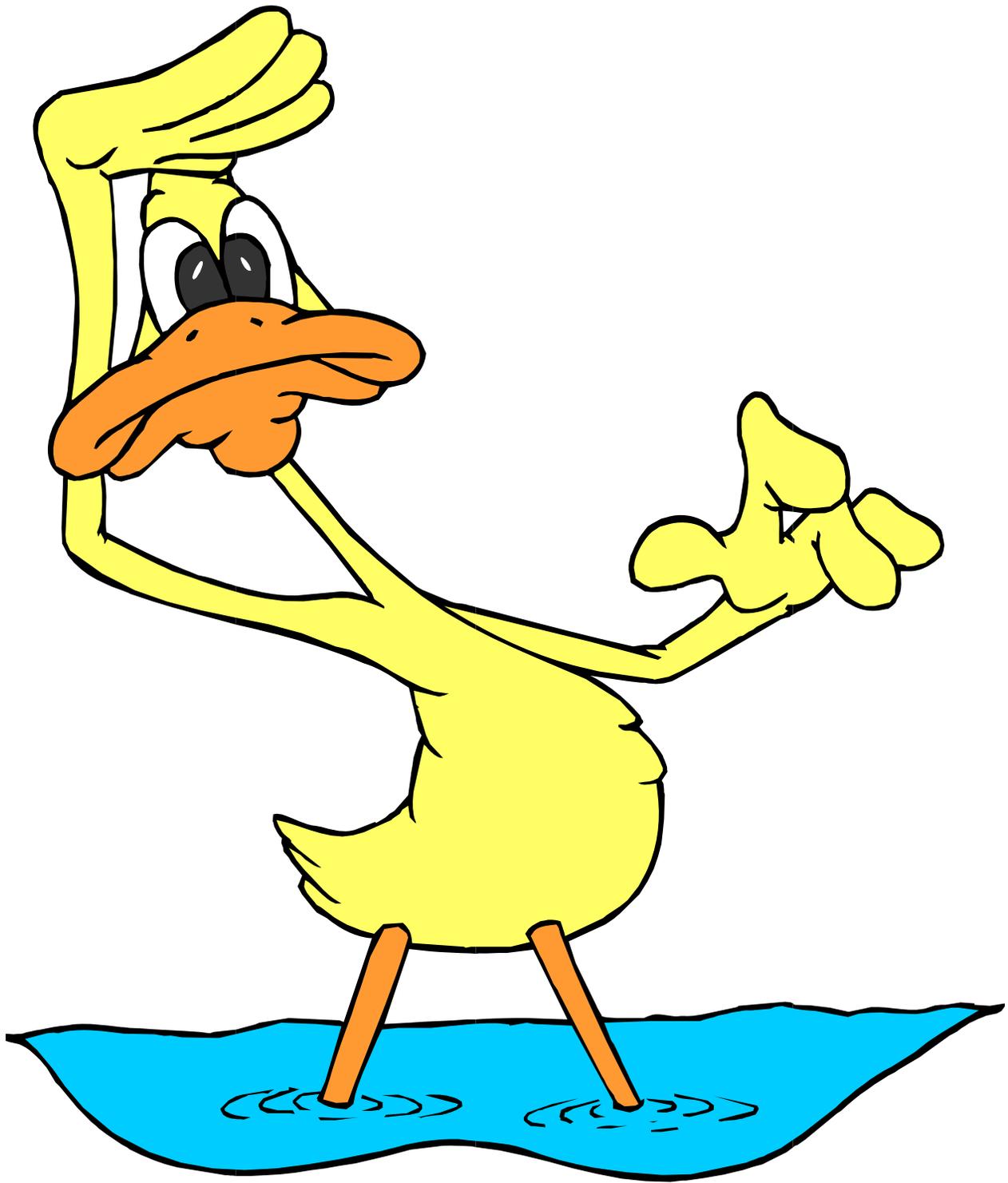
Handout 15-8: Feeling Hurt



Handout 15-9: Hiding Hurt



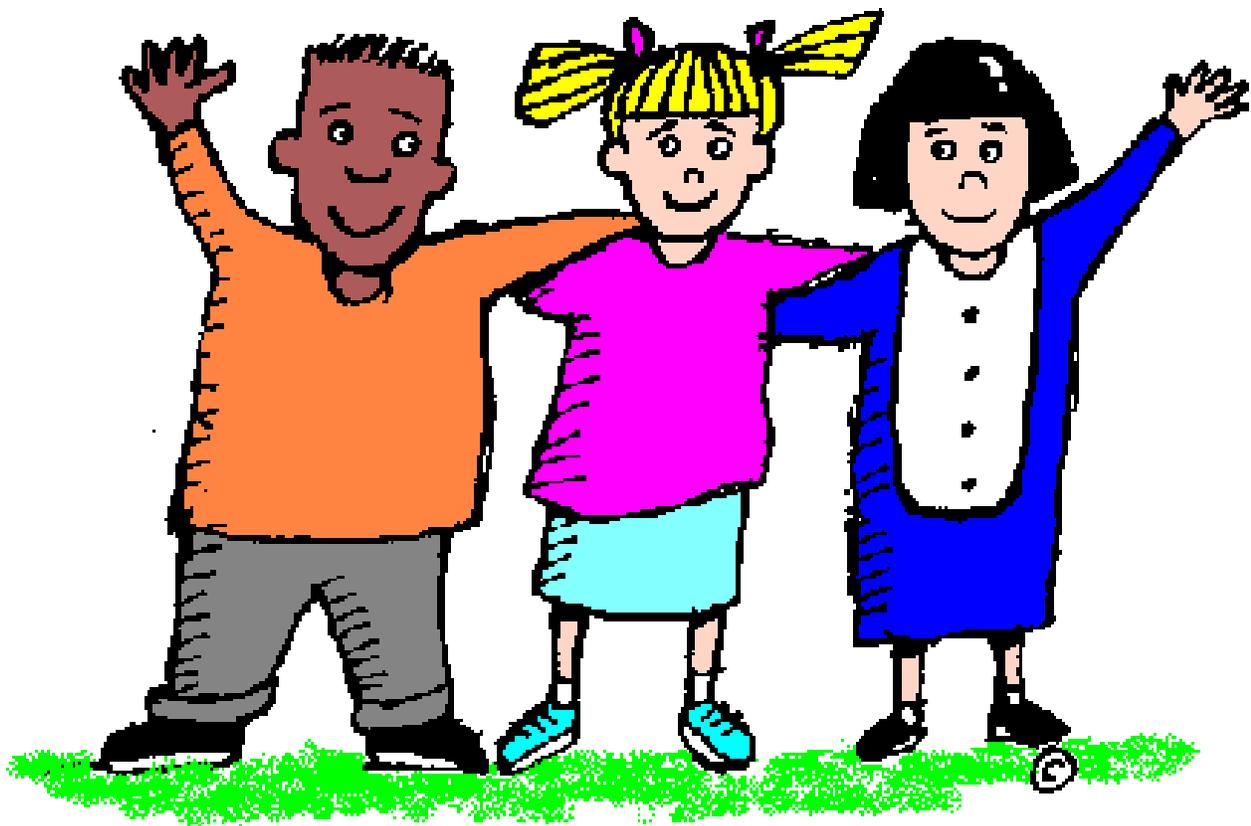
Handout 15-10: Landing



Handout 15-11: Looking Out



Handout 15-12: Bully!



Handout 15-13: Friends!



Handout 15-14—Here's What I Did!

WHAT IS HATE CRIME?



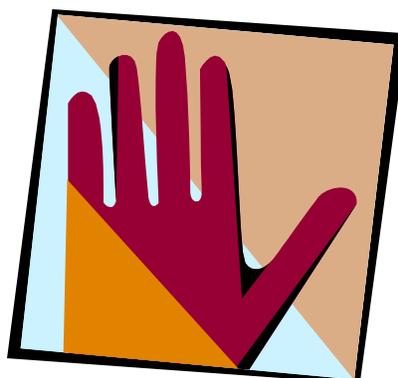
**If you are frightened or harmed
by someone
because of your
skin color
religion
sexual orientation
national origin
disability
there are laws to protect you.**

HATE CRIME
SHOULD BE REPORTED.

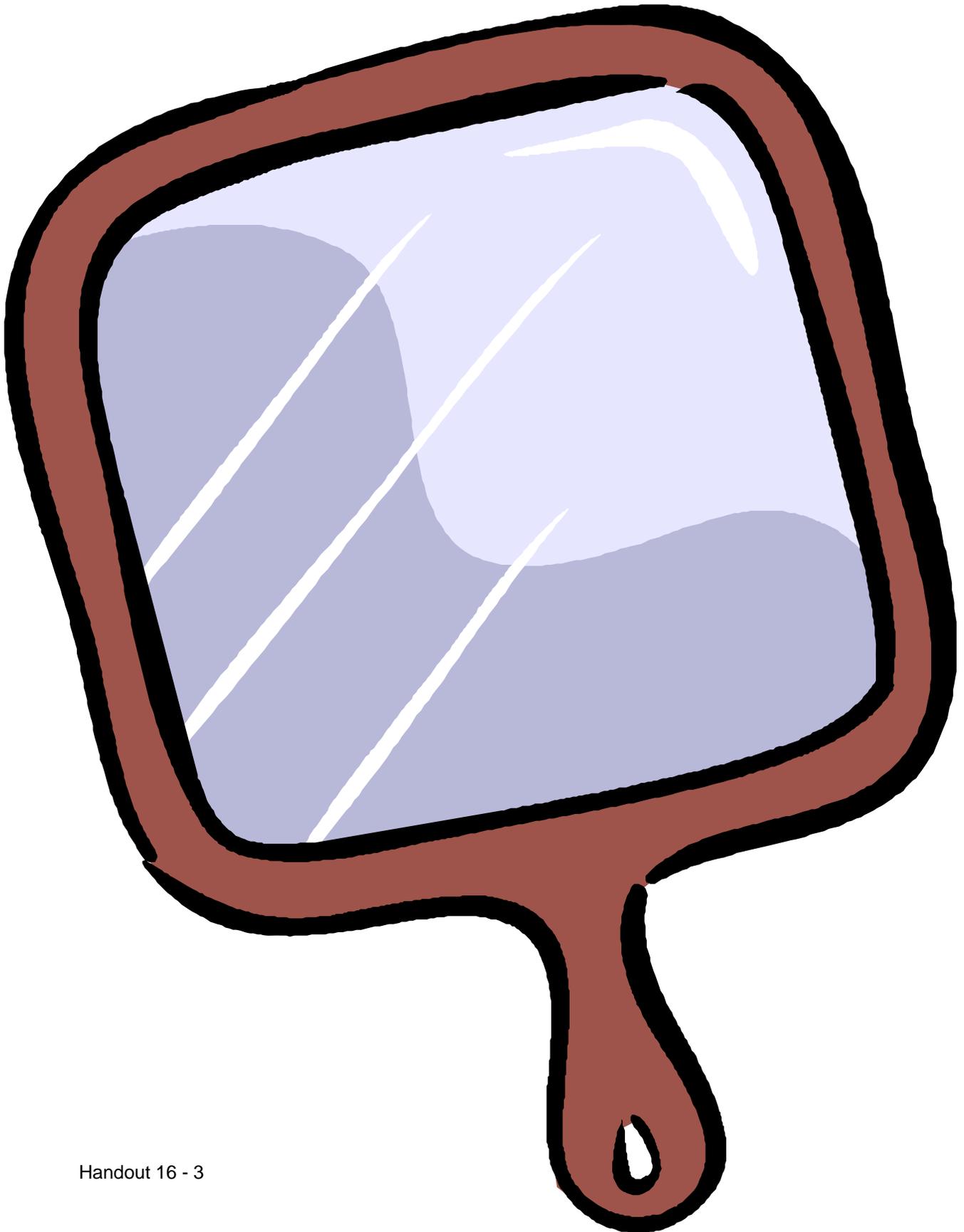
**IF YOU KNOW SOMETHING,
TELL SOMEONE.**



**TALK TO YOUR TEACHER OR
COUNSELOR AND
HELP STOP
HATE CRIME.**



Who Am I?



What Do I Like To Do?

If No One Will Listen

Maybe no one told you there is strength in your tears
And so you fight to keep from pouring out
But what if you unlock the gate that keeps your secret soul
Do you think there's enough that you would drown?

No one can tell you where you alone must go
There's no telling what you will find there
And, God, I know the fear that eats away at your bones
Screaming every step, "just stay here"

If no one will listen
If you decide to speak
If no one's left standing after the bombs explode
If no one wants to look at you
For what you really are
I will be here still

If you find your fists are raw and red from beating yourself down
If your legs have given out under the weight
If you find you've been settling for a world of gray
So you wouldn't have to face down your own hate

If no one will listen
If you decide to speak
If no one's left standing after the bombs explode
If no one wants to look at you
For what you really are
I will be here still.

© Kelly Clarkson, Keri Noble

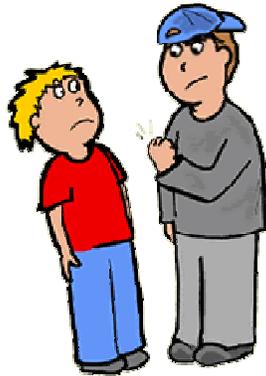




Restroom?



Help me with my bus?



Another child is bothering me.



Where is my classroom?

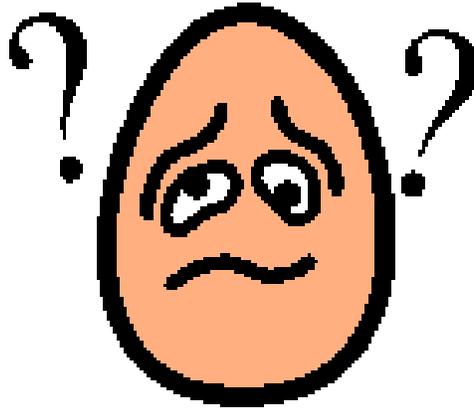


I need a book.



Can you help me with lunch?

I'm confused



I'm confused.



I do not feel well.



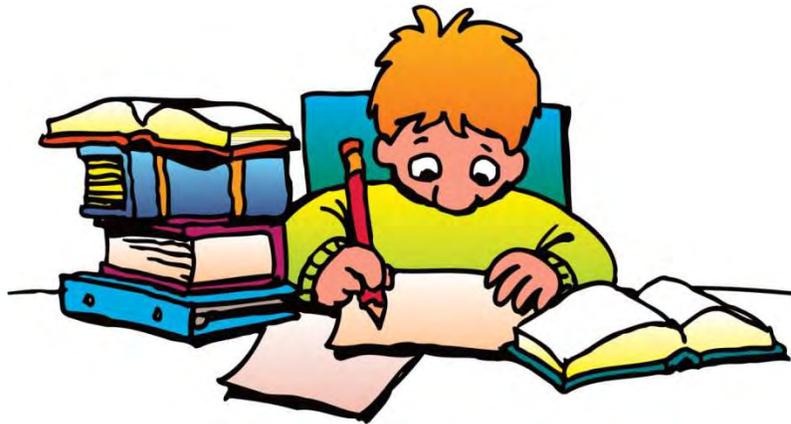
Help me with my locker?



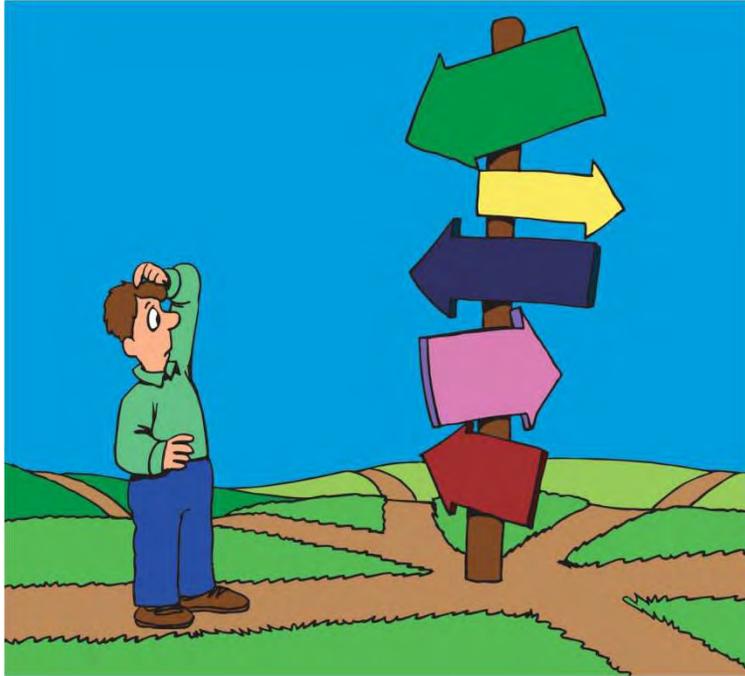
Can a teacher help me?



I need to use a phone.



What is the homework?



I am lost!

SUPPLEMENTAL PRIMARY LEVEL (K-2) ACTIVITIES

These activities are to be used in conjunction with the modules
in the **Welcome To Our Schools** curriculum



NEW YORK STATE OFFICE OF TEMPORARY AND DISABILITY ASSISTANCE
BUREAU OF REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT ASSISTANCE
40 NORTH PEARL STREET, 10C • ALBANY, NEW YORK 12243

SUPPLEMENTAL PRIMARY LEVEL (K-2) ACTIVITIES

Introduction

Possible Classroom Behaviors of Primary Level Refugee Children

Supplemental Activities

These activities are to be used in conjunction with the modules in the **Welcome To Our Schools** curriculum.

Activity # 1 • Getting to Know the Teacher

Activity # 2 • Raise Your Hand

Activity # 3 • Learning to Line Up

Activity # 4 • Taking Turns

Activity # 5 • Listening at Circle Time

Activity # 6 • What's in Your Classroom?

Activity # 7 • Who is Your Friend?

Activity # 8 • Putting the Pieces Together

Activity # 9 • Keeping Organized

Activity # 10 • Classroom Jobs

Activity # 11 • Creating Comfort to Reduce Stress

Activity # 12 • Quiet Time

Activity # 13 • Books!

Activity # 14 • Favorite School Activities

Activity # 15 • Ready for Cold Weather

Activity # 16 • Bullies

Activity # 17 • Safe in the Neighborhood

Activity # 18 • Communicating with Teachers

INTRODUCTION

IMAGINE.....

Your teacher asks a question and the interpreter translates it. You know the answer!

“Raise your hand,” the teacher says.

Raise your hand?

Why?

Your teacher says, “Line up, everyone, we are going to take turns on the swings on the playground.”

Line up?

What does that mean?

Take turns?

How?

What is a *swing* – and what happens on a *playground*?

These may be the thoughts of refugee students who have just arrived at American schools. The students may have had some exposure to schooling and the routine procedures of a classroom, such as lining up, raising your hand, working cooperatively in small groups, participating in “circle time,” and checking books out at the school library. But these standard procedures are often new and bewildering to most primary level refugee students.

The following activities address the basics of adjusting to a classroom in American schools in grades kindergarten through second grade. The Refugee Academy instructor and the Academic Coach can determine if the activities are necessary for the specific students enrolled in the Academy.

All of the activities should be used in conjunction with the modules and Parent Programs in the **Welcome to Our Schools** curriculum.

POSSIBLE CLASSROOM BEHAVIORS OF PRIMARY LEVEL REFUGEE CHILDREN

Young refugee children can be enthusiastic about school and curious to learn about their new American life. They can be proud of their cultural traditions while adapting to American customs.

Students in pre-school and grades K-2 may not remember the details of their lives in their home countries and look upon their new school with excitement. However, their emotional response to family trauma and resettlement may not be visible. Their anxieties about attending school can be similar to any child attending school for the first time, compounded by lack of familiarity with the American school system in general.

Most American children have participated in playgroups, child care, pre-school and/or pre-Kindergarten programs. For many primary level refugee children, the school is new — and so is the process of schooling. The following behaviors may show up as young refugee children try to figure out how to navigate a system that can be rewarding and fun, but also discouraging and overwhelming. The basic strategies suggested can be used for any of the behaviors, and should be employed with all students, regardless of their level of adaptation.

BEHAVIOR	SUGGESTED STRATEGY
Wandering	Establish a clear code of conduct; remind often
Inattentive	Arrange for one-on-one focus; conduct sensory assessment (hearing, eyesight)
Separation anxiety	Be familiar with siblings and relatives the student depends on Show school/classroom locations of relatives
Silent	Don't push; assess speech; assign a helpful buddy
Fatigued	Check for reasons, including full households, diet, emotional stress
Anxious	Provide a school-based comfort item for each child
Frustrated	Begin with key English words that are used often in classrooms
Depressed	Assess sleeping patterns, diet, family loss in relatives, income, valuables Refer to psychologist, social worker, Refugee Resettlement Case Manager

BEHAVIOR	SUGGESTED STRATEGY
Overwhelmed	Provide access to quiet space; practice walking school layout
Fidgety	Involve student in games, movement; practice short stints of sitting
Hitting, fighting	Frequent counseling sessions about home life, school, behavior
Clinging to cultural identity	Encourage sharing of information; introduce new traditions slowly
Avoiding situations	Repeat process for rest rooms, drinking fountain, locker room, playground to determine if avoidance is due to bullying, fear of darkness or noises
Impaired memory	Create predictive experiences, reminders, repetition, review
Exaggerated startle response	Quick upbeat response; practice bells and drills before they occur
Frequent health complaints	Check for lead poisoning; consult with school nurse; determine if complaints are for attention or stress Assess for seasonal clothing and knowledge about dressing for the weather
Frequent social complaints	Assign pairs; model play, sharing, cooperation
Parallel (not interactive) play	Organize cooperative learning, small group projects with assigned roles
Masking feelings, insecurities	Establish a spot for personal belongings that is visible; reassure everyone
Communicating in own language only	Read and discuss picture books; praise use of new words by all students
Distracted by home life	Provide a sense of community with class tasks, projects, routines, games
Erratic behavior	Every day review the school day, routines, what will happen, expectations
Protective of teacher, peers	Provide leadership and class chore opportunities

BEHAVIOR**SUGGESTED STRATEGY**

Resistance to physical, eye contact

Understand cultural and social norms; respect resistance; ease into contact
Involve student in non-physical activities; assign "important" class duties to encourage distraction and pride in class participation

Shyness, self-determined isolation

Facilitate enrollment in clubs, sports, extracurricular activities

Embarrassment

Assess for hygiene; lunch items/money; clothing that fits; seasonal clothing
Replace child as translator for parents with professional interpreter
Recognize inexperience with changing clothes, interacting with other gender



#1 GETTING TO KNOW THE TEACHER

For many primary level refugee students, the Refugee Academy will be the first school they have experienced. They may be unsure about the teacher, either because they have never experienced a classroom setting, or they have heard about (or experienced) teachers who are more formal than most teachers in American primary grades. This activity will assist students in understanding that teachers are responsible for ensuring that students will learn, but that they are also caring individuals who look out for the welfare of their students.

*Also see Module 1
American Schools*

OBJECTIVE

Students will become familiar with the responsibilities and personal interests of the classroom teacher, increasing their comfort level around teachers.

SUPPLIES

Large tote bag filled with instructional tools and personal items of the classroom teacher, to be shared with the students. Examples are:

- lesson plan/grade book
- notebook paper
- pencils
- spiral notebook
- folders and other school supplies
- pens
- calendar
- textbooks
- construction paper
- scissors
- glue
- tape
- favorite snack
- lunch
- tissues
- personal fiction book

children's book (to read aloud)
something related a personal hobby of the teacher
music CD, iPod
DVD of a favorite movie
umbrella
cold weather clothing of the teacher
Handout: *Teacher's School Bag*

INSTRUCTIONS

- ❑ The instructor should call attention to a large, filled tote bag that is on a desk or table in the front of the room.
- ❑ Explain that the classroom teacher has many things to do during the day. Most teachers carry a bag, backpack, or briefcase filled with the items that they will need for their teaching. They bring it to school every day.
- ❑ *Ask:* What do you think I have in this big bag? Accept any responses.
- ❑ Depending on the comfort level of the students, the instructor can:
 - pull one item out of the bag and ask the children to talk about what it is and why the teacher might have it in the bag
 - ask a student to reach into the bag and pull something out – then discuss what it is and why the teacher might have it in the bag
- ❑ The instructor should point out:
 - how the item is connected to teaching
 - how the item shows the personal interests of the teacher
 - how the teacher prepares for weather, lunch break, crafts, etc.
- ❑ The instructor should pass the item around and encourage the students to ask questions about the item.
- ❑ Point out examples of classroom words that are associated with the item:
 - snack
 - book
 - notebook
 - pencil

- ❑ Pause as the items are discussed, to:
 - read a story aloud
 - show how a pencil is used to write in a notebook
 - try on a winter hat
 - demonstrate using a tissue and throwing it away
 - explain that the iPod is used on the bus, but not in school
- ❑ Demonstrate how to care for the items by, for example:
 - closing a book with a bookmark
 - packing up an unfinished lunch
 - sharpening a pencil
 - storing an iPod in a case pocket of the bag.
- ❑ Ask individual students to identify the item that they like the best in the bag. Do not push students to say anything aloud – they can point to the item – but review the word for the item and ask if they would like to explain why they chose a particular item.
- ❑ Stress that the bag belongs to the teacher and should never be touched unless the teacher has given permission. Explain how the same rules are followed for the personal items of students.
- ❑ Distribute the handout *Teacher's School Bag* for the students to color. They can draw additional items around the bag if a color copy of the handout has been distributed.
- ❑ This activity can be carried out with other instructors and Academic Coaches so that students can get to know them a little better, too.
- ❑ Ask the students what they know about the teacher's day, based on what is in the tote bag.
- ❑ Ask the students to guess what will be used that day in school – then point out the item when it comes time to use it. For example, there may be a picture book in the bag that is used for story time.





#2 RAISE YOUR HAND!

When you want to be called on, you raise your hand. This is true in grades K-12, college, and sometimes at meetings on the job.

*Also see Module 2
Making Friends*

Raising your hand to be called on is a new experience for most children entering school for the first time. It may be an entirely new concept for refugee children. They need to learn that they may be called on by the teacher at any time, but if they want to ask or answer a question, contribute to a discussion, ask for permission, or volunteer, then they are expected to raise their hand. This activity will give students opportunities to practice raising their hand in class.

OBJECTIVE

Students will become familiar with the routine of raising their hand in class and waiting for acknowledgement by the teacher before speaking.

SUPPLIES

Poster:

Raise Your Hand! (Available as part of the **Welcome to Our Schools** curriculum)

Handouts:

Boy Raising Hand

Girl Raising Hand

Students Raising Hands

INSTRUCTIONS

- The classroom should be arranged so that students can practice raising their hands during a large group discussion, circle time, and small group meetings with the Academic Coach and other instructors.
- The instructor should point to the poster and discuss what the student is doing in the picture.

- ❑ The instructor should show the handout *Boy Raising Hand* and ask the boys to raise their hands the way the boy is raising his in the picture. Explain that students are supposed to raise their hand when they want to ask or answer a question.
- ❑ The instructor should show the Handout *Girl Raising Hand* and ask the girls to raise their hands the way the girl raising hers in the picture. Repeat why students raise their hands. Explain that students also raise their hand when the teacher asks for volunteers (or asks who might be interested in helping the teacher or who might want to join in an activity.)
- ❑ Show students the handout *Students Raising Hands* and explain that the class is going to practice raising their hand.
- ❑ Point out that students don't have to raise their arms straight in the air every time they raise their hands. When they raise their hand they shouldn't wave their arm, make noises, or keep their hand up when the teacher has called on someone else. (Adults in the classroom can role-play raising their hand in class.)
- ❑ Begin practicing, praising students as they raise their hands in response to the questions.
- ❑ Practice with questions that everyone can answer by raising their hands:
 - *Raise your hand if you are sitting at a desk.*
 - *Raise your hand if you are wearing shoes.*
 - *Raise your hand if you like to play games.*
- ❑ Then switch to questions that provide students with a choice as to whether to raise their hand:
 - *Raise your hand if you like rice.*
 - *Raise your hand if you have brown hair.*
 - *Raise your hand if you like to play soccer.*
- ❑ Practice in different settings, such as during circle time, in classrooms, and in small group sessions with the Academic Coach and other instructors.
- ❑ Continue practicing with additional questions, without instructing students to raise their hand. For example:
 - *Who would like to sit in the front of the room?*
 - *Who would like to get a book from the bookshelf?*
 - *Is there anyone who would like to show us the picture that we drew this morning?*

- ❑ The instructor should make a point of reminding students who forget that they should raise their hand before speaking. Students who are quiet and do not speak or raise their hand at all should be called on even if they did not raise their hand. Students can then see that the teacher calls on everyone in the class at some time or another.

- ❑ Post the handouts around the room so that students can see them.









#3 LEARNING TO LINE UP

A standard procedure in American schools is lining up to move to another classroom. Students line up to walk the halls, enter or leave a class, exit the building, and buy lunch in the cafeteria. Although most refugee students will be generally familiar with the concept of lining up, they may not understand the system and appropriate behaviors associated with lining up. This activity will give them a fun opportunity to practice lining up.

*Also see Module 1
American Schools*

Instructors should keep in mind that this activity involves tracing the student's body on a large piece of paper. Some students may feel uncomfortable having their body traced; the instructor can sketch the body shape on a large piece of paper taped on the floor or wall next to each of the students. Every student should have a paper cutout of themselves.

OBJECTIVE

Students will become familiar with the procedure of lining up in school.

SUPPLIES

Rolls of butcher paper cut into pieces that are the approximate size of the students

Crayons or markers

Black or navy wide-point marker

Space for students to lie down so that they can be traced on the butcher paper

Scissors for students (optional)

Crayons or markers

Black or navy wide-point marker

Handout: *Figure Coloring Page*

INSTRUCTIONS

- ❑ The instructor should distribute the handout *Figure Coloring Page* and ask the students to color a picture of themselves. They can add face and hair, shoes, clothing, or anything else that they believe depicts their appearance. They can also add items around the drawing that show their interests and activities.
- ❑ If the students have already had some school experience, ask them to describe situations when they are expected to line up in school.
- ❑ Explain the line-up procedure in the classroom:
 - A line leader is usually designated by the teacher; this is often considered an honor.
 - Everyone should face forward.
 - There should be a space between each person.
 - When walking, they should keep the space between students.
 - The students should be quiet when in line, especially when walking through the hallways.
 - There should be no touching anyone else in the line (poking, hitting, etc.).
 - The students should be watching the teacher for signals about stopping, turning, quiet, etc.
 - Students can acknowledge friends who are passing by the line with a wave or a smile, but should not talk or move out of the line to greet them.
 - Students should pay attention to where they are going in case they have to go there by themselves in the future (e.g., main office, lunch room, nurse's office).
 - Students should stay in the line when waiting in hallways or when entering and exiting a new classroom, gymnasium, or playground.
 - Students should respond to the playground whistle or announcement to "line up" to go back inside. (Note: instructors may want to practice this because some refugee students may be concerned that the whistle is a signal of a problem.)

- ❑ The instructor should ask the students to hold their pictures in front of themselves and line up one a time. The students can practice “walking” their pictures around the room, keeping in a line.
 - Explain that the students may be asked to line up for teams in gym class.
 - Explain that the “buddy” system is when students line up in pairs.
- ❑ Lay out the pieces of butcher paper and trace students so that they each get their own paper “person.”
- ❑ Ask students to color the large drawings. They can copy the small handout drawing or create an entirely new image of themselves.
- ❑ The instructor should tell the students to begin with the faces so that everyone has at least completed that part of the picture.
- ❑ *Optional:* When the large drawings are completed, the students can cut out the figures. (This should be done if the instructor feels that the students are comfortable using scissors.)
- ❑ The instructor should ask the children to line up again, one at a time. This time they will be carrying their large figures and will practice walking their figures down the hall and into other school settings. By walking their figures through the school, they are pretending to show the figures how to walk in the school in line and are giving the figures a “tour.”
- ❑ Although the walk around the school will also assist students in becoming oriented to the building, the purpose of the activity is to practice walking appropriately in a line.
- ❑ Upon returning to the classroom, place the figures in the seats (or around the room) and practice walking in line through the school again (without the figures).
- ❑ Continue practicing lining up, even when the class is not leaving the room for another activity. Keep reviewing the procedures for lining up.
- ❑ Rotate line leaders to give students the privilege of leading the class, and to help line leaders build confidence in understanding the layout of the school.





#4 TAKING TURNS

One of the biggest adjustments children have to make when they enter school is the process of taking turns. Unless they have participated in a structured preschool program, they are more than likely used to independent or parallel play, or informal group activities. The children may have experienced waiting for their turn, but during the school day they are taking turns all day long.

*Also see Module 5
So Much to Learn*

In this activity the students will become exposed to a variety of recess activities while learning how to take turns. The instructor and the Academic Coach should select recess activities that will be routinely conducted in the local school whether on an asphalt playground, in a gymnasium, or in a classroom.

Instructors should keep in mind that refugee students, particularly those in the primary grades, may have minimal experience with playing with a ball, climbing on a jungle gym or slide, swinging on a playground swing, or even walking on a sidewalk or trail. They may not understand the concept of taking turns and will have to be gently guided to wait until they can try the activity.

Even recess periods that allow students to move from activity to activity at their own discretion require taking turns occasionally. Refugee students will need to know that barging into the middle of an activity will be disruptive and may annoy the other students. At the beginning of every recess period (or play time) take a few minutes to practice taking turns.

The instructor and Academic Coach should demonstrate every recess activity first, regardless of how basic it may seem.

OBJECTIVE

Students will become familiar with standard recess activities while practicing taking turns.

SUPPLIES

Equipment used for recess activities. Examples are:

- swings
- slide
- ball to toss into a basket
- ball to roll or kick
- jump rope
- Frisbee®
- two items to balance (e.g., plastic plate and apple)
- line or balance beam
- tunnel, bases, ropes, or other physical education resources

INSTRUCTIONS

- ❑ Instructors should prepare the play areas in advance, keeping in mind that the purpose of the activity is to give students the opportunity to practice taking turns. The tasks should be easy to accomplish.
- ❑ The students can line up behind different play areas, or can follow each other in one line from one play area to the next. (The process will be determined by the number of adults who can assist students in taking turns.)
- ❑ The instructor should demonstrate a signal that will be used to tell students when it is their turn (pointing at the student, raising arm in air, etc.).
- ❑ The instructor should keep reinforcing taking turns by lining students up and sending the signal when the next student can go ahead.
- ❑ As a follow-up to the activity, the students can practice taking turns in the classroom:
 - serving as line leader
 - sitting near the teacher
 - lining up
 - choosing a book
 - coming to the teacher's desk
 - selecting a handout, pencil, etc.



#5 LISTENING AT CIRCLE TIME

Most primary level instruction includes an activity called “circle time” when students gather around the teacher, sitting on the floor or on chairs. As refugee students become accustomed to sitting quietly at a desk, they may not realize that circle time is more informal, but the same classroom rules apply. They are still expected to sit quietly, listen, raise their hands, take turns, etc. During this activity the students not only practice good behavior during circle time, they also learn how to listen with their entire bodies (ears, eyes, mouth, hands, feet, seat, and brain).

*Also see Module 1
American Schools*

OBJECTIVE

Students will become familiar with the rules of classroom circle time and will practice listening with their entire bodies.

SUPPLIES

Circle time area

Large rug or mat – or individual carpet squares

Cueing signal for gathering in a circle (song, picture, lights flickering, teacher going to chair in the center of the circle, etc.)

Musical instruments such as a tambourine, maraca, or triangle (as an example of a possible activity during circle time)

Picture books with large, easily visible illustrations (as an example of a possible activity during circle time)

Simple science or math item, such as ruler, fish bowl, potted plant, abacus (as examples of possible demonstrations during circle time)

Healthy food (as an example of a possible discussion topic during circle time)

Large picture (as an example of a possible discussion topic during circle time)

Handouts:

Circle Time

Circle Time Coloring Page

INSTRUCTIONS

- ❑ The instructor should use a cueing signal, explaining that when the students hear/ see the signal they are to gather in a circle for circle time.
- ❑ Describe the steps to circle time, practicing each step one at a time:
 - Walk quietly to the circle area and sit down.
 - Instructors may specify any of the following:
 - one row at a time
 - collect a carpet square to sit on
 - move chairs
 - sit in the front row first
 - sit next to your buddy
 - Make sure that hands and feet are not touching anyone else in the circle.
 - Always face the teacher.
- ❑ Once students have practiced settling into a circle, begin the circle activity right away so that the students will not get restless. Hold up the handout *Circle Time* and discuss the activities that might take place during circle time.
- ❑ Provide short examples of each possible circle time activity:
 - Story time (sample storybooks)
 - Music (musical instrument)
 - Demonstrations (science, math items)
 - Discussions (healthy food, picture)
- ❑ Remind students that the rules of circle time are the same as when they are sitting at their desks (raise hands, take turns, etc.).
- ❑ The instructor should demonstrate how the students will be listening during circle time with their *whole bodies*:
 - eyes (watching the teacher)
 - ears (leaning forward and focusing on the teacher)
 - mouth (staying quiet unless called upon by the teacher)
 - hands (raising hand to speak; not bothering others in the circle)

- feet (not stretching, kicking, taking up too much space)
 - seat (remaining in the circle time spot)
 - brain (concentrating on learning the information discussed during circle time)
-
- ❑ Repeat the steps to listening with the whole body, asking students to demonstrate how they are listening in circle time.
 - ❑ If the students are still able to continue sitting quietly, a quick story should be read to them (or a story told aloud by the teacher).
 - ❑ Explain how the students should leave circle time and move on to the next activity (line up, return to seats, etc.).
 - ❑ Distribute the handout *Circle Time Coloring Page* and ask the students what they think the group and the teacher are discussing. Are the students following classroom rules? Students can color the picture and add additional items on the easel and around the circle.
 - ❑ The instructor should repeat circle time often so that the process becomes familiar to the refugee students and they are comfortable with the rules and activities.







#6 WHAT'S IN YOUR CLASSROOM?

Primary-level classrooms are usually filled with decorated bulletin boards, walls covered in posters, chalkboards with pictures and signs, learning stations, and bookshelves filled with toys, art supplies and books. Some classrooms even have cubbies overflowing with student belongings, easels and tables covered with art projects, and mobiles hanging from the ceiling.

*Also see Module 1
American Schools*

The rooms are colorful and stimulating, but often overwhelming for students who have never seen a school before. There are many things to see and absorb, a variety of choices, and multiple opportunities to try new things.

It can be exciting but bewildering at the same time.

In this activity refugee students will have the opportunity to become familiar with the variety of materials in their classroom. They will learn where various resources are located and how they are used. The activity may seem very simple – to find something in a classroom – but it will assist refugee students in identifying the many components of the classroom, rather than becoming overwhelmed with the overall image.

OBJECTIVE

Students will become familiar with the variety of resources in a primary-level classroom and where those resources are located.

SUPPLIES

Marching music for students to march to as they explore the classroom

The instructor can take photographs in advance of different areas of the classroom, such as those listed below in the Handouts section. The photographs can be printed or can be displayed on a computer as the students carry out this activity.

Handouts: (Select the handouts that apply to the Refugee Academy classroom)

Books

Puzzles

Art supplies

Teacher's desk

Pencils

Computers

Exit sign

Bulletin board

Blackboard

Clock

Pencil sharpener

Backpack

INSTRUCTIONS

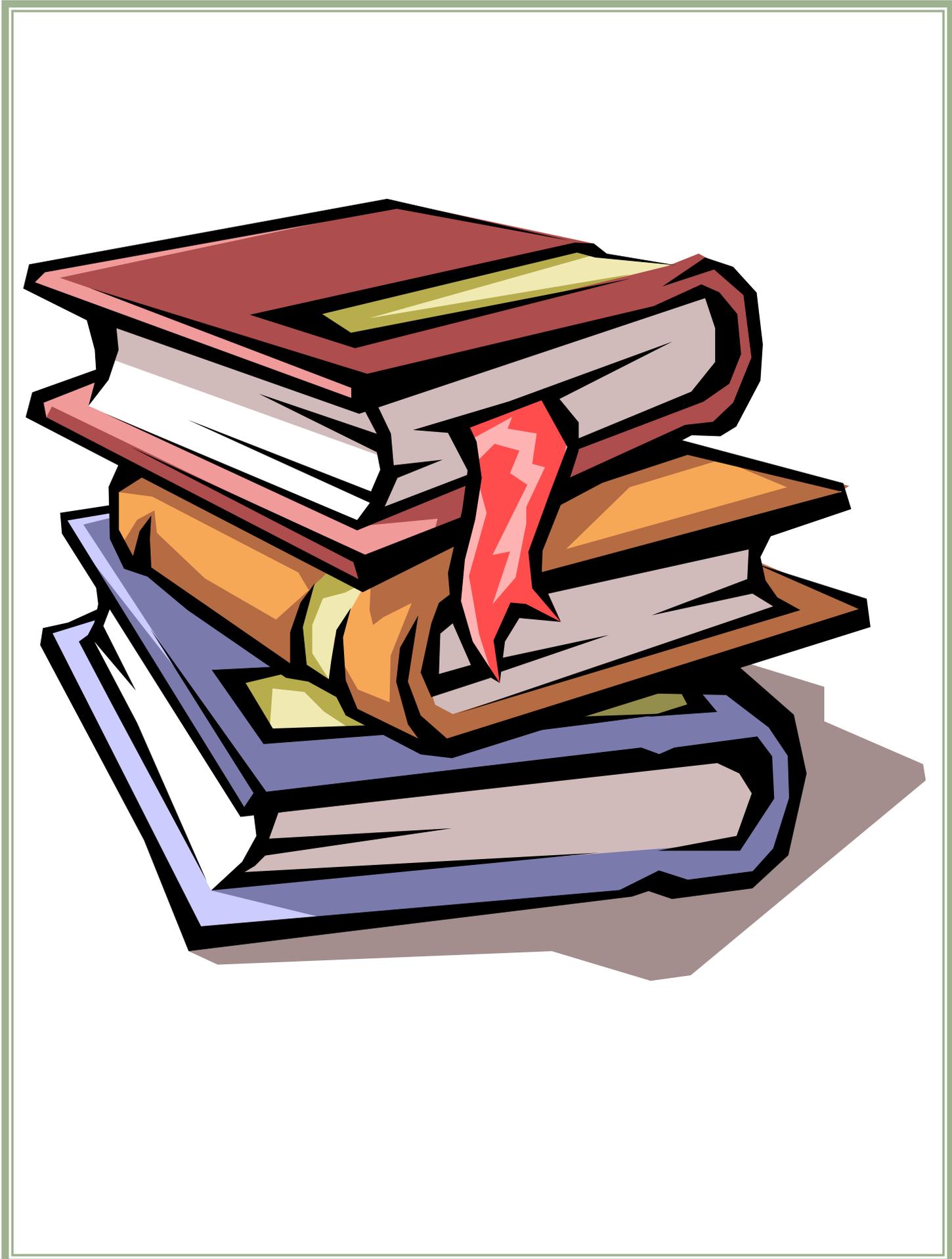
- ❑ The instructors can begin this activity by doing a quick tour of the classroom, pointing out all of the resources, learning centers, play areas, etc. The students may have difficulty absorbing the information. The purpose is to give a brief overview and explain to the students that they are going to get to know their classroom.

- ❑ The instructor should start the marching music and the students should practice marching in place. The instructor then turns the music off, holds up a picture of where the students should go next, then turns the music back on so that the students can march to the area. This process is repeated as the students walk to various points in the room.

- ❑ The instructor can show photographs of the actual classroom, or use the handouts provided. Additional pictures can be displayed, depending on what is in the classroom. (Note: Since all classrooms are different, not all of the handout pictures will apply to the Refugee Academy classroom.)

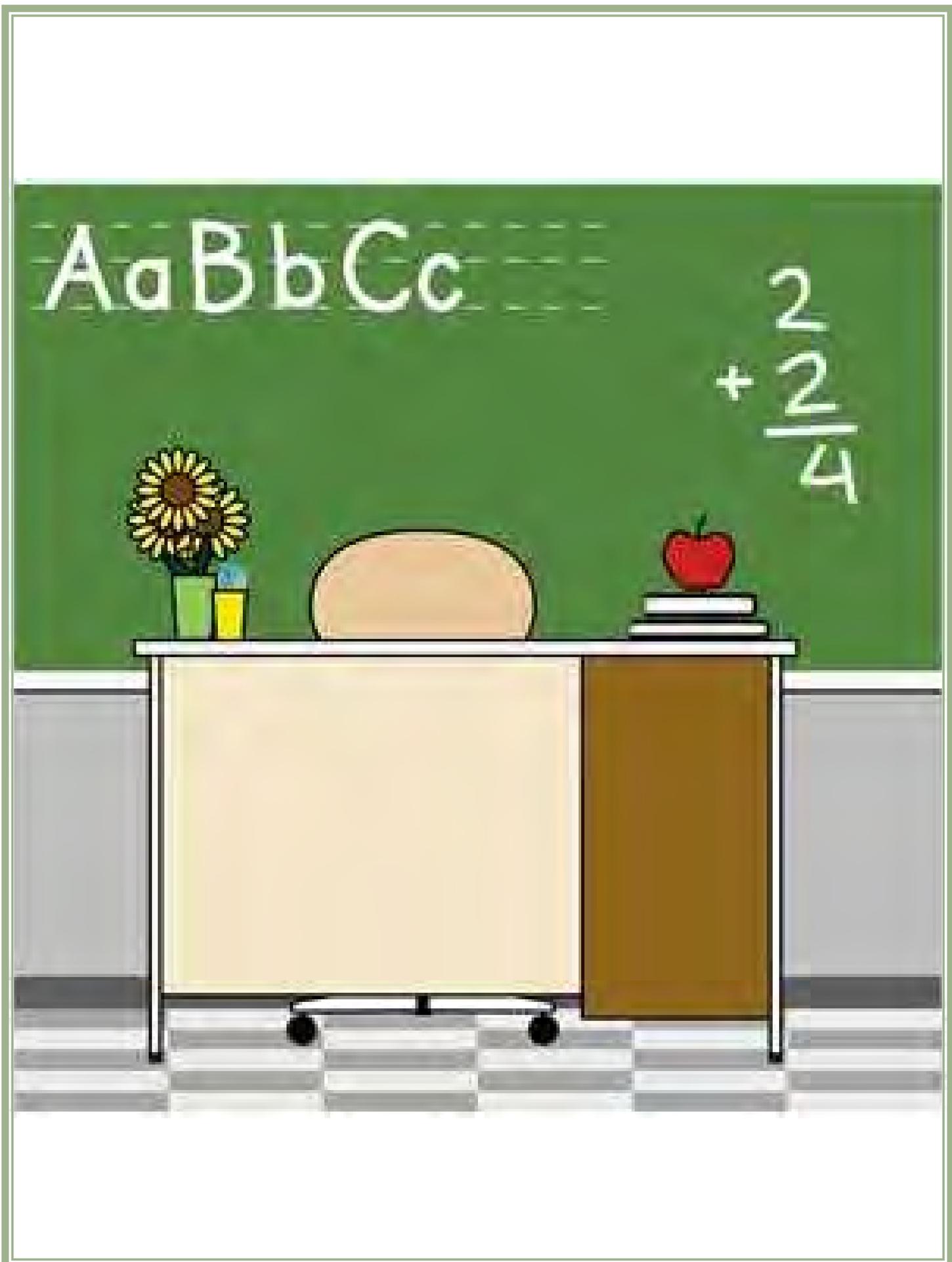
- ❑ The instructor and the Academic Coach can lead the students to the spot in the room that the instructor has mentioned, or can wait to see if the students can figure it out. After each location is found, the instructor can show how the resources are used in that part of the classroom.

- As a follow up to the activity, the students return to their seats and the instructor invites two students to come to the front of the room. The instructor holds up a picture and the pair of students work together to show the rest of the class where that spot is located in the classroom. The class can help them, if necessary. The instructor and students can add additional “I Spy” items in the classroom. (Individual students should not be asked to do this unless it is clear that everyone is familiar with the room.)





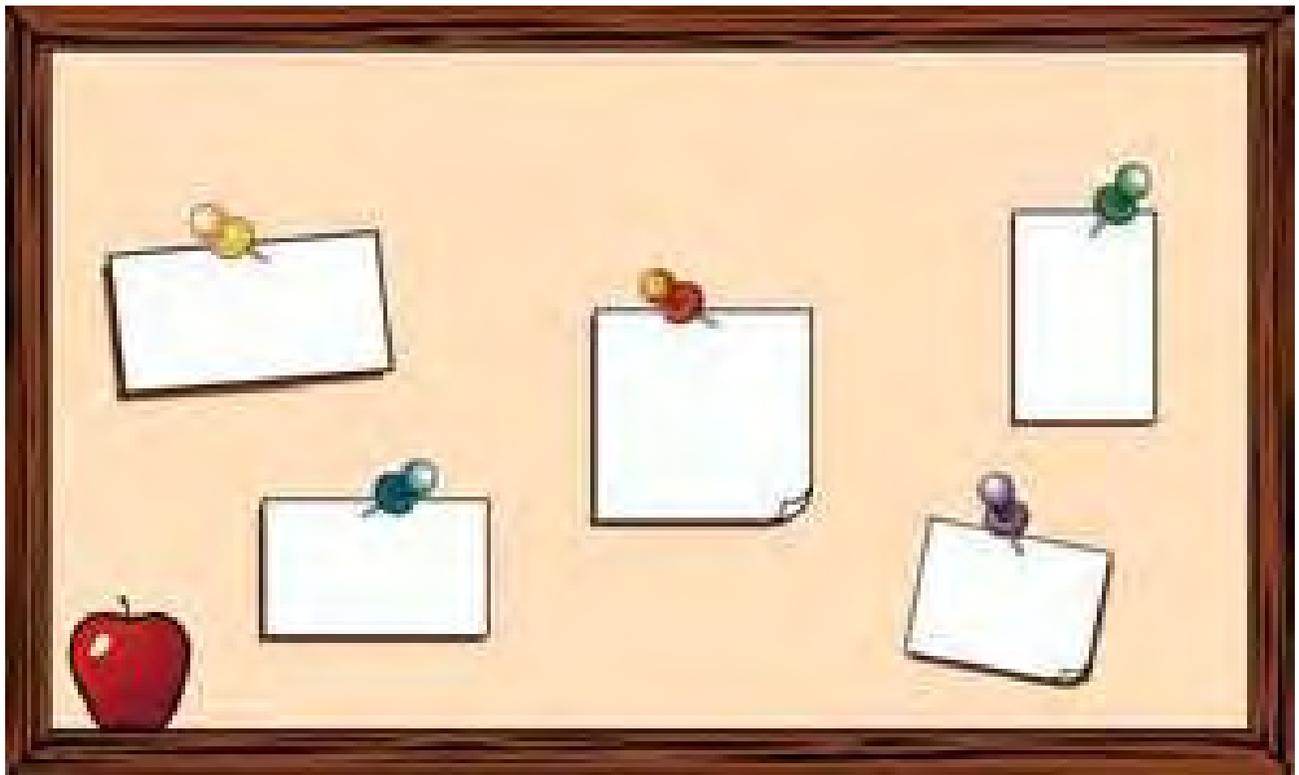




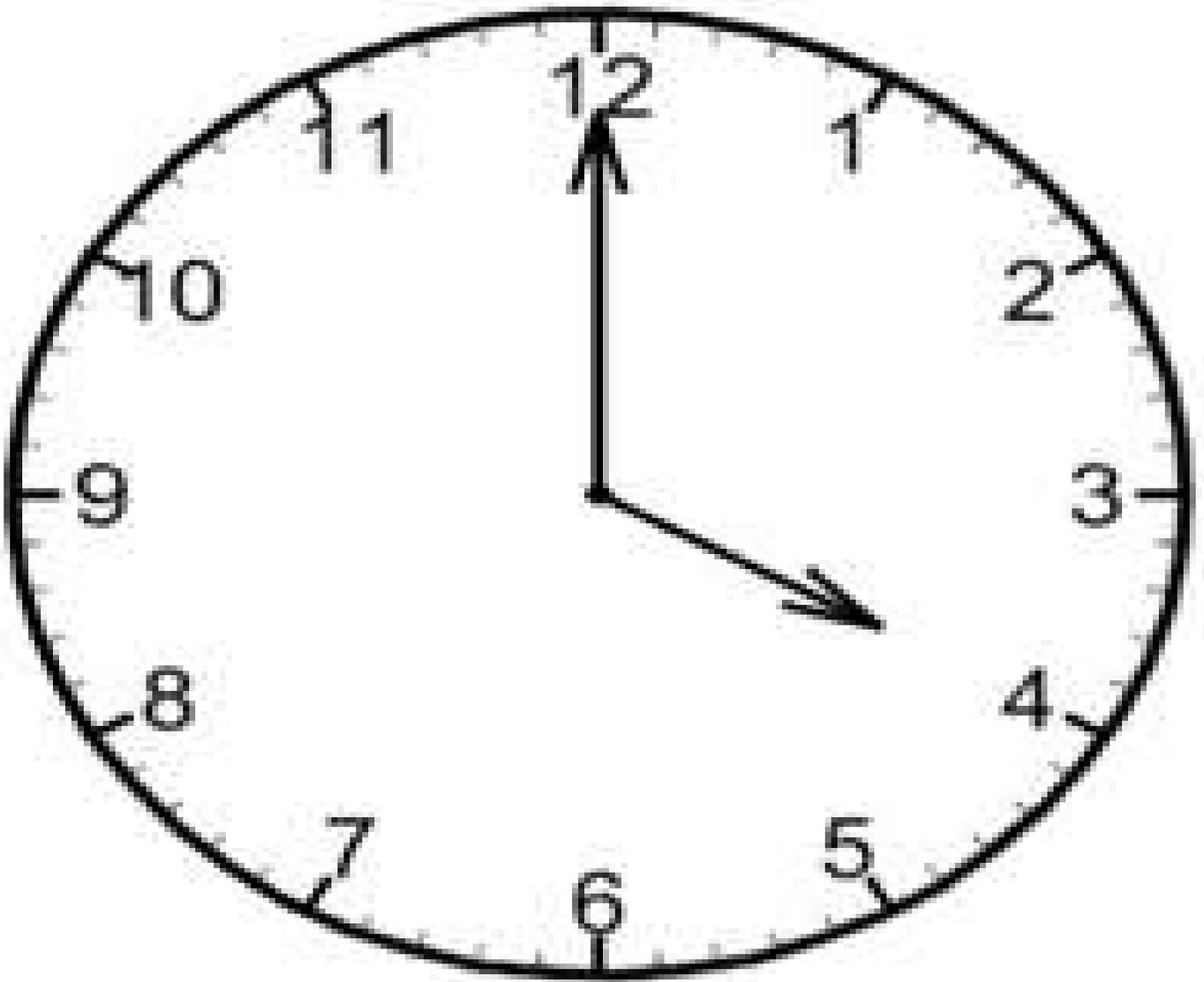


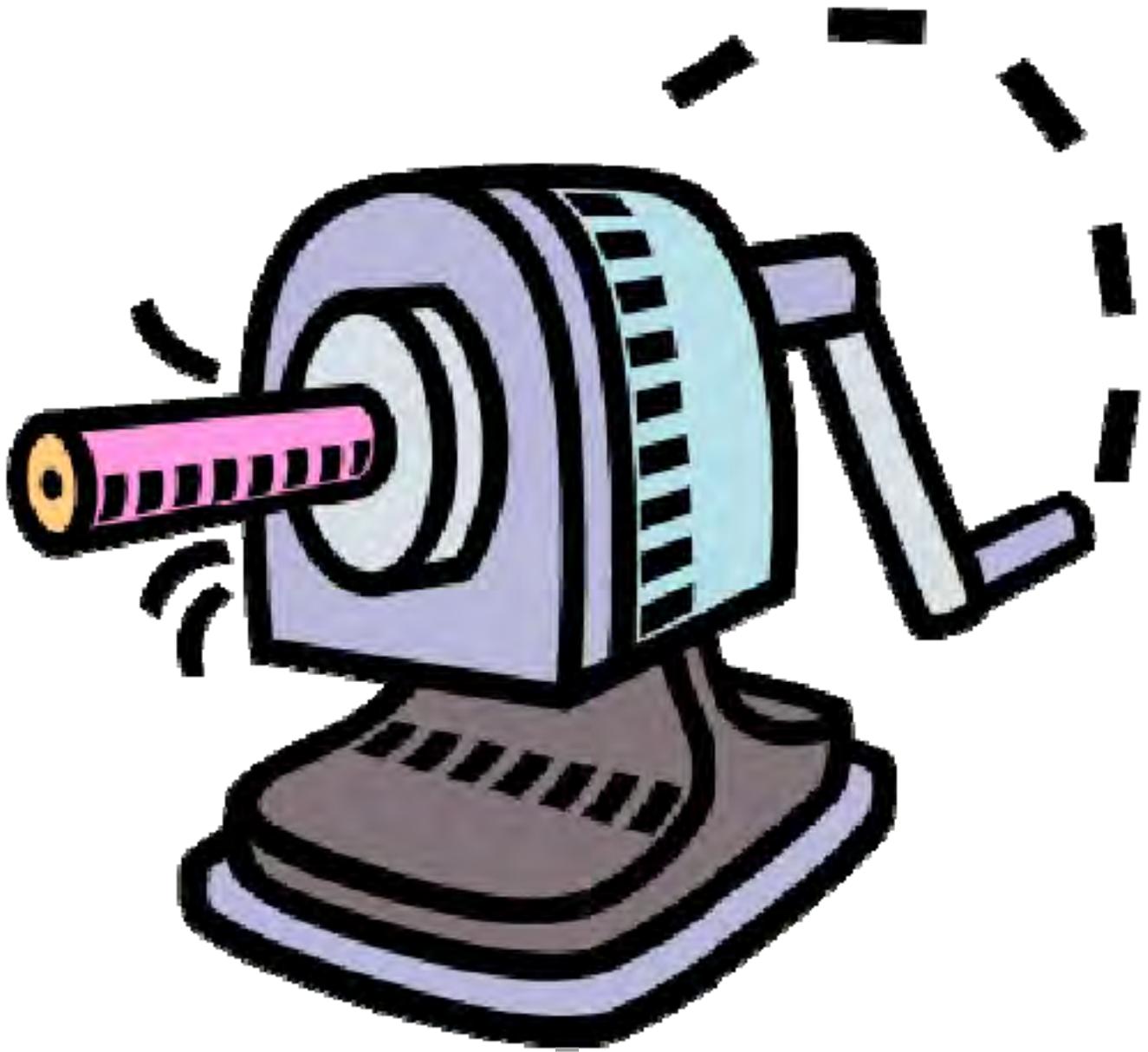
















#7 WHO IS YOUR FRIEND?

At the early primary level, children start to build relationships and learn about the qualities of a good friend. Most refugee students are eager to make friends in their new school, but do not necessarily know how to build friendships. They may not be able to discern between a true friendship and someone who is pretending to be friendly for the purpose of taking advantage of them (e.g., teasing to embarrass them, setting them up to do something unsafe or illegal; taking money from them, recruiting for a gang, etc.).

*Also see Module 2
Making Friends*

Classroom activities should provide opportunities for socialization and the development of new positive relationships. Some of the refugee students may have lost friends in their home countries or left them behind when they relocated. Emphasis in this activity should be on how to make new friends in the Refugee Academy and in school.

OBJECTIVE

Students will become familiar with the elements of a positive friendship.

SUPPLIES

Photographs of instructor and/or Academic Coach with a friends

Handouts:

Lots of Friends!

Fun in the Rain with a Friend

Helping a Friend

Playing a Game with a Friend

Talking to a Friend

Friends Around the World

INSTRUCTIONS

- The instructor and the Academic Coach should show the photographs of themselves with friends and talk about why they are friends with the people in the photos.

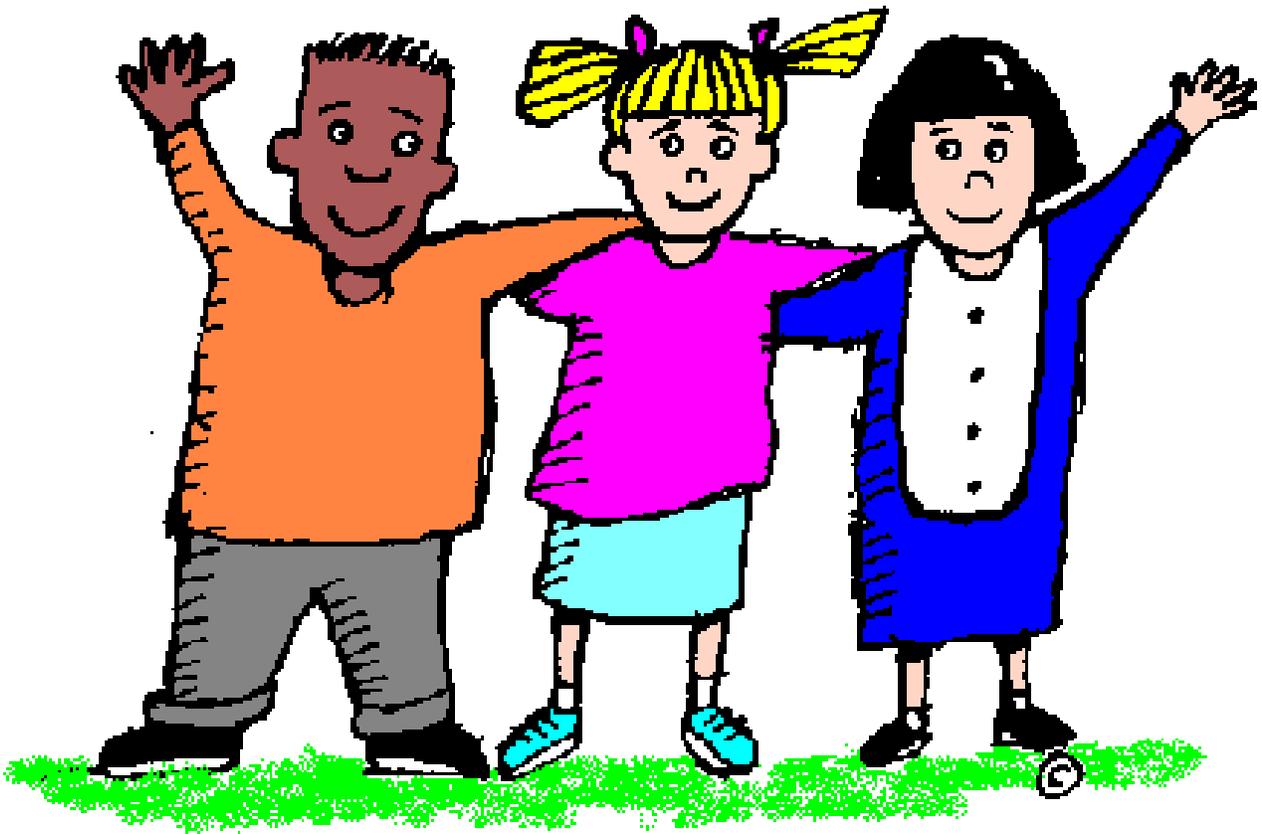
- ❑ The instructor should discuss the definition of “friend” with the students, stressing the characteristics of a positive friendship.
- ❑ The instructor should hold up each handout, one at a time, and ask the students how they can tell that the people in the picture are friends. For each handout, point out that good friends are:
 - helpful
 - kind
 - willing to share
 - polite
 - supportive
- ❑ The instructor should explain that friends do **not**:
 - distract you from getting your work done
 - encourage you to break the rules
 - keep you from socializing (playing, working) with other students
 - pressure you to do things that you don’t want to do
 - hurt your feelings.
- ❑ Ask: What can you do to show that you know how to be a good friend?

(The instructor should demonstrate a friendly greeting and offer to share a book with another adult in the classroom.)

Additional ways that the teacher can role play or the students can show how to be a good friend:

- Help set up a toy or put toys away
- Offer to assist in getting work done, with the teacher’s permission
- Approach someone who looks lonely
- Save a place at lunch
- Choose another student as a buddy
- Explain an assignment
- Ask how another student is feeling after being sick
- Apologize for accidentally breaking a toy

- ❑ The instructor should encourage each student to say *Hi!* to someone else in the class as a friendly greeting. (The instructor should arrange this so that everyone gets a chance to greet and everyone gets greeted.)
- ❑ The instructor can then divide the students into pairs or groups of three and ask them to find a quiet place in the room and:
 - tell each other their names
 - describe a food that they have enjoyed (at any time in their lives)
 - choose a book to look at together (or toy to play with).
- ❑ This activity can be repeated often so that students will have the chance to greet each other and make new friends.
- ❑ Display the handout *Friends Around the World* and explain that students in the Refugee Academy and in American schools can be friends.
- ❑ Students can draw a picture of students who are behaving like good friends (similar to the handouts).
- ❑ Instructors may want to connect this activity with Module 15 *Staying Safe* in the **Welcome to Our Schools** curriculum, and Activity #17 *Safe in the Neighborhood* included in this Supplemental Primary Level (K-2) packet of activities.















#8 PUTTING A PUZZLE TOGETHER (COOPERATIVE LEARNING)

A number of classroom activities in American schools consist of cooperative learning, particularly in the primary grades. The purpose of cooperative learning is to assist students in building skills in communication, leadership, problem-solving, and, of course, cooperation.

*Also see Module 2
Making Friends*

In this activity, groups of four students will work together to complete a four-piece jigsaw puzzle after the separate pieces have been colored by the students. Putting puzzles together is a crucial early learning skill because it involves spatial relations, logic and problem-solving, patterning, and a sense of achievement. Working on puzzles can be a significant stress reliever, particularly if friends help out.

Many refugee students may be experiencing jigsaw puzzles for the first time in the Refugee Academy. They will need to understand the concepts of putting shapes together, matching colors and designs, and creating a whole image from pieces. In this activity, the students will have the opportunity to make new friends as they work cooperatively to solve a problem.

OBJECTIVE

Students will become familiar with a simple jigsaw puzzle and cooperate to put the puzzle together.

SUPPLIES

Crayons or markers

Decorative items (beads, glitter, embroidery thread, ribbons)

Glue or glue stick

Blank 8½ x 11 paper for mounting a completed puzzle (“background” paper)

Optional: Children’s scissors (if the students will be cutting out the puzzle pieces)

Optional: Boxes of puzzles ranging in difficulty

Optional: Classroom puzzle table reserved for working on jigsaw puzzles

Handouts: *Puzzle Pieces (four pages)*

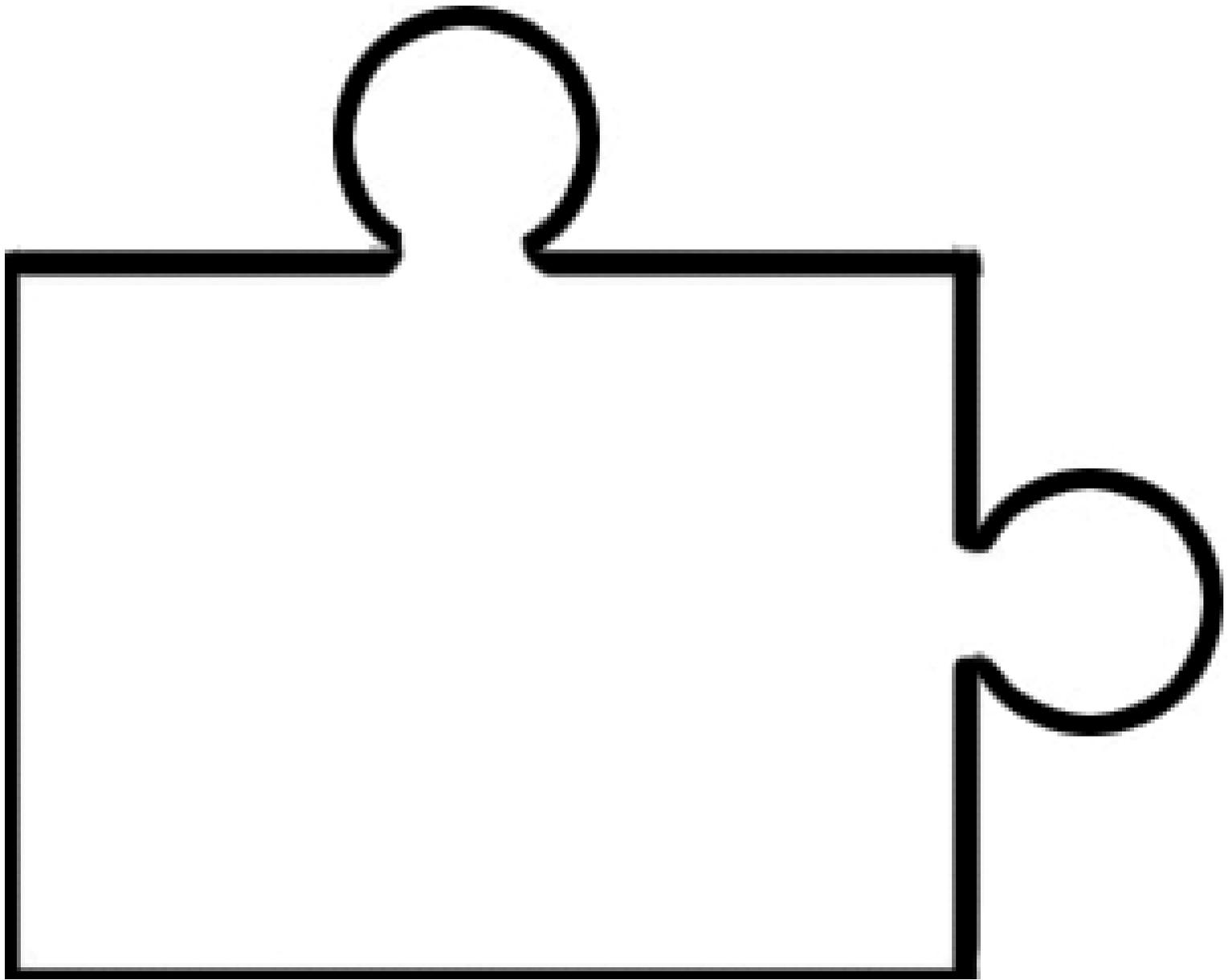
Children with Puzzle Coloring Page

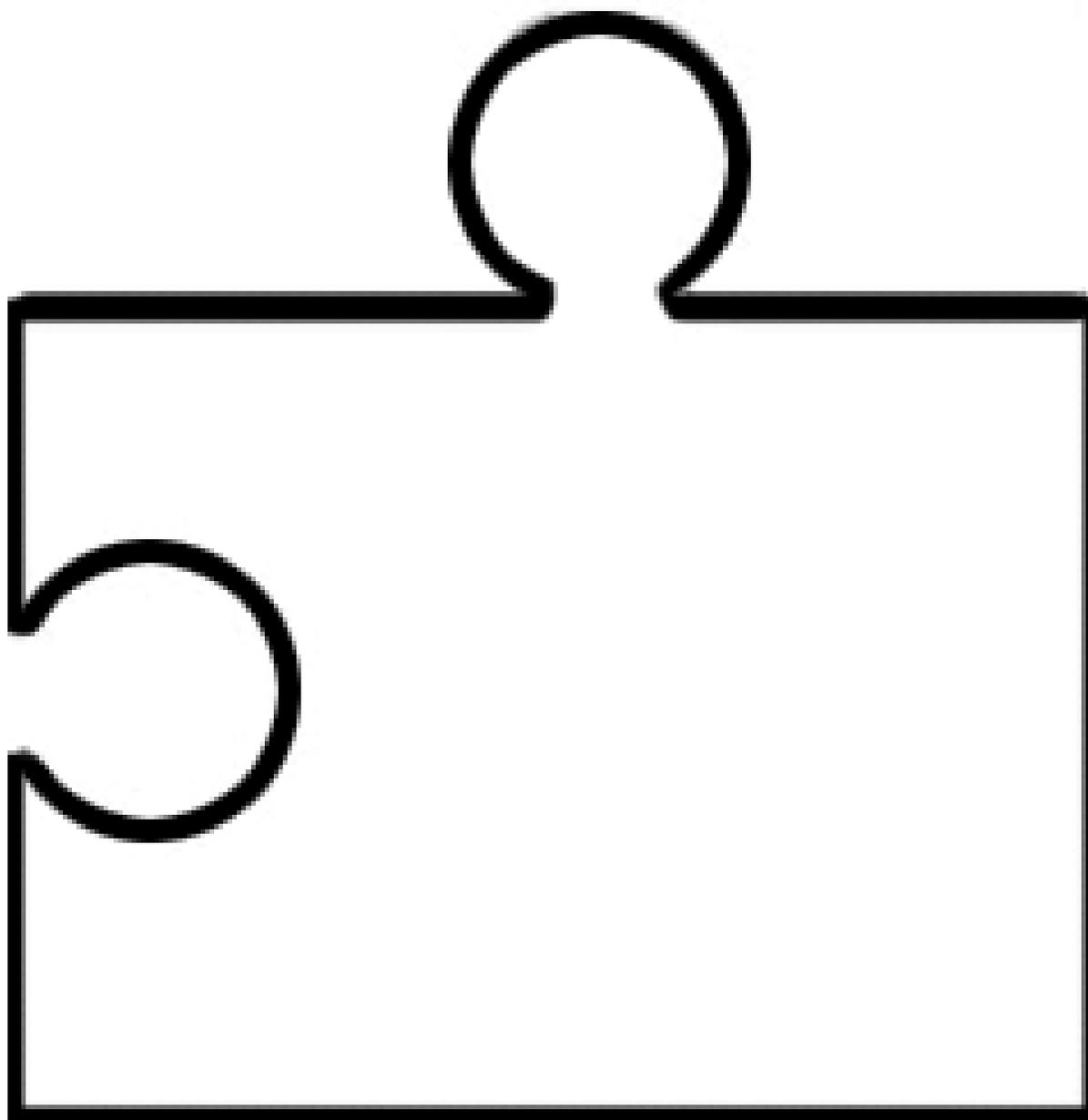
INSTRUCTIONS

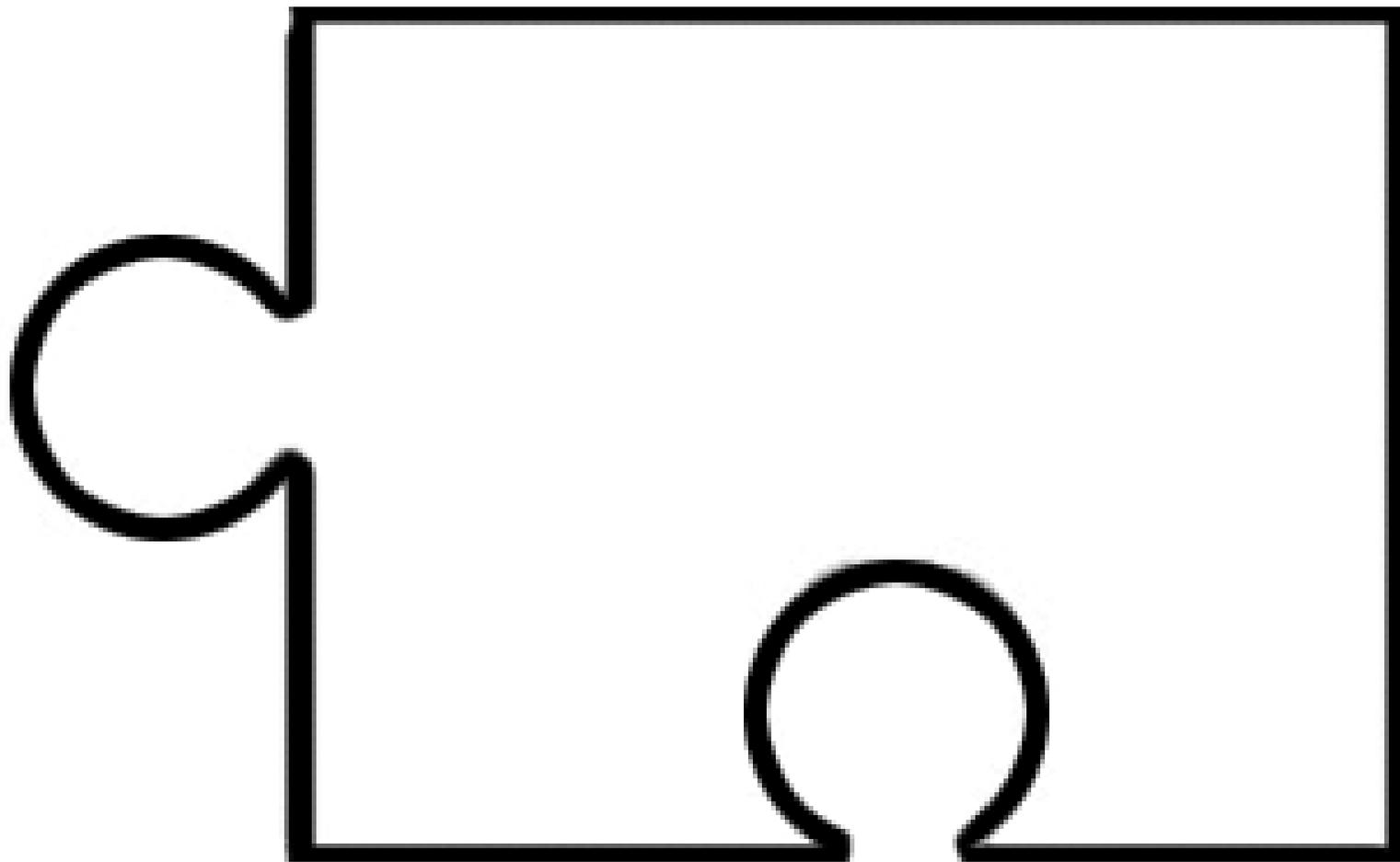
- ❑ The instructor should determine if the students are able to cut out the puzzle pieces on the handout *Puzzle Pieces (four pages)*. If not, then the pieces have to be cut out by the instructor and clipped together. (Each group will receive a set of 4 puzzle pieces.)
- ❑ The instructor should divide the students into groups of four.
 - If the group is not evenly divided by four, some students may be able to work on more than one piece of the puzzle. Others may share a piece and work on it together.
 - As groups are divided, the instructor should keep in mind that the activity is designed for cooperative learning and building friendships.
- ❑ Each group receives the handout *Puzzle Pieces (four pages)*.
- ❑ Each student cuts out *one* of the puzzle pieces and begins decorating it. Remind students that they cannot change the shape of their puzzle piece.
- ❑ The instructor should establish a time frame for decorating.
- ❑ Once the pieces are decorated, the group of four children should cooperate in putting their puzzle together and placing it on the background paper. For some students, the process will be obvious. For others, the arrangement of the pieces will be a challenge.
- ❑ The instructor should stress that the students should all take turns, help each other, and decide together how they want to place the completed puzzle on the background paper (e.g., landscape, portrait, crooked).
- ❑ Once the small group has arranged the puzzle, they should glue it to the background paper. (The instructor may need to remind the students about the proper use of glue.)
- ❑ The completed puzzles can be displayed in the room.

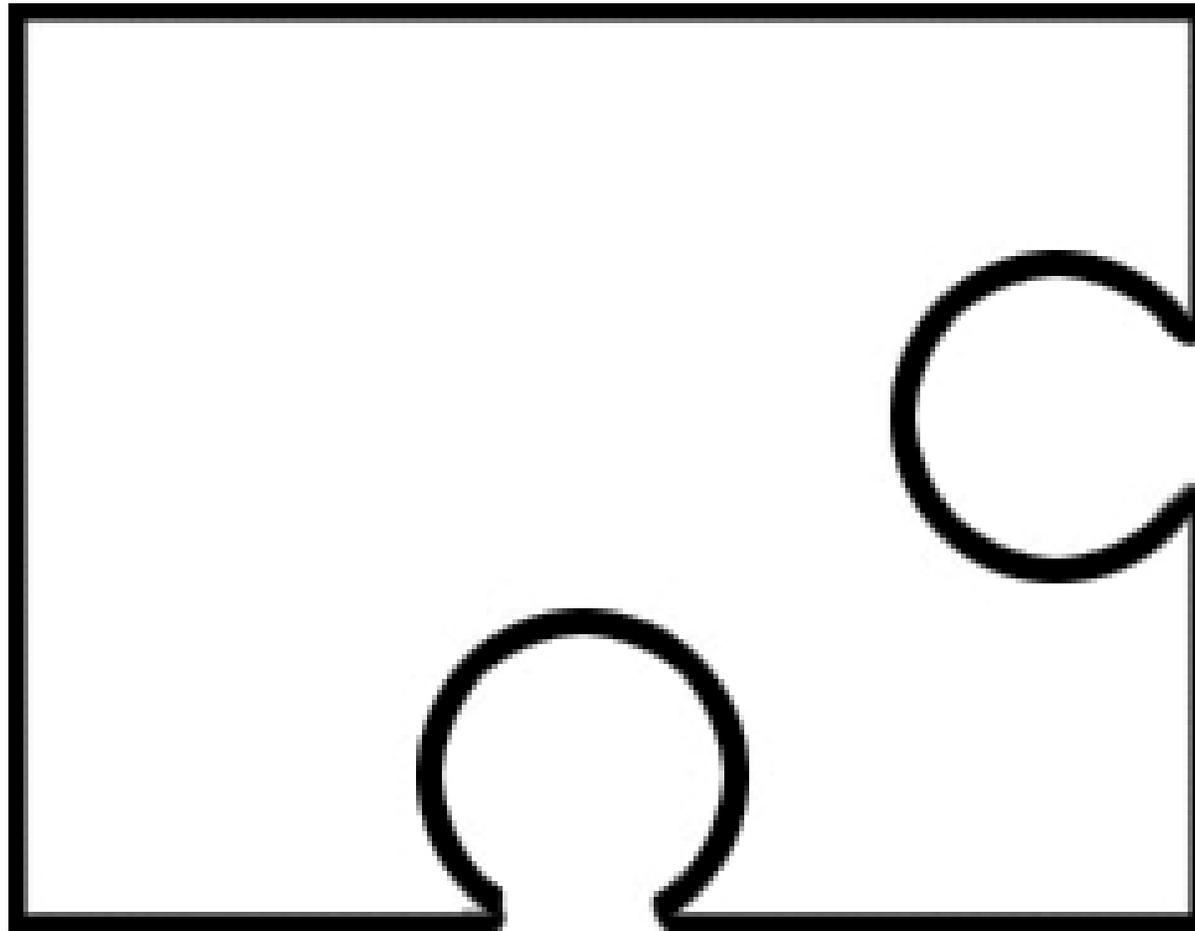
- ❑ The instructor should distribute the handout *Children with Puzzle Coloring Page* and discuss how well the groups cooperated to put together a puzzle. Stress the positive behaviors that were observed. If there were problems, discuss how conflicts can be resolved (or how the problems were solved by the group).

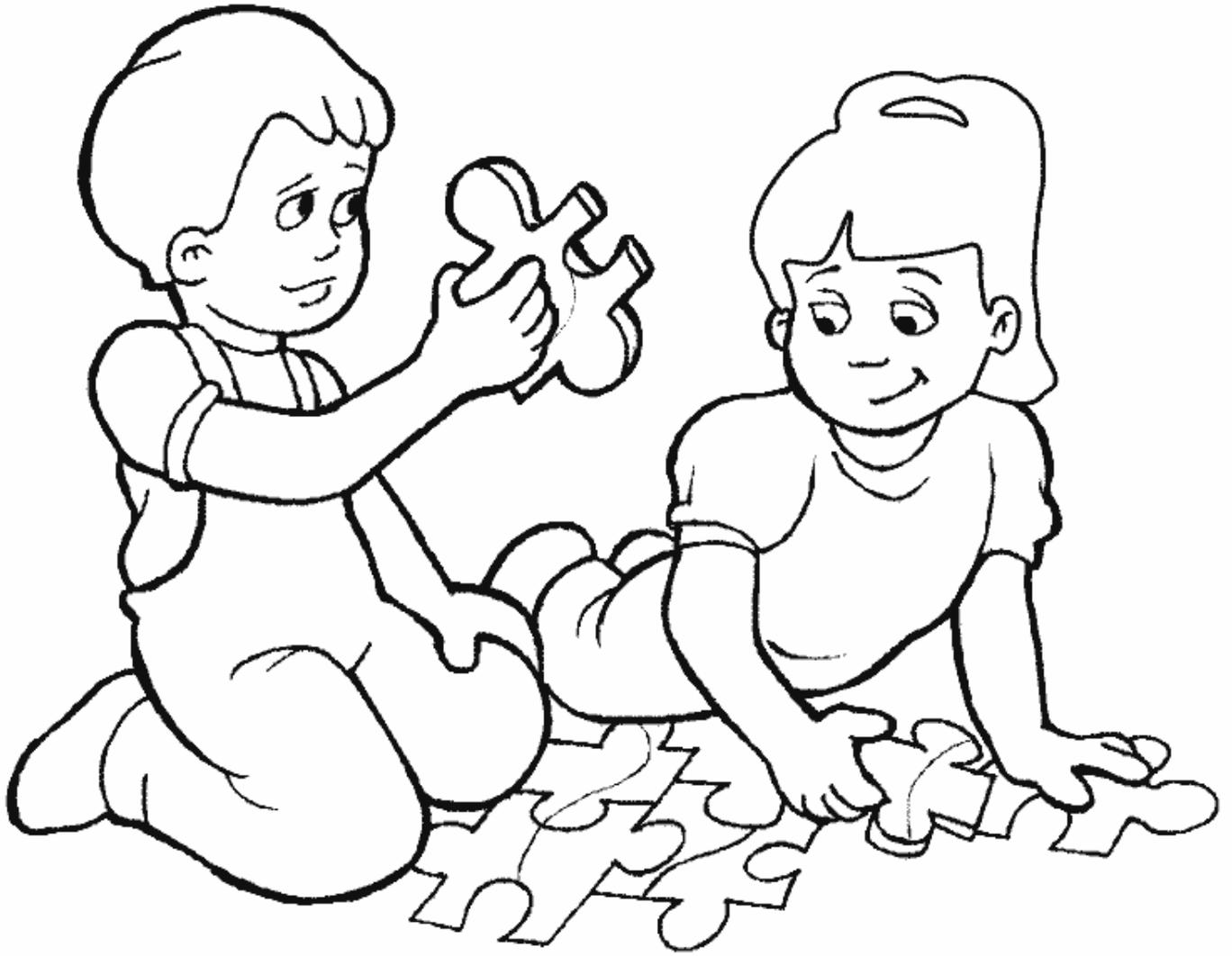
- ❑ If additional puzzles are available, encourage the students to work on puzzles when they have free time and need to concentrate on something that is challenging and fun.













#9 KEEPING ORGANIZED

Beginning in the primary grades, students are responsible for assignments to complete, papers to save, and worksheets and notes to take home, and papers to save. It is often confusing for students to keep track of all of the papers, even when teachers take the time to help students stay organized. For refugee students, the amount of paperwork can be especially overwhelming.

*Also see Module 9
Study Skills*

In this activity students will create their first system for keeping organized in school. They will decorate a pocket folder that will remain in their desk (the Academy folder) and another folder for their backpack (the Home folder).

Papers that are supposed to go home should go in the folder in the backpack. All other papers can stay in the Academy folder. It is important for instructors and Academic Coaches to take extra time to make sure that the students are filing the papers in the correct folders and are keeping the folders neat. The students may have difficulty and may need constant monitoring, but the purpose of the activity is to help refugee students to realize that they should try to stay organized. The folder system is one way to manage all of the paperwork. It also encourages students to develop the habit of bringing papers back and forth between school and home.

If the instructor follows this system carefully, student stress should be reduced, communication with families should improve, and students will have evidence of their accomplishments in the program. Note that if the primary grades in the school district have specific organizational systems, the instructor should try to replicate those systems as closely as possible. Some schools require particular binders or folders that all students must use in school.

OBJECTIVE

Students will become familiar with storing school papers in an organized system.

SUPPLIES

Two pocket folders per student, labeled with the name of the student. (The best system will be to use one color for the Academy folder and one color for the Home folder.)

Supplies for decorating the folders, such as crayons, markers, stickers, pictures, glue

Paperwork for the folders, if appropriate, such as notes for parents, completed work, worksheets and coloring pages to complete at home, etc. (See Handouts)

Handouts for the cover of the folders:

- *Home*
- *School*

Handouts for the Home folder:

- *Getting to School*
- *School Subjects*
- *School Supplies K-5*
- *School Events*
- *School-Home Communication*
- *After School Activities (K-5)*
- *Academic Coach Information*
- *Sample Notes for Illness*
- *Sample Late Notes*

INSTRUCTIONS

- ❑ The instructor should provide students with two folders, labeled with the names of the students.
- ❑ The students can copy their names and decorate their folders to make them their own. They should place the Home handout picture (choose Home or Apartment) on one folder and the School handout picture on the second folder.
- ❑ Instruct the students how to file the papers. The HOME folder should go back and forth from school to home in the backpack.
- ❑ Handouts for parents are provided in this activity, as well as in the **Welcome to Our Schools** Parent Programs. The instructor should distribute a new handout each day, explaining to the students that they should give the HOME folder to their parents and then bring it back to the Refugee Academy every day. (The handouts should also be reviewed with parents during conferences or Refugee Academy Parent Programs.)
- ❑ The instructor may have additional papers available for the students to take home or store at school. The instructor should inform the students how to file their papers in the folders. This process should be repeated every time there is a paper that the students need to keep or take home.



apartment



WELCOME!



GETTING TO SCHOOL



School Bus Number: _____
Morning Time: _____
Home Time: _____
Bus Stop: _____



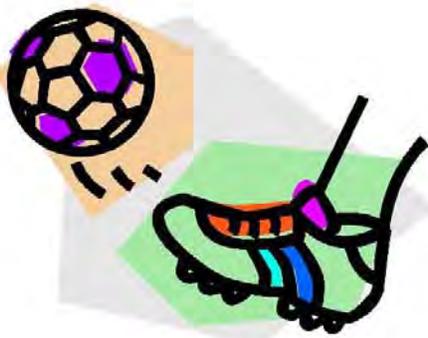
City Bus Number: _____
Morning Time: _____
Home Time: _____
Bus Stop: _____



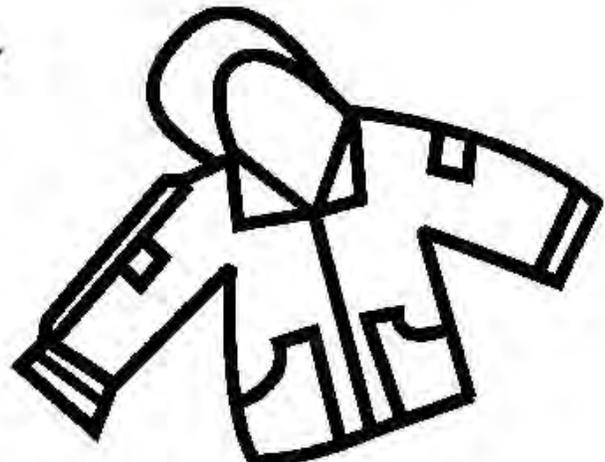
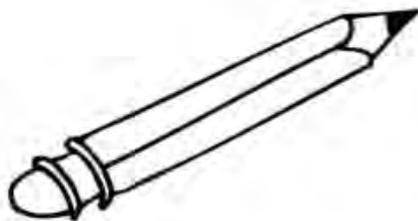
Morning Time: _____
Home Time: _____
Walking to School _____

SCHOOL STARTS: _____

SCHOOL SUBJECTS



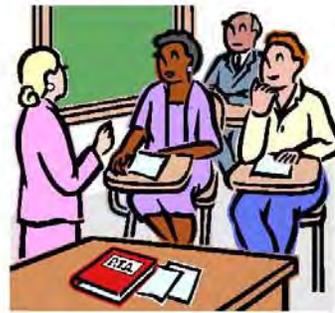
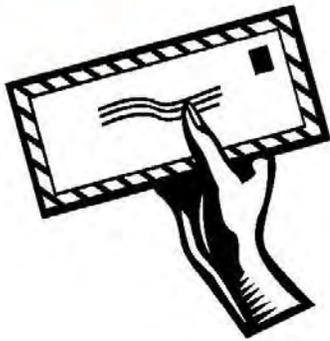
Handout 3 – 2 School Subjects



Handout 1-2: School Supplies (K-5)



Handout 13-2: School Events



Handout 13-1: School-Home Communication

After School Activities



Handout 2 – 1 (K-5)

ACADEMIC COACH INFORMATION



NAME: _____

LOCATION: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

EMAIL: _____

Welcome! Handout 1 Academic Coach Information

SAMPLE NOTES FOR ILLNESS



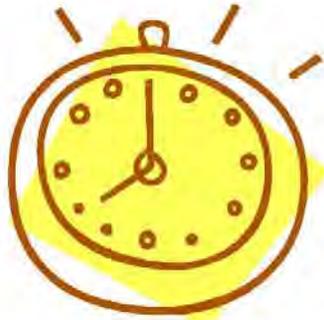
PLEASE EXCUSE _____'S ABSENCE

ON _____ DUE TO ILLNESS.
(date of absence)

PARENT SIGN NAME: _____ DATE: _____

Welcome! Handout 3 Absent Note

SAMPLE LATE NOTES



1) PLEASE EXCUSE _____ FOR BEING LATE TO SCHOOL DUE TO ILLNESS.



2) PLEASE EXCUSE _____ FOR BEING LATE TO SCHOOL. SHE HAD A DOCTOR'S APPOINTMENT.



3) PLEASE EXCUSE _____ FOR BEING LATE TO SCHOOL. SHE MISSED HER TRANSPORTATION TO SCHOOL.

PARENT SIGN NAME: _____ DATE: _____

Welcome! Handout 2: Tardy Note



#10 CLASSROOM JOBS

Most elementary school classrooms have lists of jobs for the students to complete every day. A chart is usually posted, and every week the students are assigned to different tasks. The jobs may include straightening the books, feeding the class pets, erasing the board, or putting away the toys.

*Also see Module 4
School Rules*

In addition, every student is expected to assist in keeping the classroom neat. If the environment is neat and organized, the students are not as easily distracted. The students learn to take pride in their classroom and can even earn rewards for completing their jobs.

OBJECTIVE

Students will become familiar with typical classroom jobs and develop pride in completing the jobs and keeping the classroom neat.

SUPPLIES

Empty classroom wastebasket

One or two pieces of scrap paper per student that can be crumpled and thrown out (Note: Select paper that is clearly scrap paper so that students understand that they are not throwing out fresh pieces of paper. If the school has a recycling system, use the appropriate basket for collecting recycled paper.)

Music to play while children are doing the classroom jobs

INSTRUCTIONS

- The instructor should put the classroom wastebasket on top of a table or the instructor's desk.
- Ask:* What is this for?
- Give each student a piece of scrap paper that can be tossed in the wastebasket.

Ask them to crumple up the paper and line up to take turns throwing the paper into the wastebasket.

- ❑ The instructor should be part of the line, intentionally miss the basket, and continue walking. If a student picks up the paper, the instructor should praise the student and point out how important it is to work together to keep the classroom clean.
- ❑ Remind students that whenever they “shoot” for the basket they should pick up any paper that misses. Otherwise, the instructor should pick up the paper and emphasize how waste is thrown in the basket. Explain that there are rules that require people not to “litter” outdoors or indoors. Whenever students “shoot” for a basket, they should pick up any paper that misses.
- ❑ Ask students to straighten items on their desks and tidy up their belongings in a desk or in a cubby.
- ❑ Select the jobs that are available in the Refugee Academy classroom and divide the students into pairs to complete the jobs. Examples of jobs are:
 - straighten books on the bookshelf
 - sort and store toys and puzzles
 - straighten rows of desks and loose chairs in the classroom
 - water plants
 - feed class pets
 - straighten circle time area
 - organize a bulletin board.
- ❑ Demonstrate each job so that students can see what is expected.
- ❑ Give students a limited amount of time to complete their jobs. Encourage the students to help each other and look for other tasks that they can do to make the classroom neat. (Play music while the students work.)
- ❑ Point out how it is easier to get class work done when the room is neat and organized.



#11 CREATING COMFORT TO REDUCE STRESS

This activity should be discussed with school social workers and psychologists involved in the Refugee Academy program before it is implemented.

*Also see Module 14
Coping with Stress*

The first few days of the Refugee Academy can be fun and exciting for young students, but also scary and stressful.

Children who are nervous or scared can often find comfort by holding a soft blanket, stuffed animal, or toy. Although bringing these items to school is usually discouraged (even in kindergarten), instructors in the Refugee Academy may want to provide young refugees with a “comfort item” to keep with them for the duration of the Academy.

A comfort item is usually something small that can be carried in a pocket or backpack. Students may reach for the item when they are feeling anxious, or when it is a quiet time in the class and they are encouraged to relax. For example, students may take out their comfort item during story time or circle time, or when the class is preparing for a transition to a new activity.

Comfort items have been shown to be significantly helpful to students in transition. If the items are viewed as a temporary source of stress reduction, students will eventually discover that they don’t need them. Instructors can introduce them if it appears that students will benefit, and then gradually encourage students to experience new activities in the Refugee Academy without calling on the comfort item for solace.

It is up to the instructor and colleagues to determine if a comfort item is appropriate in the Refugee Academy. They may prefer that students try other strategies and seek help before relying on a comfort item. (See *Module 7 Coping with Stress* for suggestions.) The instructor and the Academic Coach may feel that it is confusing to the student to provide a comfort item that can be used in the Academy but not in school.

And students may discover that older siblings tease them about the comfort item, so it may be necessary to keep the item at the site of the Refugee Academy.

Some students may not need the item at all. Some may misplace it or give it away. It may be taken away from a child by a parent, sibling, or another student. It is important

to establish a system in the Refugee Academy classroom to prevent loss of the comfort item. (It may also be necessary to set up systems for keeping the comfort items clean.)

One of the best ways to provide comfort is to give each student a paperback book that they get to keep as their own. They can select from a shelf of books or the instructor can determine the most appropriate book for each child. The students can take out their book whenever it appears that a quiet time of comfort is required. At the same time they are developing an appreciation of literature as a source of comfort.

After discussing the use of comfort items with colleagues, the instructor can determine whether the items would be useful in the Refugee Academy. This activity provides suggestions for introducing a comfort item and for encouraging students to use the item to reduce stress.

OBJECTIVE

Students will understand how a comfort item is a source of stress reduction during the Refugee Academy and at home, but may not be allowed in school.

SUPPLIES

Optional: The picture book *Owen* – by Kevin Henkes (New York: Greenwillow Books, 1993) - This book shows Owen (a mouse) and his fuzzy yellow blanket and tells how it provides him with comfort. But Owen cannot bring the blanket to school, so Owen's mother makes a blanket square into a handkerchief.

Comfort item for each child, such as:

- 4"x 4" flannel fabric swatches, easily washable by hand, available at fabric/quilting stores
- small toy
- small stuffed animal (easily washable)
- book

Optional: puppets

Some of these items may be donated and should be checked for safety. For example, check for small parts and lead because of possible lead poisoning. Younger siblings may handle the items. Contact the New York State Department of Health, Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (518)402-7600 for information about specific toys.

INSTRUCTIONS

- ❑ The instructor can distribute the comfort items and ask the children to experience their texture, color, and other details.
- ❑ The instructor and the Academic Coach can role-play how a student might be feeling anxious and will reach for the comfort item. (This can also be done with puppets.)
- ❑ The instructor can read the picture book *Owen*, explaining that the student may not be able to bring the comfort item to school, especially if it is a toy or stuffed animal.
- ❑ Explain that the comfort item (toy, stuffed animal, flannel square, book) should be in a safe place and will be taken out when the instructor tells the students to get it.
- ❑ Explain that sometimes the instructor will encourage a student to get their comfort item if it appears that they need it.
- ❑ *Ask:* Where will you keep your toy (stuffed animal, flannel square, special book)? When will you be able to take it out?
- ❑ Role-play one student comforting another student who is stressed. Ask students how they can calm down if they feel nervous or upset. Provide suggestions such as playing with a friend, talking to an adult, or working on a project such as coloring or putting a puzzle together.



#12 QUIET TIME

Most primary grades have a “quiet time” when students are expected to work without talking, either at their desk or in a reading corner or learning center. For many students this is difficult because they enjoy socializing and may have difficulty staying on task when they are doing an activity by themselves.

*Also see Module 9
Study Skills*

For some refugee students, the quiet time is a welcome relief from the constant noise and activity of an American school. They may be feeling overwhelmed and need a few minutes of quiet. If they are expected to be silent during quiet time, then they are not pressured to try to communicate, follow what is going on, and connect with other children.

Teachers in primary grades use quiet time to help students concentrate and learn how to work independently. In the Refugee Academy, it will be necessary to show the students what they can do during quiet time. The length of quiet time can be determined by the instructor and is based on the age and school experience of the refugee students.

OBJECTIVE

Students will become familiar with how to work independently during class quiet time.

SUPPLIES

Quiet time activities set up around the room, such as:

- independent games and puzzles
- reading center
- coloring pages and other worksheets for students to complete
- art supplies to take back to the desk
- music and media centers with headphones
- computer station

Optional: Soft music

INSTRUCTIONS

- ❑ The instructor should wait until all of the students are quiet. Explain that the students are going to have a short period of time to work quietly by themselves. There will be no talking unless they have to ask the teacher a question.
- ❑ Demonstrate the teacher's signal for quiet, such as holding the index finger up to the lips or raising a hand in the air.
- ❑ The instructor should show the students the choices around the room for quiet time activities. The students can take a minute to select an activity and then quiet down.
- ❑ If students are going to be sharing a play area, it is important that they are not permitted to choose toys and games that will involve other students, such as dress-up, board games, etc. The purpose is to help primary-level students become comfortable with independent, quiet activities.
- ❑ Extend the length of quiet time as students become comfortable working alone.



#13 Books!

One of the first things that refugee students notice about their classrooms is that there is color everywhere – on the walls, bulletin boards, teacher’s clothing, and rugs. The students also comment on the number of books available for free reading at any time.

*Also see Module 6
So Much to Learn
and
Module 7
Interests and Talents*

Some refugee students have never experienced selecting and holding a book, flipping the pages, and studying the pictures. Others have used books before, but are often surprised by the extensive libraries in the schools and the number of books and textbooks in the classroom. (They are also often amazed by how heavy the books are in their backpacks!)

Younger refugee students will be introduced to the many different kinds of books once they enter school. They will eventually learn the difference between fiction and non-fiction, picture books and chapter books. They will also learn how to check out a book at the library.

This Refugee Academy activity focuses on becoming aware of the sheer variety of reading material available in schools. Some schools will have extensive collections in a school library and in classrooms, while others will have limited resources that students can use. Regardless of the number and condition of the books, refugee students should have the opportunity to see what is available in their school and in their local library, online, and in bookstores.

OBJECTIVE

Students will become familiar with a full range of books that are available for free in school and local libraries, and for purchase online and in bookstores.

SUPPLIES

Two tall stacks of books collected from libraries and bookstores, including:

- Board books
- Picture books with few words
- Story picture books

- Level Books
- Middle grade and Young Adult (YA) books with illustrations
- Middle grade and Young Adult books with no illustrations
- Graphic novels for middle school and high school
- Textbooks
- Magazines

Classroom library with enough books for children to select on to read, or a stack of books that have been checked-out by the teacher for the students to borrow in the classroom. (The class may also go to the school or community library to check out books.)

Examples of bookmarks

Card stock cut into bookmarks

Crayons for coloring bookmarks

Optional: electronic device with books on it, including picture books

Handouts:

- *Girl Reading*
- *Boy Reading*
- *Girl with Glasses Reading*
- *Reading coloring pages (3 choices)*
- *Choosing a Book*

INSTRUCTIONS

- ❑ The instructor should show each book, pointing out the cover, jacket flap, text and illustrations, and other information related to the book.
- ❑ Explain how to handle books:
 - keep books clean
 - don't fold pages
 - use bookmarks
 - turn pages carefully (left to right)
- ❑ Pass the books around for the students to look through. Ask them to identify pictures or pages that they find particularly interesting. (This is a good opportunity for students to practice raising their hand.)
- ❑ *The instructor should make it very clear that the students are not expected to know how to read the books.* The students are becoming aware of the full range of books

that are available to them. The instructor should explain that some books require reading skills that they will learn in school, and that everyone learns how to read at a different pace.

- ❑ The instructor can point out:
 - personal book favorites
 - books that they found interesting
 - books that were hard to read but enjoyable
 - favorite authors
 - books that were purchased at a store, used book sale, online

- ❑ Explain that there are books written about nearly everything. Hold up the handout *Girl Reading*.
 - Ask: What do you think that this girl is reading about? (Any answer is correct.)

- ❑ Hold up the handouts *Boy Reading* and *Girl with Glasses Reading* and ask the same question.

- ❑ Ask: What would you like to read about?

- ❑ If there are books in the classroom, point out their location and the rules about borrowing books to read. Encourage the students to select a book. (If a classroom library is not available, students can select from a stack of books that the instructor has gathered. See Supplies.)

- ❑ Post the handout *Choosing a Book*. Discuss the system for selecting a book at the school library, checking out the book, and returning it on time.

- ❑ Ask: What is the girl reading about and do you think she will choose that book?

- ❑ If possible, take a tour of the school or public library, obtain library cards (or learn the school check-out system), and borrow a book.

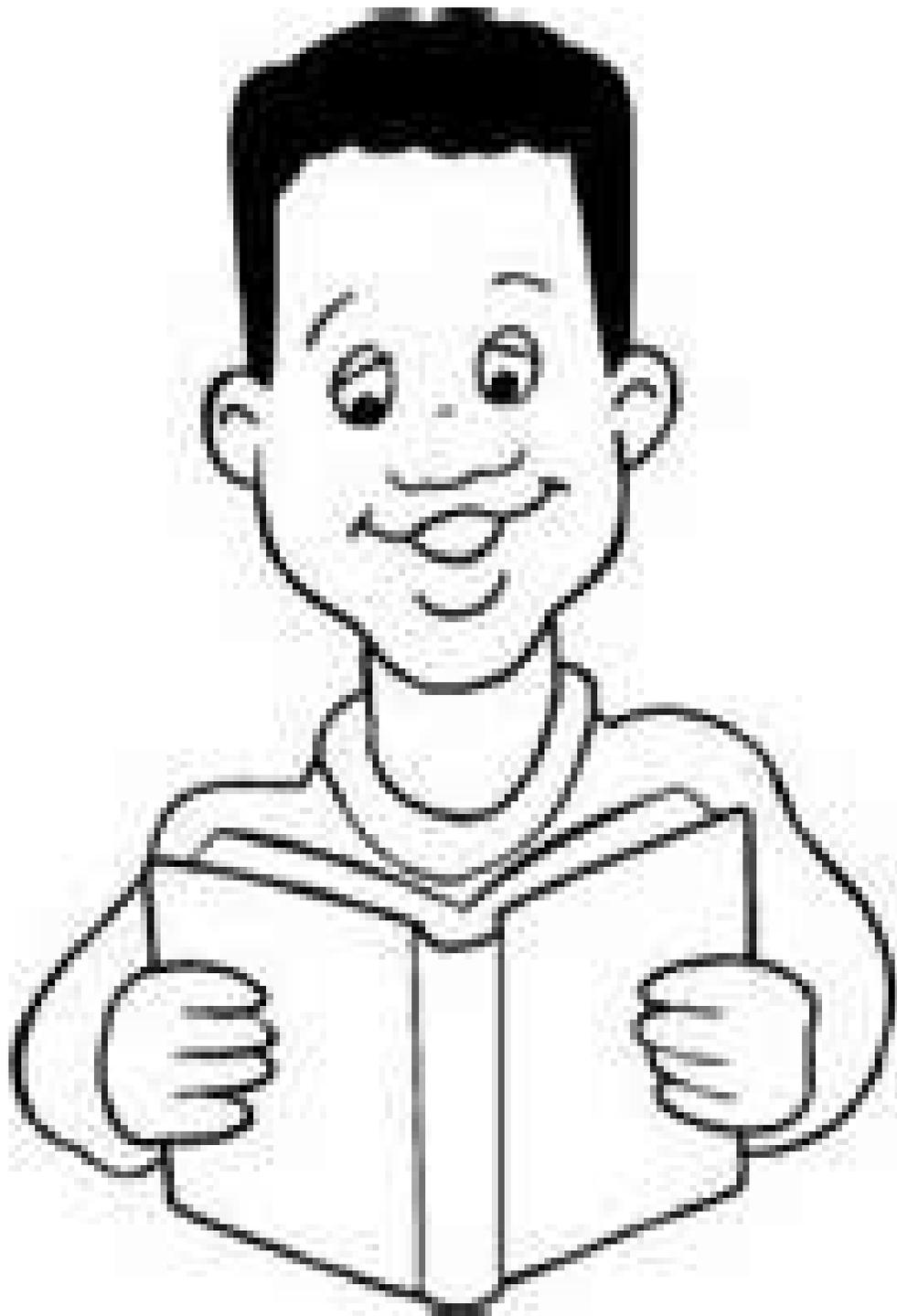
- ❑ Distribute card stock bookmarks and crayons for students to use when they start reading their books.

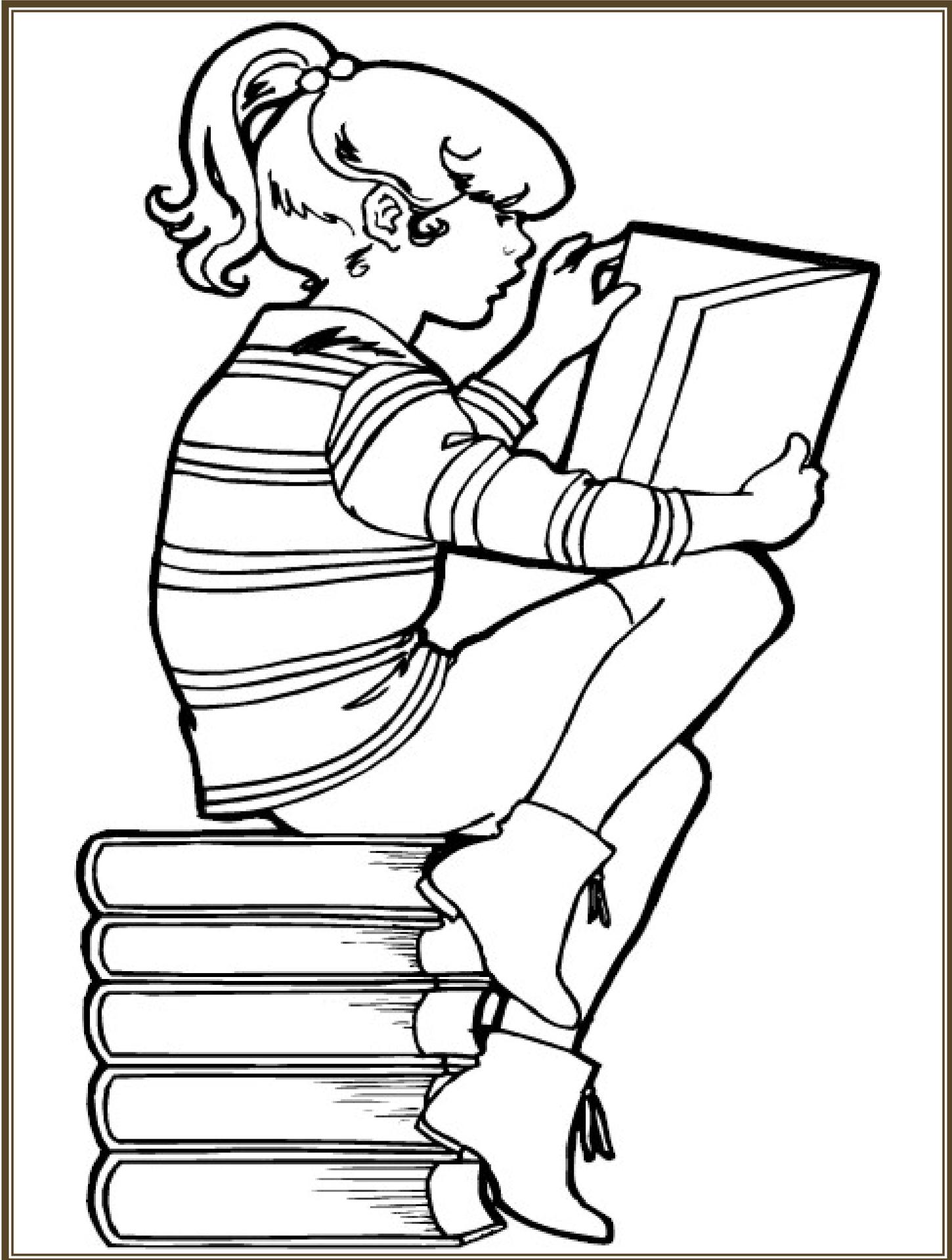


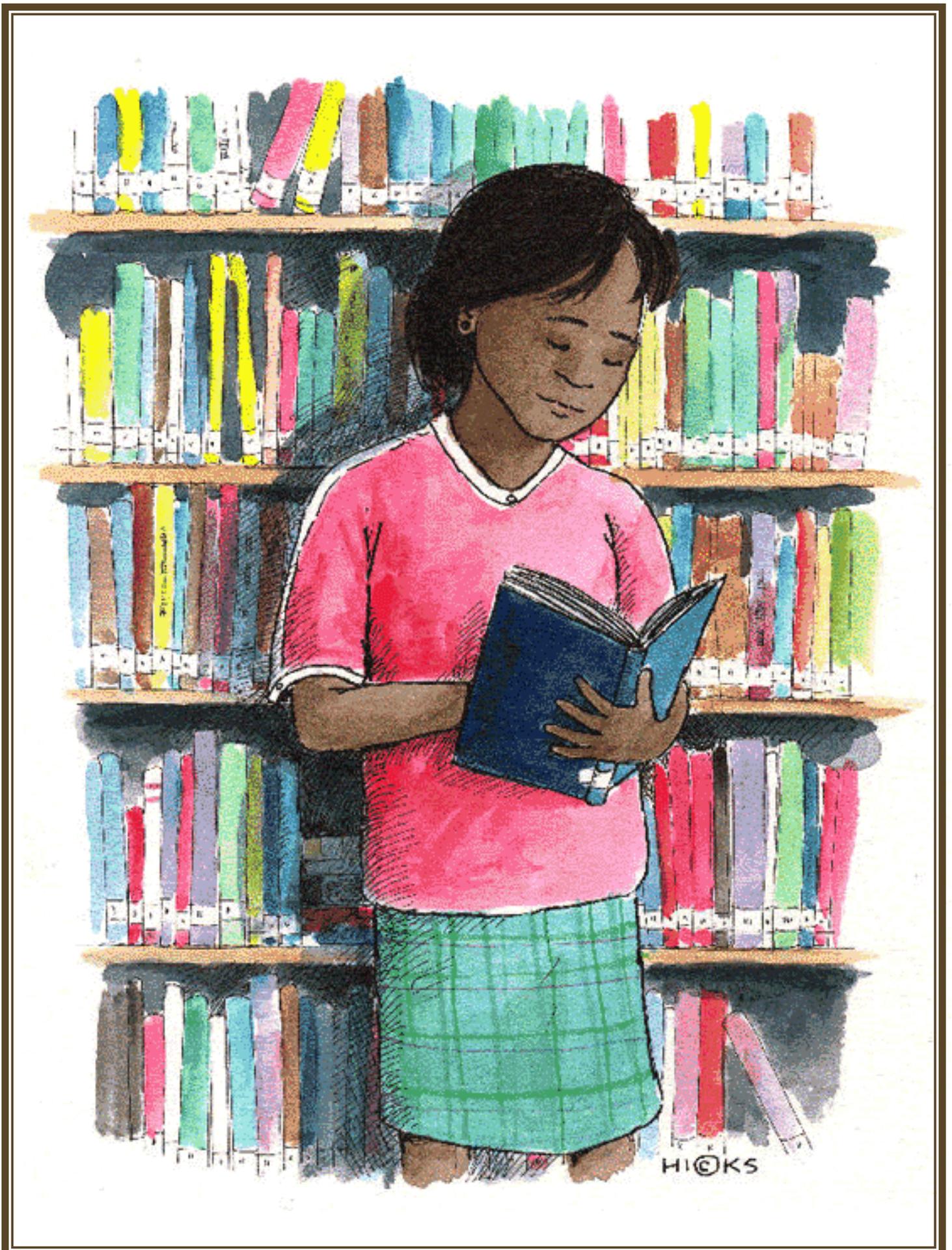














#14 FAVORITE SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Note: This activity should be conducted after refugee students have had exposure to the variety of activities that occur in American schools.

*Also see Module 7
Interests and Talents
and Mini-Academy
Activity #11*

During the Refugee Academy refugee students will have the opportunity to experience activities that may occur during the school day. If time and space permit during the Academy, the students will participate in large and small group learning experiences, playground and gymnasium games, snack and lunch breaks, and art and music activities. They will become familiar with the school building and will learn where to store their belongings, how to use the restrooms, and what after-school options are available.

As refugee students in the primary grades begin to understand what happens during a school day in America, they will start to identify their favorite activities.

OBJECTIVE

Students will become familiar with the variety of activities that occur during a school day and will identify their favorite activities.

SUPPLIES

Handout: *School Activities Grid* (three pages, including one page with empty grid squares)

Additional *School Activities Grid* handout (all three pages) cut into squares (for demonstration)

Optional follow-up handout 7-1 *What Do You Enjoy?* from Section C: Handouts (for discussing extracurricular activities) and Mini-Academy, Activity #11 *Look What I Can Do!* (pictures to color)

Crayons or markers

Student scissors

Group of desks or table for small groups of three or four students

Note: For this activity it will be helpful to have one adult assigned to each group to assist in facilitating the activity.

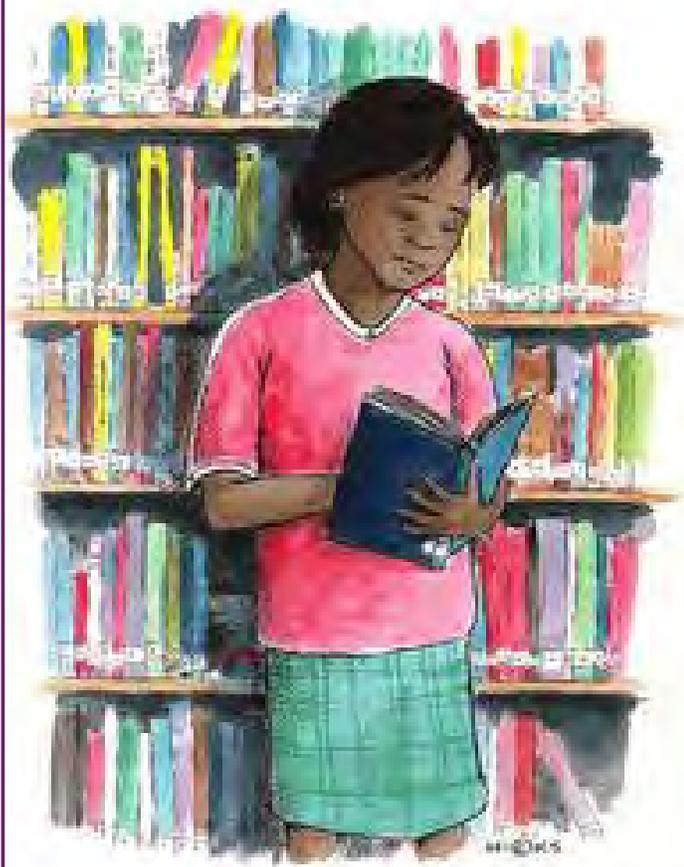
INSTRUCTIONS

- ❑ The instructor should show the School Activities handout (all three pages) and discuss each activity briefly. If the students have participated in the activities, the instructor should ask the students to describe what happens during the activity.
- ❑ Ask:
 - *Where do we do this activity?*
 - *What do we use when we do this activity?*
 - *Can someone show me where these crayons (books, games, etc.) are in the classroom?*
- ❑ Some of the activities may not be depicted exactly as they occur in the Refugee Academy or school. The instructor should discuss variations of the activity (e.g., different equipment on the playground).
- ❑ The instructor should then show how the handout has been cut into individual squares. The squares should then be arranged in the order of the instructor's preference and placed on a table for the class to see. For example, READING may be the first square, GAMES second, LUNCH third, PLAYGROUND/RECESS fourth, etc. (The instructor should role-model academic choices first.)
- ❑ The instructor should explain why they like each activity, making sure to stress that all activities are enjoyable in school, even if some are more challenging than others.
- ❑ The instructor should pass out the handout School Activities Grid (all three pages) to each student and review the pictures on the handout again. The students can draw their own activities in the blank squares.
- ❑ The instructor should divide the students into groups of three or four so that the students are sitting together in a group of desks or at a table. If possible, an adult should join the group to help facilitate the activity.
- ❑ The instructor should demonstrate how the students are to fill in the blank squares with additional pictures, cut out each picture, and then line the pictures up in the order of preference.
- ❑ It is important to recognize that the students may have difficulty with the scissors

and may not understand how to show order of preference. The students can line the pictures up left to right or stack them with their most favorite activity on the top of the pile.

- ❑ Each student in the group should share their order of preference with the other students in the group. If this is too challenging, each student can show the picture of what is their favorite activity and tell why they selected it.

- ❑ This activity can also include a discussion of extracurricular activities as described in *Module 7: Interests and Talents*. Coloring pages are also provided in the Mini-Academy Activity #11 *Look What I Can Do!*







#15 READY FOR COLD WEATHER

Many refugee students have not experienced cold weather, let alone piles of fallen leaves, snow, ice storms, and school cancellations due to weather. It may be difficult for them to understand how to prepare for cold weather when they can't even imagine what it looks or feels like.

*Also see Module 6
Stay Healthy*

In this activity, the students will learn about appropriate clothing for cold weather. They should be encouraged to be prepared for weather changes that will start at the beginning of the school year. They can talk to their family members and Refugee Resettlement Case Manager about clothing that they will need.

OBJECTIVE

Students will become familiar with winter clothing and how to prepare for cold weather.

SUPPLIES

Large tote/paper bag containing winter:

- hat
- scarf
- gloves and mittens
- boots
- snowpants
- sweater
- socks
- raincoat
- winter jacket
- umbrella

Access to a window that allows students to see the weather

Optional: Bucket of ice cubes

Information about where to obtain winter clothing in the local area (thrift shops, local stores, churches, school nurse, etc.)

Pictures of autumn and winter scenes from handouts, Internet, and books

Handouts:

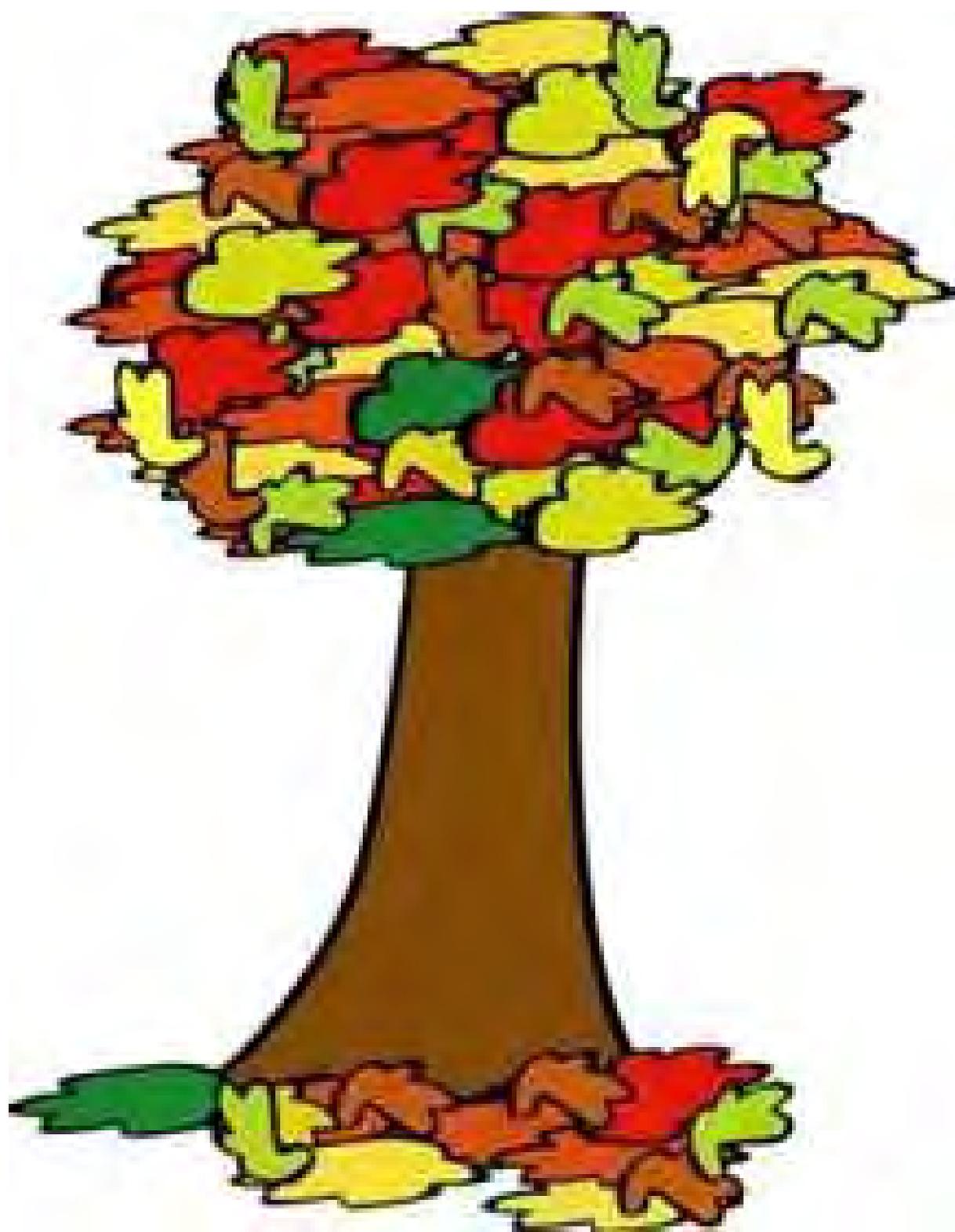
- *Autumn tree*
- *Leaves*
- *Winter scene*
- *Sledding*
- *Snowman*
- *Winter clothing*
- *Boots*
- *Scarf*
- *Cap*
- *Gloves*
- *Mittens*
- *Jacket*
- *Sweater*
- *Socks*
- *Hat*
- *Girls with Umbrellas*
- *Snow Day!*
- *Tissues*

INSTRUCTIONS

- ❑ The instructor should lead children to a window that allows them to see the weather outside. The instructor and students should comment on the weather, describing how it looks and feels. Compare the current weather to the days before.
- ❑ Since the Refugee Academy may be held in the summer, it might be difficult for refugee students to imagine what cold weather looks and feels like. The instructor should show the students pictures of autumn and winter scenes, commenting on how the weather looks and feels.
- ❑ The instructor can pass around a bucket of ice cubes for students to touch so they can get a sense of how cold weather feels.
- ❑ The instructor should stress the enjoyable activities of winter, rather than how the cold weather can be unpleasant! Show the handouts *Sledding* and *Snowman*.

Snow Day! (Explain why a school snow day may be necessary.)

- ❑ Demonstrate each piece of winter clothing, explaining how it is important. For example, the wind can blow, but a scarf will keep the children warm. Making snowballs is fun, but gloves or mittens are necessary. A hat is very important because it keeps the heat from escaping through the head (although students need to know that it keeps ears and head warm).
- ❑ The instructor should explain to students that they need to be protected from cold weather so that they are comfortable and warm. (*Optional:* Although colds and flu technically don't come from dressing inappropriately in cold weather, the instructor may want to explain that sometimes people get the sniffles in the winter (referred to as a "cold.") Share the handout *Tissues* and show students how to properly use a tissue and throw it out.)
- ❑ Put all of the winter clothing into the paper/tote bag and ask each child, one at a time, to come up and select one piece of clothing to try on.
- ❑ Distribute the handouts that depict winter clothing so that students can explain to their parents what the family will need for cold weather. Discuss with students how they can obtain winter clothing.







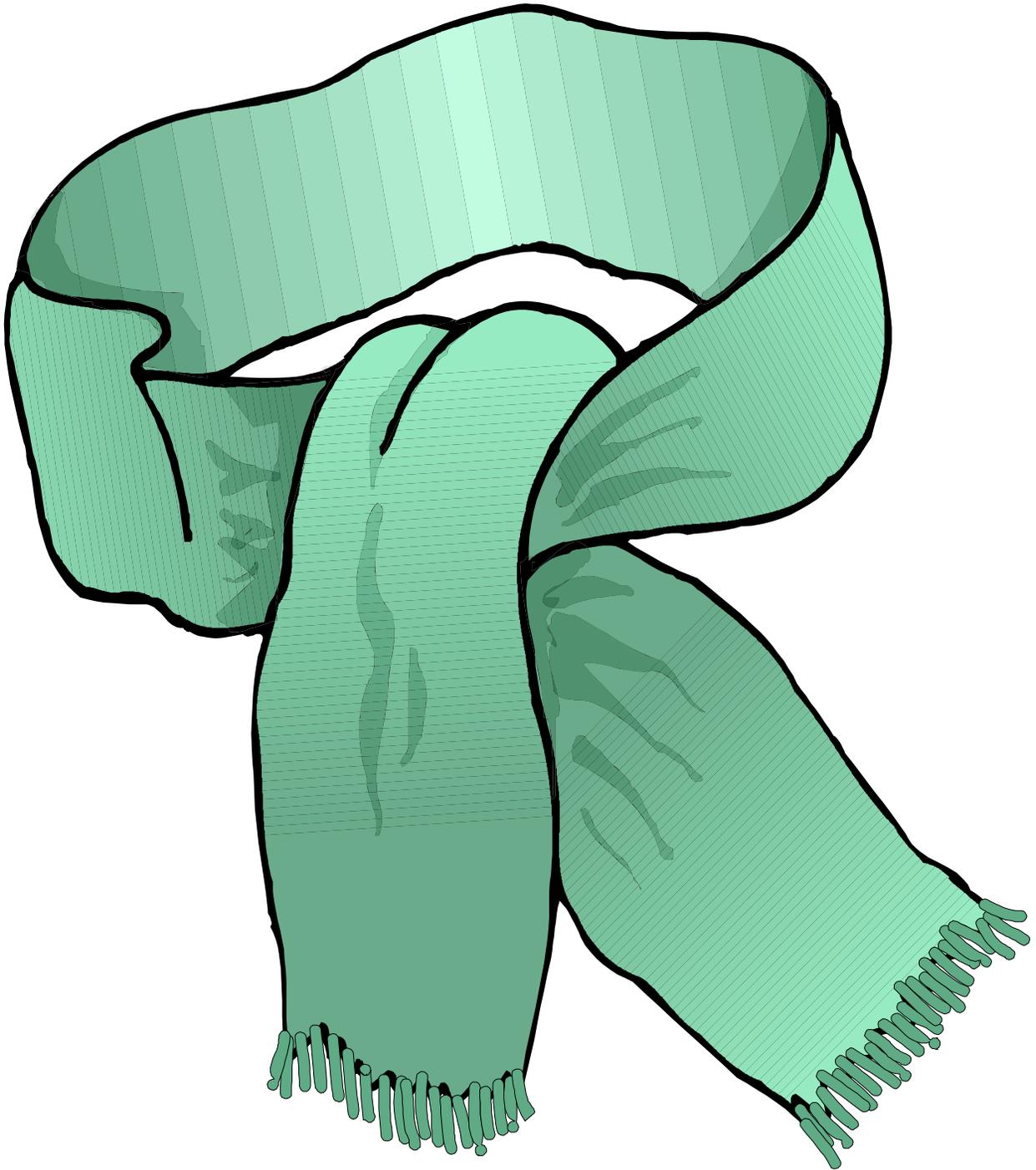




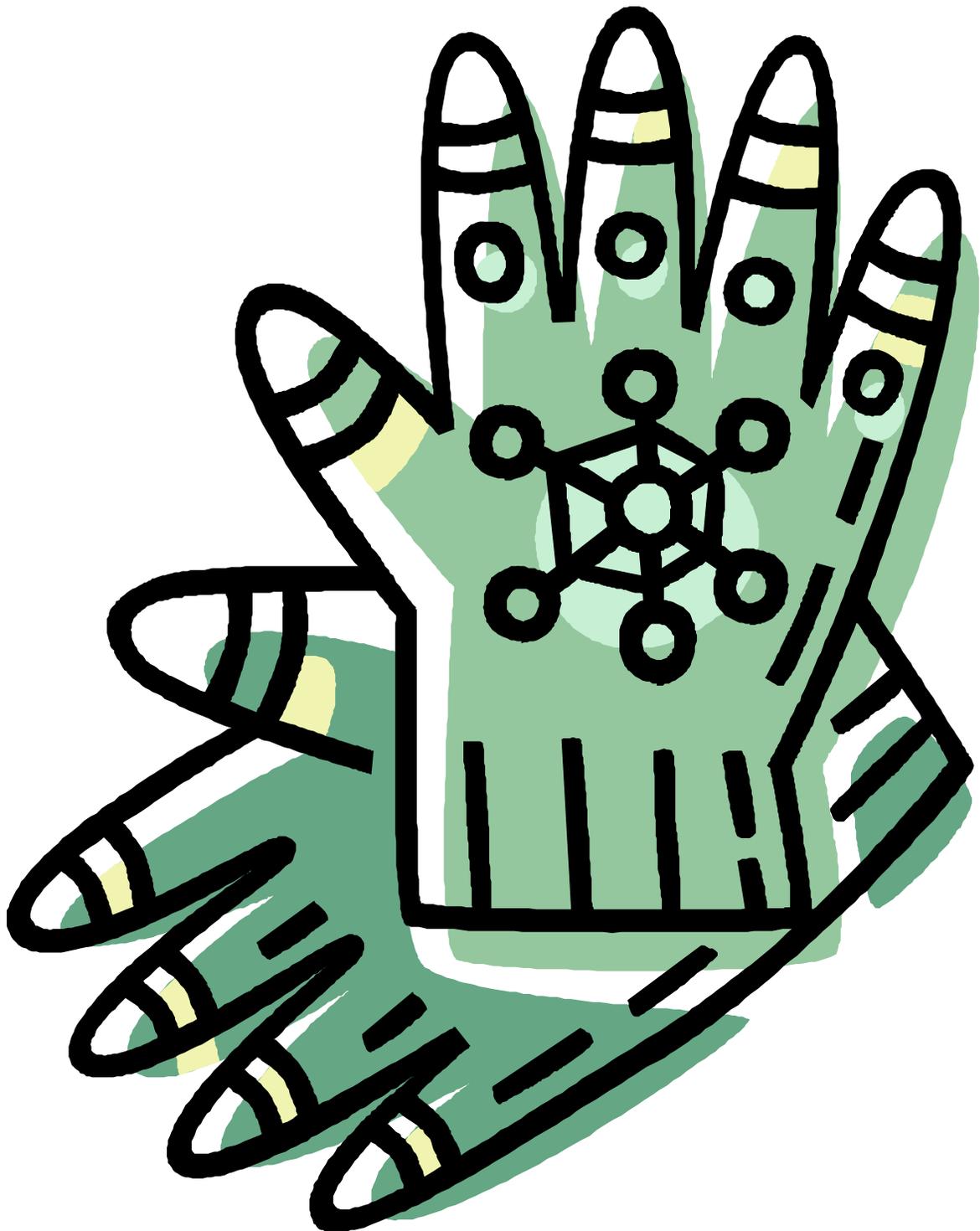


boots





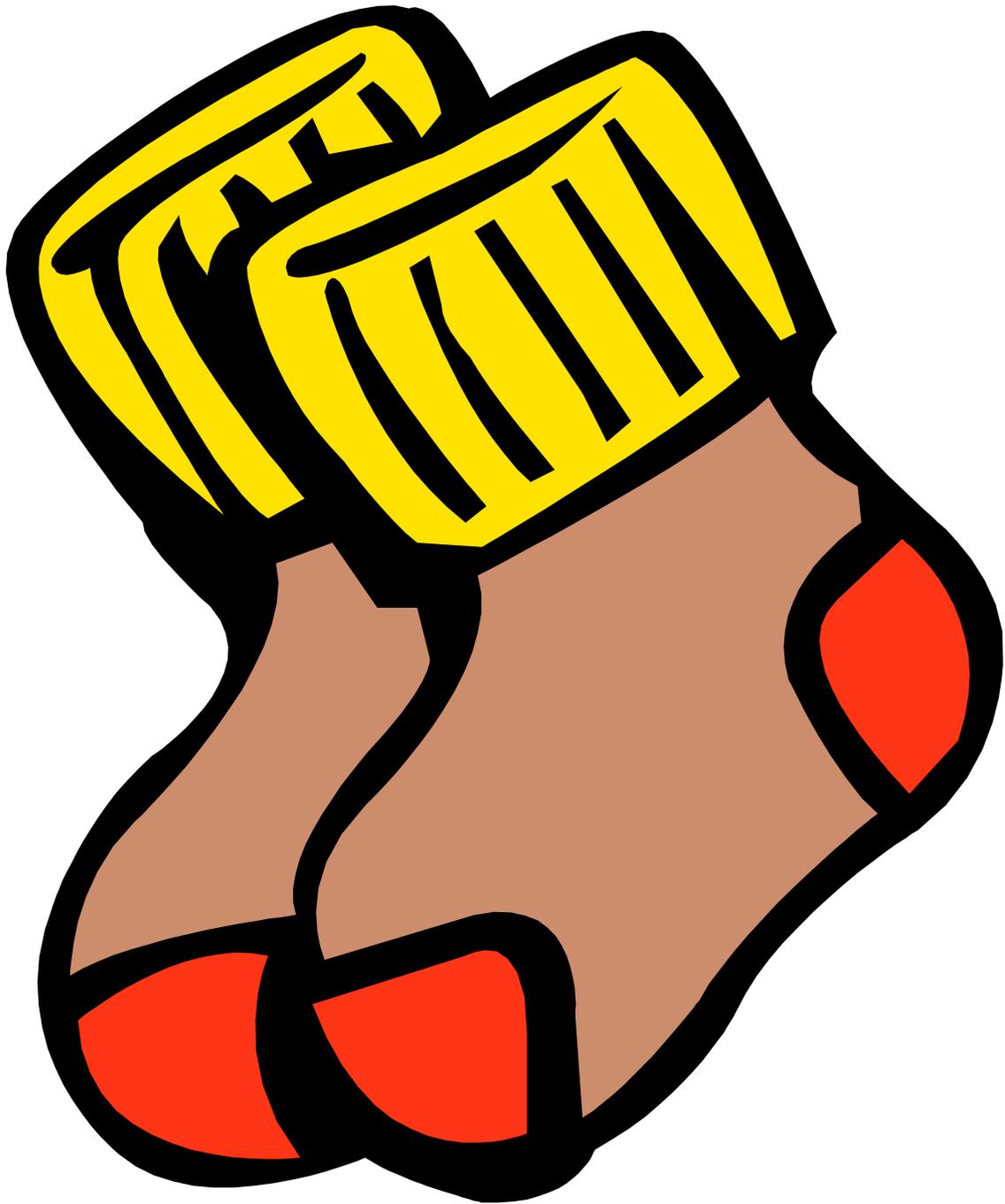






















#16 BULLIES

It is difficult to explain to refugee students that they are safe in their new country, but at the same time tell them that they may be subjected to unsafe environments and bullies who set out to harm them.

*Also see
Module #15
Staying Safe*

The vast majority of students in school will be friendly and helpful to new refugee students, but it is important to alert even the youngest students to the reality that some students will deliberately tease, threaten, frighten, or hurt them. These students are bullies and their behavior is usually unprovoked and persistent, often continuing for a long period of time.

Since bullies are seeking power and control, any student who appears to be vulnerable can be a target. Bullies tend to focus on students who are “different” in color, dress, behavior, mannerisms, size, physical appearance, and so forth. If a refugee student tends to be timid, withdrawn, and/or anxious, then bullies may zero in on that student. The more the target is visibly affected by the bully, the more bullying tends to escalate.

Bullying can be physical (poking, tripping, hitting, blocking passage, etc.) as well as verbal and emotional (humiliating a student, ignoring a student and encouraging others to ignore, teasing, etc.). It can also occur online as “cyberbullying” (e-mails, photos, Facebook entries, etc.).

Young students may not understand why someone continues to bother them. If they are new arrivals, they may not realize that bullying is considered unacceptable and may even be against the law.

Of course, new students do need to learn how to get along with many different personalities. They are not going to be friends with everyone. Some of the American students will be unfriendly and inconsiderate – even insulting. Refugee students will need assistance in navigating the social demands of a new school. But if they are consistently attacked by another student, then they need help and should know who to talk to about the problem.

In some cases, the refugee students themselves may begin bullying because they are trying to achieve a sense of control over their own situation. They may have experienced bullying or violence in their home countries and have not learned how to

treat others with respect.

It is important to begin with primary-level students by talking about how it feels to be treated with respect and kindness. If they feel angry, upset, or frightened when another student approaches them, then they should not tolerate it and need to talk to a trusted adult. Sharing this information with a adult is difficult for children to do at any age, but younger children are more willing to talk about a bullying problem if they know exactly who they can turn to and how they will be protected.

OBJECTIVE

Students will become familiar with how it feels to be bullied, and will learn who they can talk to if they experience or witness bullying.

SUPPLIES

Drawing paper, crayons/markers/paint

Arrange for students to be able to visit a “trusted adult” in their office (e.g., guidance counselor, principal, social worker, police officer) or invite them to class. The adults selected should be readily available to students once they attend school. (Note that some students may be uncomfortable around an officer in a uniform. Reassure the students and invite the officer to participate in class activities.)

Handouts:

- *Happy Face*
- *Sad Face*
- *Bully*

INSTRUCTIONS

The instructor should *post* the handout *Happy Face* and ask the students what they see.

Discuss:

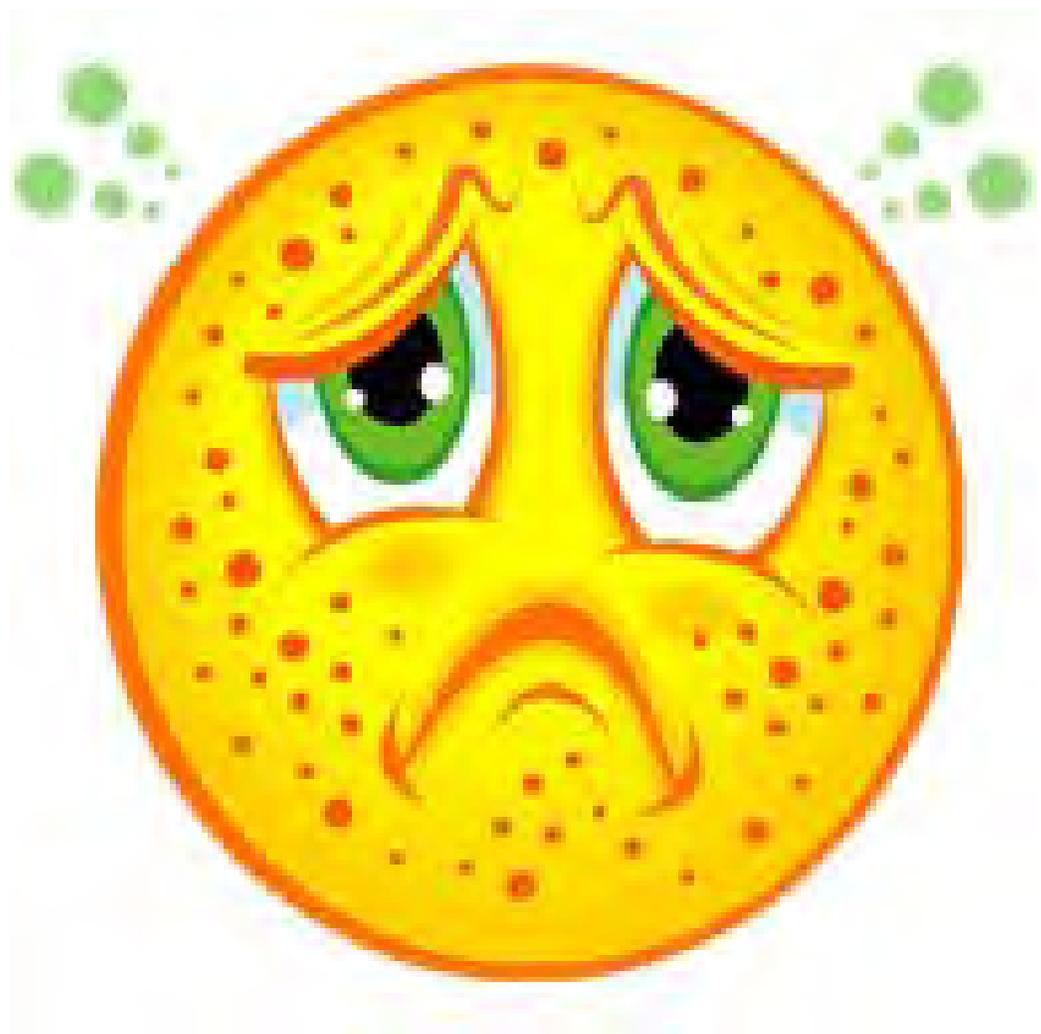
- how it feels to be happy (e.g., smiling, jumping, “high five,” cheering, etc.)
- what can make people feel happy
- what makes the students feel happy
- how you can tell if someone is happy.

- ❑ The instructor should *post* the handout *Sad Face* and ask the students what they see.
- ❑ Discuss how it feels to be sad (e.g., stomach aches, loneliness, anger, not hungry, sleep problems)
- ❑ Do not go any further with this discussion, but immediately show the handout *Bully* and ask students what is happening in the picture.
- ❑ Ask students to point to the posted picture that shows how the boy in the backpack must feel.

The instructor can decide if the students need to learn the term “bully” or if they should just be aware that some students may treat them badly and they should not tolerate it.

- ❑ Review the behaviors that can make students feel sad:
 - poking
 - tripping
 - hitting
 - blocking passage
 - invading personal space
 - teasing
 - ignoring
 - urging other students to be mean
 - posting information on the computer
- ❑ Explain that if any of those behaviors happen often – especially if they occur when adults are not present to witness them – then they must tell an adult. (If they ever feel frightened or sad about *anything*, they should talk to their teacher or other trusted adult.)
- ❑ Introduce students to a trusted adult (see Supplies) and ask each student to name someone they can talk to if they ever feel that they are being bullied.
- ❑ Distribute drawing paper and crayons, markers, or paint and ask students to make a colorful happy face like the one that is posted. They can decorate it with any other features.
- ❑ Post the pictures and explain that students should feel happy in school. If they are feeling sad, they should talk to their teacher or Refugee Resettlement Case Manager.







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#17 SAFE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Many young refugee students will need specific information about how to be safe in their own neighborhoods, including when taking the bus or subway to school. They should also know how to be safe when playing in the neighborhood, or walking to a nearby store, recreational or religious center, or to school.

*Also see
Module 3: Transportation and Time
Module 15: Staying Safe
Parent Programs 1, 2, 3*

Children in the primary grades should be accompanied by an adult when they are in their neighborhoods, but for a variety of reasons they may not always have adult supervision. If parents are confused about school schedules (such as half days and snow days) and the child discovers school is cancelled — or the parents are late to pick up the student — then it is important for primary-level students to be aware of how to be safe and get the help that they need.

It is important to focus on *preventing* problems when discussing safety in the neighborhood. There are resources in *Module 15: Staying Safe* that cover topics such as bullying and gang recruitment. This activity focuses on being aware and alert, and how to get help if needed.

Note: The recommendations made by the instructor will vary according to the location and safety of the neighborhood.

OBJECTIVE

Students will become familiar with safety strategies outside the school setting.

SUPPLIES

Puppets (at least three) that will depict the people shown on the handouts

NOTE: The handouts depict generic pictures that may not match exactly what the students will see in their neighborhood. They are intended to prompt discussion about where to go for help. If the instructor can find actual pictures of local people and sites, or take the students to the specific people and sites, the students will know exactly where to go if they need help.

Handouts:

- *crossing guard*
- *bus driver*
- *police officer*
- *teacher*
- *Refugee Resettlement Case Manager*
- *principal*
- *fire station*
- *police station*
- *store*
- *woman working at store*

INSTRUCTIONS

- ❑ The instructor should put on a puppet show that depicts a series of scenarios where a child needs help in their neighborhood. For each scenario the child should know what to do to get help from adults. The following scenarios can be acted out:
 - A child is walking to school (or a recreational or religious center) and is not sure about directions. (The scenario can depict the child asking for help at a store, police station, or fire station. Instructors should stress that it may not be a good idea to ask any adult stranger on the street for assistance. The student should know their home address and telephone number and the name of the school or center.)
 - There is a conflict on a neighborhood playground and parents are not present. (The scenario can depict the student asking another parent for help, joining another group of children on the playground, or leaving the playground for a safer place. *Module 15: Staying Safe* has specific information and handouts related to how to handle bullies.)
 - There is early dismissal from school because of weather, professional development programs, parent-teacher conferences, etc., without the knowledge of the parents. (The scenario can depict the student expressing their concern to the teacher or principal. The instructor can also refer to *Parent Programs 1, 2, 3* for information and handouts for parents about school schedules and events.)
- ❑ The instructor should show each handout picture and ask the students what they see in the picture.

- ❑ For each picture, the instructor should ask: If you were scared and you needed help, how could this person/place help you?
- ❑ The instructor can teach the students the phrase: *Can you help me?* to practice.
- ❑ The students can then produce their own puppet shows that depict how to stay safe and when to say *Can you help me?*
- ❑ As a follow-up activity, the instructor can invite local store owners, police officers and firefighters, religious leaders, and recreational center staff from the neighborhood to introduce themselves to the students and explain that they are available if help is needed.























#18 COMMUNICATING WITH TEACHERS

Refugee Academy instructors and Academic Coaches have recommended that young refugee students carry a set of 3x5 cards to help them communicate with teachers during the first few weeks of school.

*Also see Module 8
Getting Help*

As the students learn English and become more comfortable in the classroom, they will start to depend on their new skills (and their classmates) to communicate. But in the meantime, they can pull out a card to hand to the teacher.

This process is not to replace learning the English language, but is a transition tool that has proven to be helpful to students who are lost or confused.

OBJECTIVE

Students will experience using cards to communicate with teachers when they start school.

SUPPLIES

Handout: *Flash Card Messages (4 pages)*

Create one set of 3x5 cards for each student with the *Flash Card Messages* on the cards. The cards can be clipped together, in a case, or wrapped up with a rubber band. The student's name should be on the cards.

INSTRUCTIONS

- The instructor should provide each student with a set of 3x5 cards that can be used for communicating with teachers. The cards are designed so the students can convey messages such as:
 - Can I use the restroom?
 - I need help with my bus.
 - Another child is bullying me.
 - Where is my classroom?

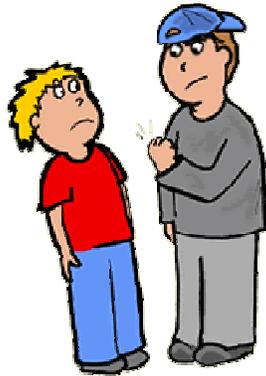
- I need a book.
 - I need help with getting lunch.
 - I don't understand.
 - I don't feel well.
- The instructor, with assistance from the Academic Coach and interpreters, can explain each card. Students should practice giving the card to the instructor during the entire Refugee Academy so that they are comfortable approaching a teacher with a card. This is also an opportunity to practice English.



Restroom?



Help me with my bus?



Another child is bothering me.



Where is my classroom?

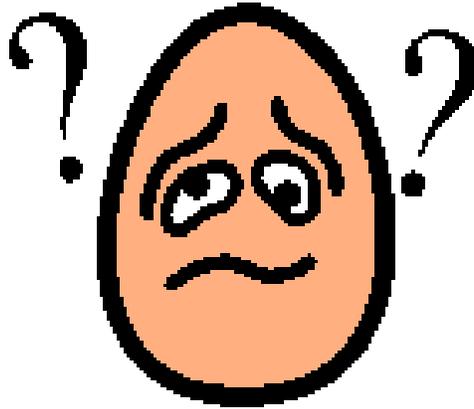


I need a book.



Can you help me with lunch?

I'm confused



I'm confused.



I do not feel well.

Activity #12: WHAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW

Grades K-12 (45-60 minutes)

PURPOSE

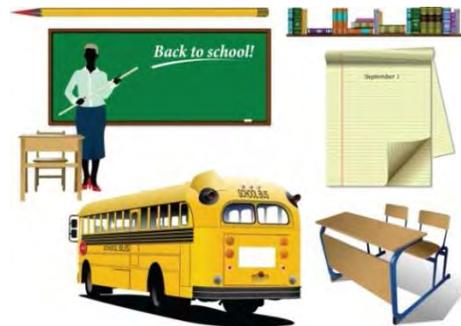
In this activity, refugee students will be informed about what their parents should ask about when meeting with school personnel.

See also: Module 13 *Families Informed and Parent Programs #1 Welcome and #2 Ready for School* and Mini-Academy Activity #13 *School Attendance*

SUPPLIES

- Handout: *Parents - Ask About*

Note that this handout can be used as a discussion tool in parent meetings.



DIRECTIONS

- Distribute the handout *Parents - Ask About* to refugee students and explain that their parents or guardian should go over each item with a principal, guidance counselor, teacher of English Language Learners, or Academic Coach. (Instructors should be *very specific* about the adults in the school who can provide information.)

Even if the students have been enrolled for a few weeks in school, the students might not be aware of information parents need to know. For example, parents may not know about permission slips, clothes for physical education, and annual health physicals.

- The instructor should briefly review each item on the handout, spending more time on information that the students may not have experienced. For example, the students may know about the school schedule and lockers, but may not have experienced after-school activities or a field trip.
- Review the following with all refugee students, regardless of how long the students have been enrolled in the school:
 - Attendance requirements
 - Absence calls and notes from parents
 - Student responsibility for taking notes home from school
 - Safety drills
 - Banned items (zero tolerance policy)



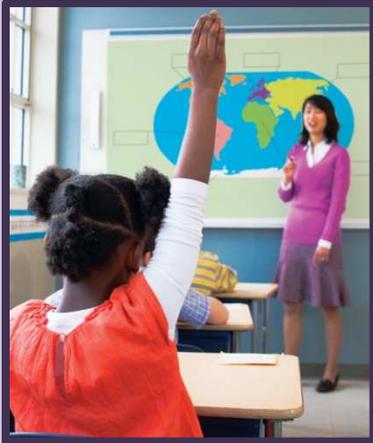
Since too much information at once can be overwhelming, the instructor may want to cover a few items on the handout each day of the mini-academy.

- The instructor should stress that parents need to know the details about school so they can help their children do well in school.

The students should take the handout home, share what they know about each item and then encourage their parents to contact the school to review each item on the handout.

PARENTS - ASK ABOUT:

School Attendance



School Absence

Note Regarding Absence

Date: _____

Dear: _____

This is to notify you that: _____ was absent on: _____ for the following reason: _____

(parent signature) _____

**If your child has a doctor please attach the doctor's note. Thank you so much. ☺

Year Schedule

<p>AUGUST 2012</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>Th</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td></tr> <tr><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td></tr> <tr><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td></tr> <tr><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td></tr> </table> <p>14-16 Administrative Recess 22-23 New Teacher Orientation 27-30 Teacher Inservice</p>	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S			1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		<p>FEBRUARY 2013</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>Th</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td></tr> <tr><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td></tr> <tr><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td></td></tr> </table> <p>25-Mar 1 Winter Recess 16 days</p>	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29															
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Daily Schedule

Daily Schedule			
Monday		Tuesday	
First Period	MATH	First Period	MATH
Second Period	ENGLISH	Second Period	ENGLISH
Third Period	PHYS ED	Third Period	ART
Fourth Period	SCIENCE	Fourth Period	SCIENCE
LUNCH		LUNCH	
Fifth Period	STUDY HALL	Fifth Period	STUDY HALL
Sixth Period	ESL	Sixth Period	ESL
Seventh Period	ESL	Seventh Period	ESL
Eighth Period	SOCIAL STUDIES	Eighth Period	SOCIAL STUDIES

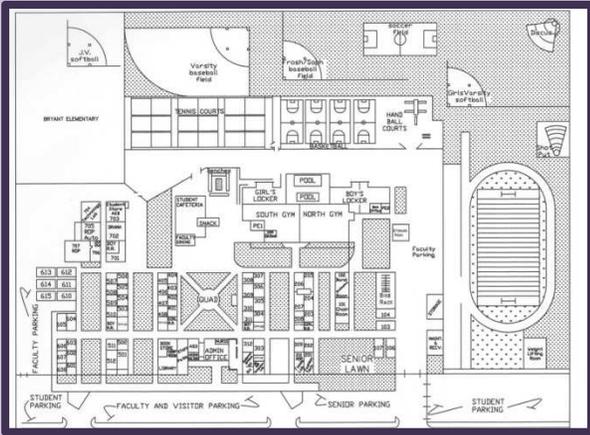
Teachers



English Instruction



School Map



Transportation



Dress Policy



Lockers



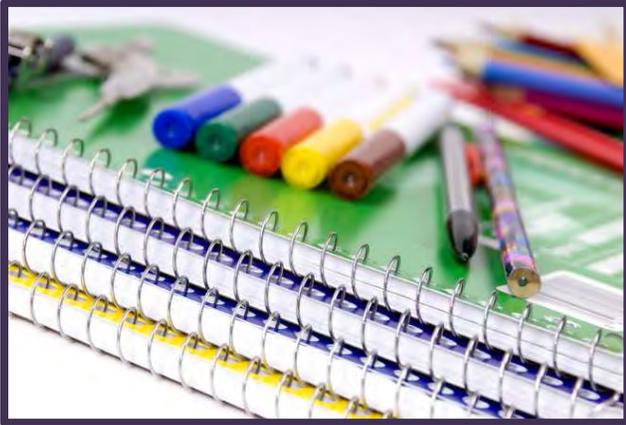
Lunch



Restrooms



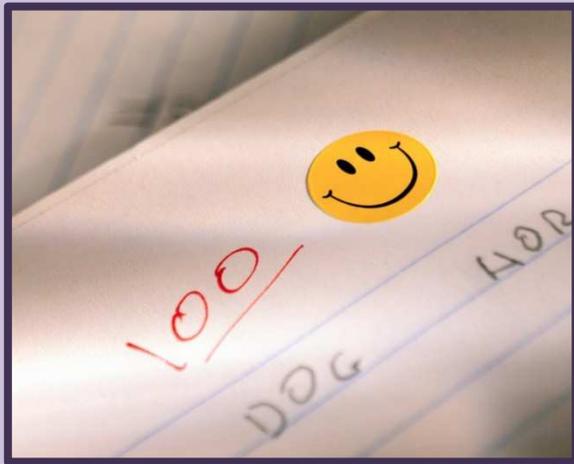
Supplies



Backpacks



Homework



Textbooks



Computers



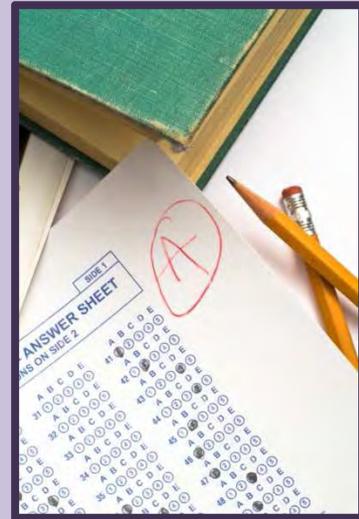
Report Cards

REPORT CARD				
GRADING PERIOD	1	2	3	4
READING	A			
WRITTEN COMMUNICATION	A			
MATHEMATICS	C			
SCIENCE/HEALTH	B			
SOCIAL STUDIES	B			
ART	A			
MUSIC	A			
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	C			
Grade Average	B			
Attendance:	Present	48		
	Absent	0		
	Tardy	1		
A = Excellent • B = Good • C = Satisfactory • N = Needs Improvement U = Unsatisfactory • I = Insufficient / Incomplete				
Student: _____ Grade: _____ Year: _____				

Guidance Counselors



School Tests



Tutoring



Physical Education



Recess



After-School Activities



Field Trips



Permission Notes

PERMISSION SLIP

I, _____,

give my child permission to:

Safety Drills



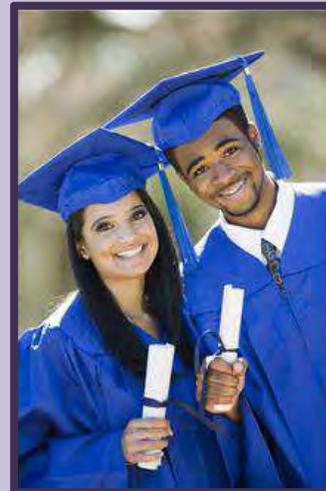
Banned Items (Zero Tolerance)



Parent Conferences



School Events



Activity #13: ATTENDANCE

Grades K-3, 4-8, 9-12 (30-45 minutes)

PURPOSE

In this activity, refugee students will learn about school attendance rules and the importance of daily attendance.

Note that the Instructor should be familiar with school district policies on attendance.

See also: Module 3 *Transportation and Time*, Module 4 *School Rules*, Module 5 *So Much to Learn!*, Module 8 *Getting Help*, Module 13 *Keeping Families Informed*, Module 14 *Coping with Stress* and Module 15 *Staying Safe*

The New York State Department of Labor states:

Minors must attend school full-time until the last day of the session in the school year in which the minor turns sixteen. School years run July 1 to June 30. A community can require minors who do not work to attend school full-time until the last day of session in the school year in which the minor turns 17.

School district policies can be more explicit, such as the one below:

School attendance is mandatory for minors from age six (age five in the xxx school district) to age 16. The law requires that school districts' educational boards create clear rules about acceptable and unacceptable absences and tardiness. The schools must notify parents when a child is late or absent without a legitimate excuse. Schools must keep accurate student lists and attendance counts. Schools may only expel students over 16 for failure to attend school for over 20 consecutive days.

SUPPLIES

- Sample absence notes if required by the district (e.g., from parents, doctor)
- Handouts:
 - *Good Reasons to Miss School?*
(This handout should be cut up into cards that are placed in a box or other container.)
 - *Why Go To School Every Day?*

DIRECTIONS

- The instructor should begin by explaining the attendance policy of the school district. The discussion should include:
 - A definition of "attendance"
 - School attendance as it pertains to the age of the student
 - School calendar and expected attendance
(e.g., number of days, holidays)
 - School hours

- o Grade level requirements (e.g., early dismissal for seniors in high school)
- o Attendance as it relates to graduation.



Emphasis should always be on the expectation that students will attend school every day of the week except weekends and holidays.

- The instructor should show the students the container that has cards from the handout *Good Reasons to Miss School?*

Ask each student, one at a time, to pull a card from the container.

The instructor should read the card aloud (unless the student is comfortable reading it) and *ask the entire class* if they think it is a good reason to miss school.

Explain what the students should do if the situation on the card occurs. Emphasize that students should have a backup plan if they encounter problems getting to school.

Discuss legitimate reasons for missing school, always emphasizing that students should make every effort to be in school every day, on time. (Note that many schools offer Perfect Attendance Awards, but students should not attend school if they are not well enough to be able to learn, and might be contagious.)

Review the school district policy for reporting absences. Some districts require phoning the main office of the school or notifying the school by e-mail. Include discussion of:

- o Why the school district needs to know a student will be absent
- o What the school district will do if a student is absent and has not been informed
- o What is required when the student returns to school.



- The instructor should give students the chance to reveal why they may not want to go to school. They may be having difficulty with communication and making new friends. They may be experiencing bullying, or are confused about how to fit in to their new environment.

Some refugee students may have health, hygiene, or literacy problems that are interfering with their ability to enjoy the school day and learn.

The instructor should raise these concerns even if the students don't mention them. Emphasis should always be on the importance of utilizing the school as a resource for learning and support.

The instructor should identify very specific resources such as school guidance counselors, Refugee Resettlement Case Managers, administrators, and other adults who can assist students. (See Mini-Activity #14 *Who Can I Talk To?* for a helpful handout.)

- Distribute the handout *Why Go To School Every Day?* and discuss the opportunities in their school that can make school more appealing, and encourage excellent attendance.

Good Reasons to Miss School?

**Very sick,
need a doctor**

**I am afraid of
another student**

**I didn't do my
schoolwork**

**MY
BOY/GIRLFRIEND
IS MAD AT ME**

**I missed my
bus/train/ride to
school**

**The weather is
bad and I don't
want to go
outside**

**I am nervous
about a
test/assignment**

**I get
bored/frustrated/
confused**

**My parents need
me at home**

I have a job and
they need me at
work/I need to
make money

**School is
too hard**

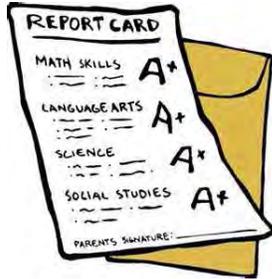
It's my birthday

I am teased
and bullied

Why Go To School Every Day?



High School Diploma



Good Grades



Make Friends



Kind People



Learn!



Learn New Skills



Play Sports



More Job Opportunities

Activity #14: WHO CAN I TALK TO?

Grades 6-12 (30-45 minutes)

PURPOSE

In this activity, refugee students will learn about adults in the school who can provide support and guidance.

See also: Module 8 *Getting Help* and Module 14 *Coping with Stress*

Note: Many of the students in the Mini-Academy may have enrolled in the middle of the school year. It is difficult enough to adjust when the school year is just beginning, but mid-year can be especially overwhelming. This activity should be conducted with mid-year students, but also reviewed with students who enrolled at the beginning of the school year.

SUPPLIES

- Handouts:

- *Who Can I Talk To?*

Note: The Instructor should complete this form in advance adding the names of adults in the school who are available to refugee students to provide guidance and support. If possible, those individuals should be personally introduced to the students.

- *Sad*
- *Happy and Sad Students*
- *Worried*
- *Worried Student*
- *Scared*
- *Scared Student*
- *Sick*
- *Sick Student (with School Nurse)*

- Optional:

- Visits from: guidance counselors; School Nurse; school Social Worker; school psychologist; school law enforcement; Physical Education or Health teacher, English Language Learner teachers, principal
- School tours to offices of counselors and administrators
- Recording of the song *Home* (Co-written by Drew Pearson and Greg Holden)
- Handout: *Home Lyrics*



DIRECTIONS

- Regardless of their length of attendance in an American school, all refugee students should be constantly reassured that there are a number of adults in the school who can help them. The students can approach any of these adults with specific questions. They can seek out an adult to talk to them, but only if they know where their offices are located.
- The instructor should distribute the handout *Who Can I Talk To?* and discuss the names on the form.

Explain:

- What the person is responsible for in the school
 - How the person can help refugee students
 - Where the offices are located
 - What steps to take to arrange for a visit
 - Confidentiality and involvement of parents
- Show the following handouts. Demonstrate and discuss each emotion.
 - *Sad*
 - *Sad and Happy Students*
 - *Worried*
 - *Worried Student*
 - *Scared*
 - *Scared Student*
 - *Sick*
 - *Sick Student with School Nurse*



Explain who the students can talk to if they are feeling the emotion, using the *Who Can I Talk To?* handout as a guide.

- As an optional follow-up activity, the Instructor can distribute the handout *Home Lyrics* and play a recording of the song. (The Instructor may want to point out that the song was originally sung by Phillip Phillips, winner of the 2012 *American Idol* competition. It is a good chance to talk about popular television shows that the students may hear about, such as *American Idol*.)



The Instructor can discuss the meaning of key phrases in the song, with emphasis on:

Just know you're not alone

You get lost you can always be found

I'm going to make this place your home.

Point out the names on the *Who Can I Talk To?* handout. Explain that they are going to “make this place your home.”

The students may want to learn the words of the song and sing along – or just join in the chorus.

Who Can I Talk To?

COUNSELOR



Name:

TEACHERS



Name:

PRINCIPAL



Name:

POLICE OFFICER



Name:

**REFUGEE
RESETTLEMENT
CASE MANAGER**



Name:

SCHOOL NURSE



Name:







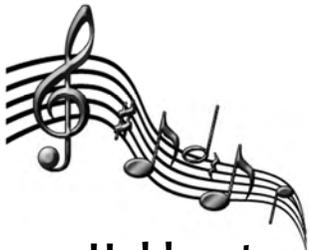












HOME

Hold on to me as we go
As we roll down this unfamiliar road
And although this wave is stringing us along
Just know you're not alone
I'm gonna make this place your home.

Settle down and it'll all be clear
Don't pay no mind to the demons
They fill you with fear
The trouble it might drag you down
You get lost, you can always be found

Just know you're not alone cause
Cause I'm gonna make this place your home.

(Chorus)

Settle down it'll all be clear
Don't pay no mind to the demons
They fill you with fear
Trouble it might drag you down
You get lost, you can always be found

Just know you're not alone cause
I'm gonna make this place your home.

(Chorus)

© Drew Pearson, Greg Holden

Activity #15: TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF!

Grades K-3 and 4-12 or large group of all ages working together (including parents)

PURPOSE

In this activity, refugee students show their personal characteristics and interests and work together to create a quilt.

See also: Module 7 *Interests and Talents* and Module 14 *Coping with Stress*

SUPPLIES

- Handouts:
 - *Quilt*
 - *Student Quilt*
 - *Blank Quilt Square*
 - *Quilt Coloring Page*
- Chart or butcher paper, cut and taped to form a background for the quilt blocks
- Crayons, markers, or colored pencils
- Samples of cloth quilts or pictures of quilts

Note: Identify a space where the final student quilt can be displayed.

- Optional:
 - Invite a local quilter to show and discuss finished quilts. Emphasis should be on how the blocks come together to create the quilt.
 - Students can draw pictures on cotton cloth quilt blocks with fabric markers. Blocks can be sewn together with yarn or on a sewing machine.

DIRECTIONS

- The instructor should show the handouts *Quilt* and *Student Quilt*, as well as other pictures of quilts so that students can see that pieces form “blocks” and blocks are put together to create a quilt.
- Distribute the handout *Blank Quilt Square* and the markers, crayons, or colored pencils.

Explain that each student will create a block for a class quilt. Their block should be filled with a picture of themselves, surrounded by drawings of their interests and activities.



For example, the student could draw a self-portrait in the center of the block. The self-portrait could be surrounded by pictures of favorite sports, foods, hobbies, clothing and jewelry, friends, etc.

Encourage students to add their names to their blocks.

If parents are participating in the activity, they can help the students determine what should be drawn on the block. Emphasize that the students should have the final decision on what they want to tell about themselves on the blocks.

- Involve the class in laying out the blocks to create the quilt. There should be the same number of blocks in each row, so the instructor or Academic Coach may have to create a block.
- The blocks can be glued to the chart paper and displayed in the classroom or hall with the sign TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF!
- If the students are comfortable speaking in front of the class, the instructor should ask each student to point out their block and describe what they included on the block.
- Optional: Distribute the handout *Quilt Coloring Page* for students to color.



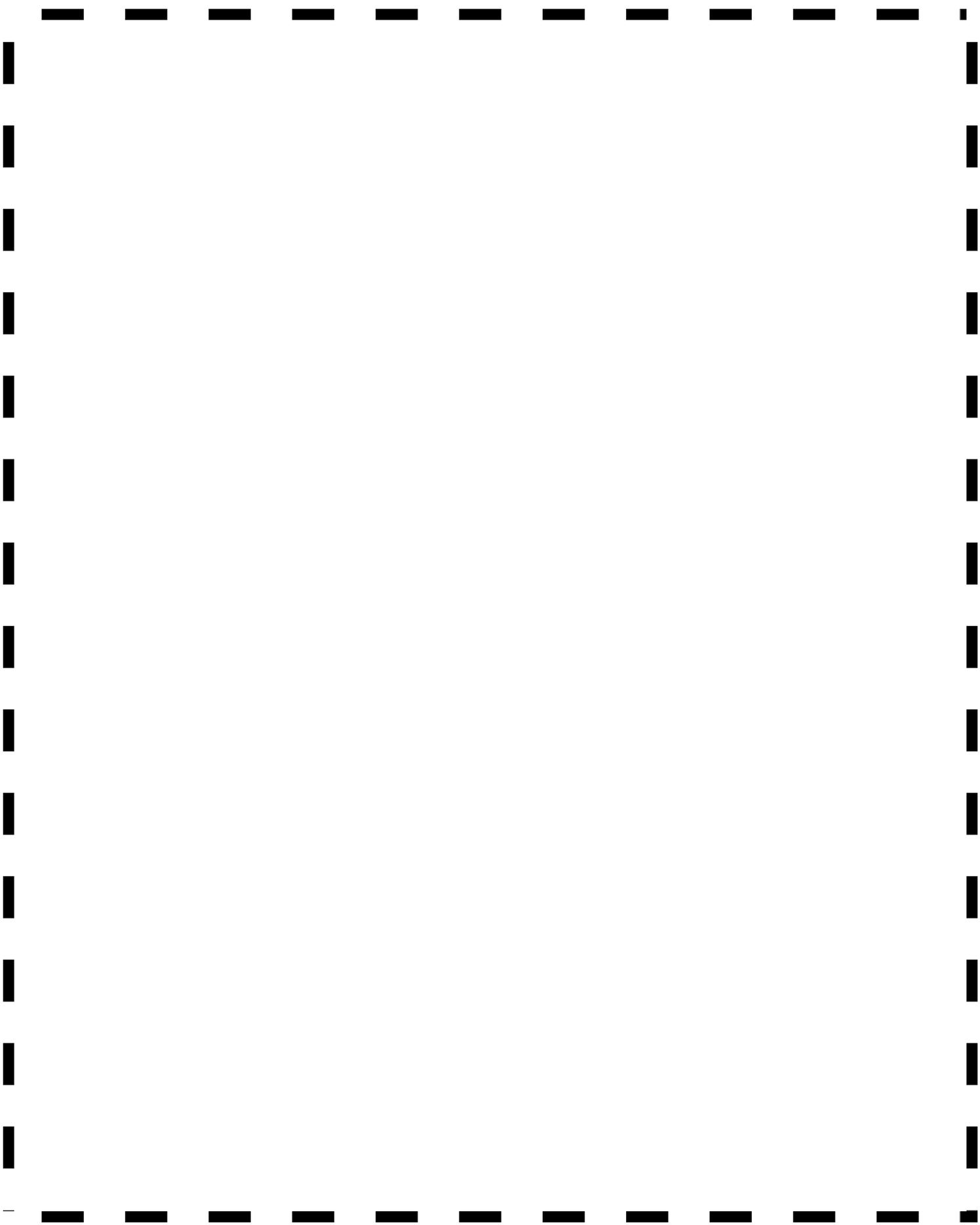
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

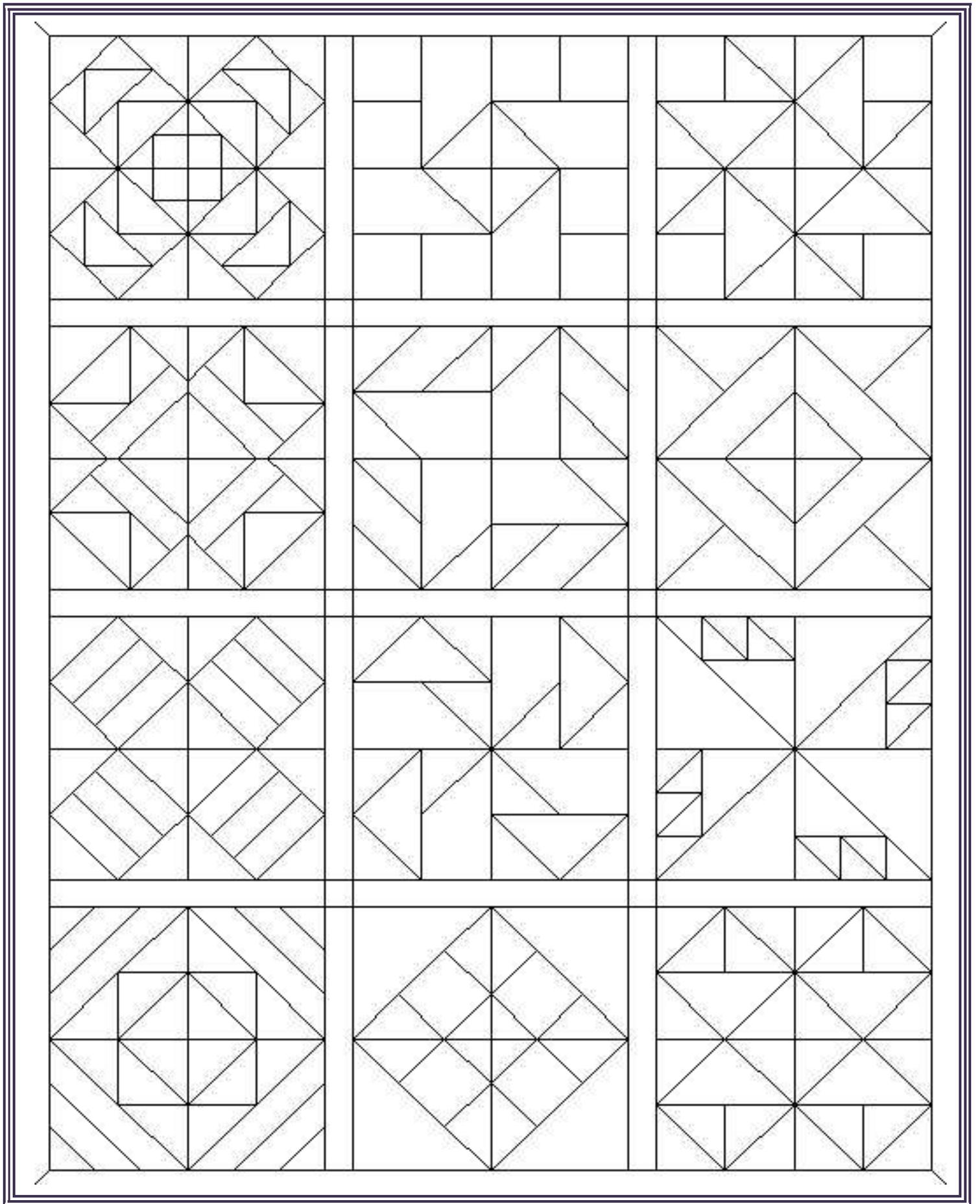
After completing the activity, ask the students the following questions:

- *What are the many different interests in this room? What does that tell us about the people in our school?*
- *Who has the same picture drawn on their quilt block?*
- *Who can teach you something that you would like to know about?*









Activity #16: HEALTHY OR UNHEALTHY?

Grades 6-8, 9-12 (45-90 minutes)

PURPOSE

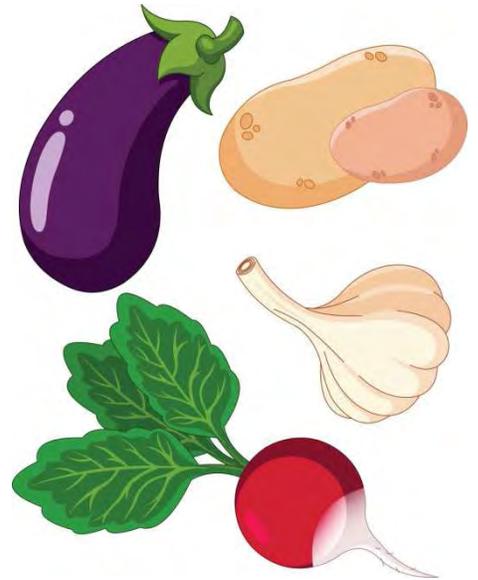
In this activity, refugee students will demonstrate understanding of healthy vs. unhealthy foods, healthy use of medications, and healthy personal habits.

See also: Module 6 *Stay Healthy!*, Module 8 *Getting Help*, and Module 15 *Staying Safe*.

SUPPLIES

Note: The Instructor will be role playing and may need the assistance of another instructor or Academic Coach.

- Handouts:
 - *Healthy/Unhealthy Food Pyramid*
 - *Hamburger, Fries, Soda*
 - *Pizza*
 - *Cake*
 - *Hot Dog*
 - *Ice Cream, Candy*
 - *Carrot*
 - *Grapes*
 - *Fruit - Strawberry, Pear, Cherry, Plum*
 - *Peas*
 - *Salad*
 - *Tomato*
 - *Sweet Potato*
 - *12 Fruits*
 - *Hygiene (Shower, Soap, Shaving, Teeth, Hair)*
 - *Washing Hair*
 - *Food Handling*



- Cigarette
- Alcohol
- Drugs (Marijuana)
- Bath
- Bath Salts
- Medications
- Pharmacist
- School Nurse
- Good For You?



- Samples of medications (prescription bottles and over-the-counter medications in liquid and capsule form)
- Optional:
 - Plastic or real fruits and vegetables
 - Pack of cigarettes
 - Bath salts
 - Visit from the school nurse
 - Visit from drug and alcohol abuse counselor

DIRECTIONS

- The instructor should focus on helping students to understand how they can make important decisions that will determine whether they are *healthy* or *unhealthy*.
- The instructor should describe the difference between *healthy* and *unhealthy* by acting out the following:
- **Healthy** (good for you – thumbs up)
 - Strong, physically fit
 - Active and energetic
 - Muscles
 - Bright eyes
 - Strong teeth
 - Alert, awake, focused
 - Clean, aware of personal hygiene

- **Unhealthy** (not good for you – thumbs down)
 - Weak, listless
 - Sleepy
 - No energy or strength
 - Aches, pains
 - Lack of interest in activities, hygiene
 - Unfocused
 - Unconcerned about personal hygiene
 - Optional: Risky or dangerous behavior such as cigarettes, alcohol, use of over-the-counter medications shared by another student.

- The instructor should hold up the following handouts and ask if the items are *healthy* or *unhealthy*.

For each handout, explain why the item or activity is healthy or unhealthy. Act out the reasons and provide specific examples, such as smoking can make you cough and have difficulty breathing – or protein can build muscles.

- *Hamburger, Fries, Soda*
- *Pizza*
- *Cake*
- *Hot Dog*
- *Ice Cream, Candy*
- *Carrot*
- *Grapes*
- *Fruit - Strawberry, Pear, Cherry, Plum*
- *Peas*
- *Salad*
- *Tomato*
- *Sweet Potato*
- *12 Fruits*
- *Hygiene (Shower, Soap, Shaving, Teeth, Hair)*
- *Washing Hair*
- *Food Handling*

- The instructor has the option of continuing with remaining handouts that focus on more sensitive topics.
- Discussion about whether drugs and alcohol are healthy or unhealthy should be discussed in depth, preferably with assistance from a drug and alcohol abuse counselor. The instructor can determine if there is enough time to review the topic so that students can comprehend the messages.
- Show the handouts *Alcohol* and *Drugs (Marijuana)* and discuss:
 - Unhealthy aspects of drugs and alcohol
 - Availability of drugs and alcohol
 - How to say no to drugs and alcohol

The Instructor should point out that hygiene is important, and sometimes bath salts are used when taking a bath. However, ingesting the bath salts can be extremely dangerous.

- Show the handouts *Bath* and *Bath Salts* and explain that bath salts should never be chewed, inhaled, or swallowed. (Bath salts can cause agitation, paranoia, hallucinations, chest pain, and suicidality, according to the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. They have recently become a popular drug used by young people, primarily because they are easily obtainable over-the-counter.)
- Show the handouts *Medications* and *Pharmacist* and discuss how medicines are important if you are sick, but they should only be taken:
 - If they are recommended by a doctor (or pharmacist)
 - If they match a specific illness
 - If the directions are followed, especially the dosage for children
 - If there are no known allergies
 - If an adult is administering and monitoring the results.

The students should never take any medication that is given to them by another student.

(Note: Children are raiding family medicine cabinets and sharing prescription medications. Explain that no one should take a medication unless it has been prescribed specifically for them by a doctor. The medications are purchased at a pharmacy/drug store.)

- Show the handout *School Nurse* and explain that all medications should be kept in the office of the school nurse during the school day. Students are not allowed to have any medications on their person, in lockers, or in backpacks – including over-the-counter medications taken for ailments such as headache, cough, etc.



Medicine is stored in the school nurse's office and is administered according to the physician's prescription only by the nurse.

- Distribute the handout *Good For You?* Ask the students to circle the pictures of the healthy items only.

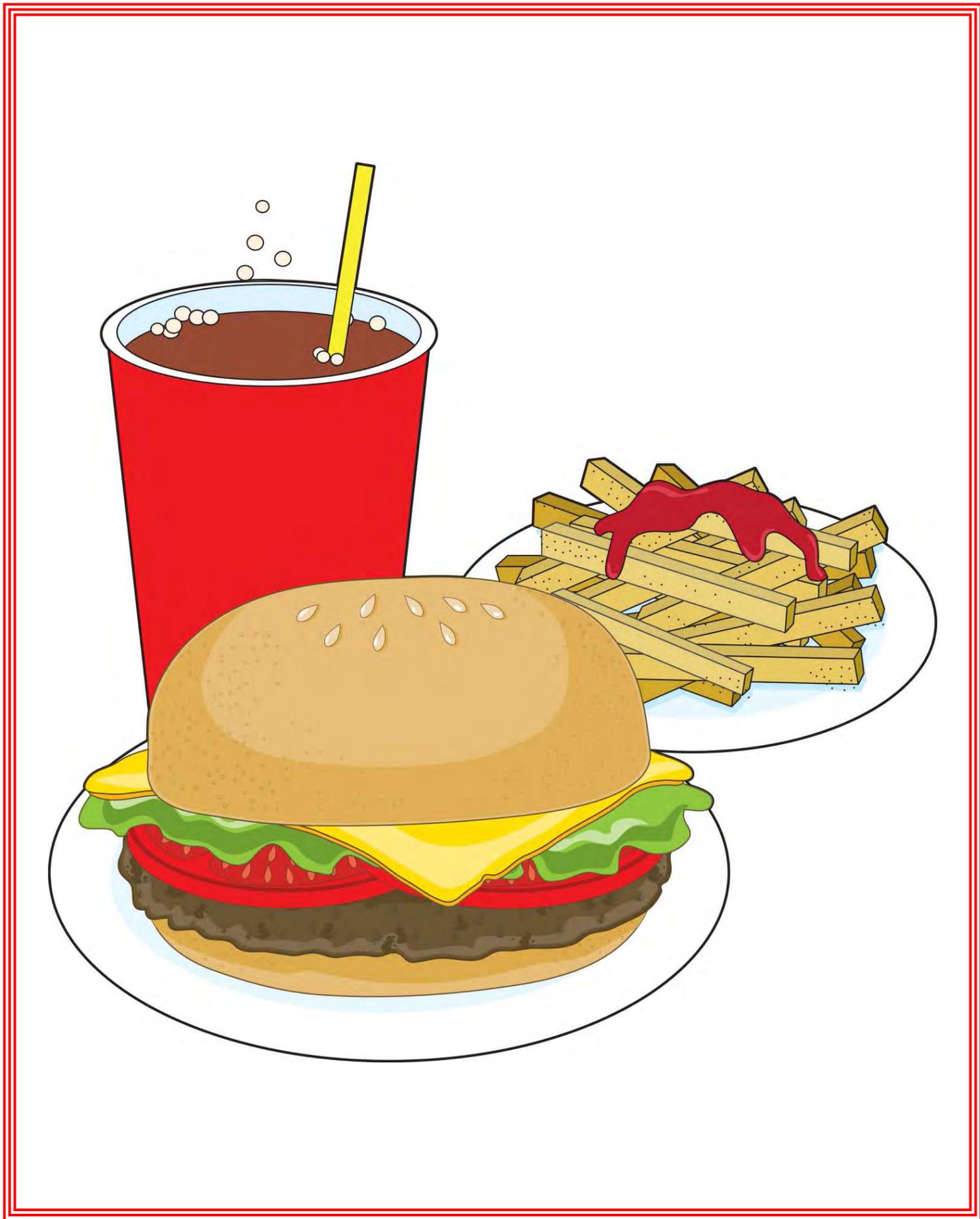
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

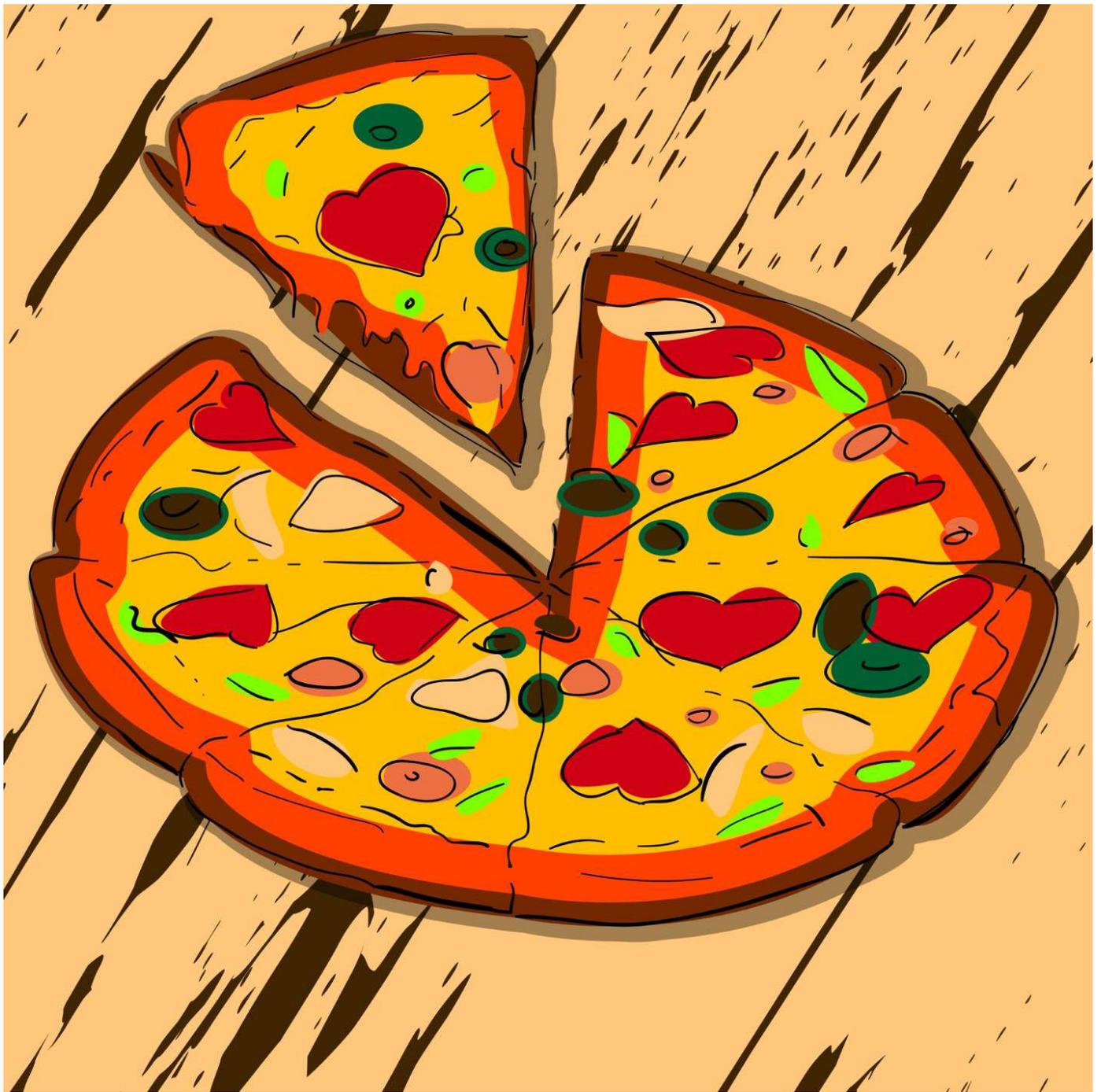
After completing the activity, ask the students the following questions:

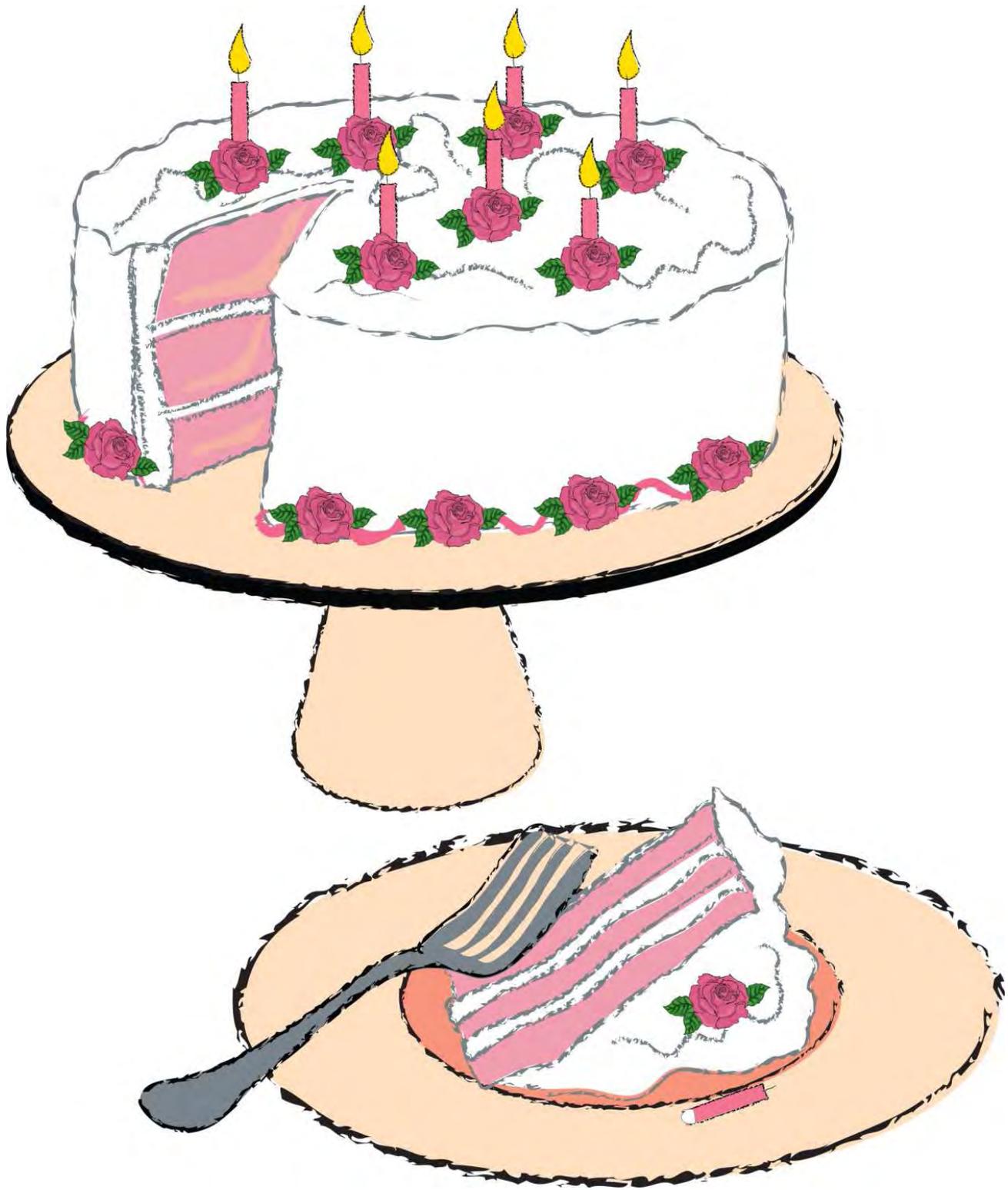
- *Can you still eat foods that are unhealthy, such as French fries and potato chips?*
- *Why are some foods delicious but not always good for your health?*
- *Can you always see how an unhealthy food (or habit) is making you unhealthy?*
- *Why are cigarettes unhealthy?*
- *Why should you be careful about taking medicines that you can find in a local drug store?*
- *Should you take medications found in someone's house or given to you by another student?*
- *What should you do if someone gives you drugs or alcohol?*

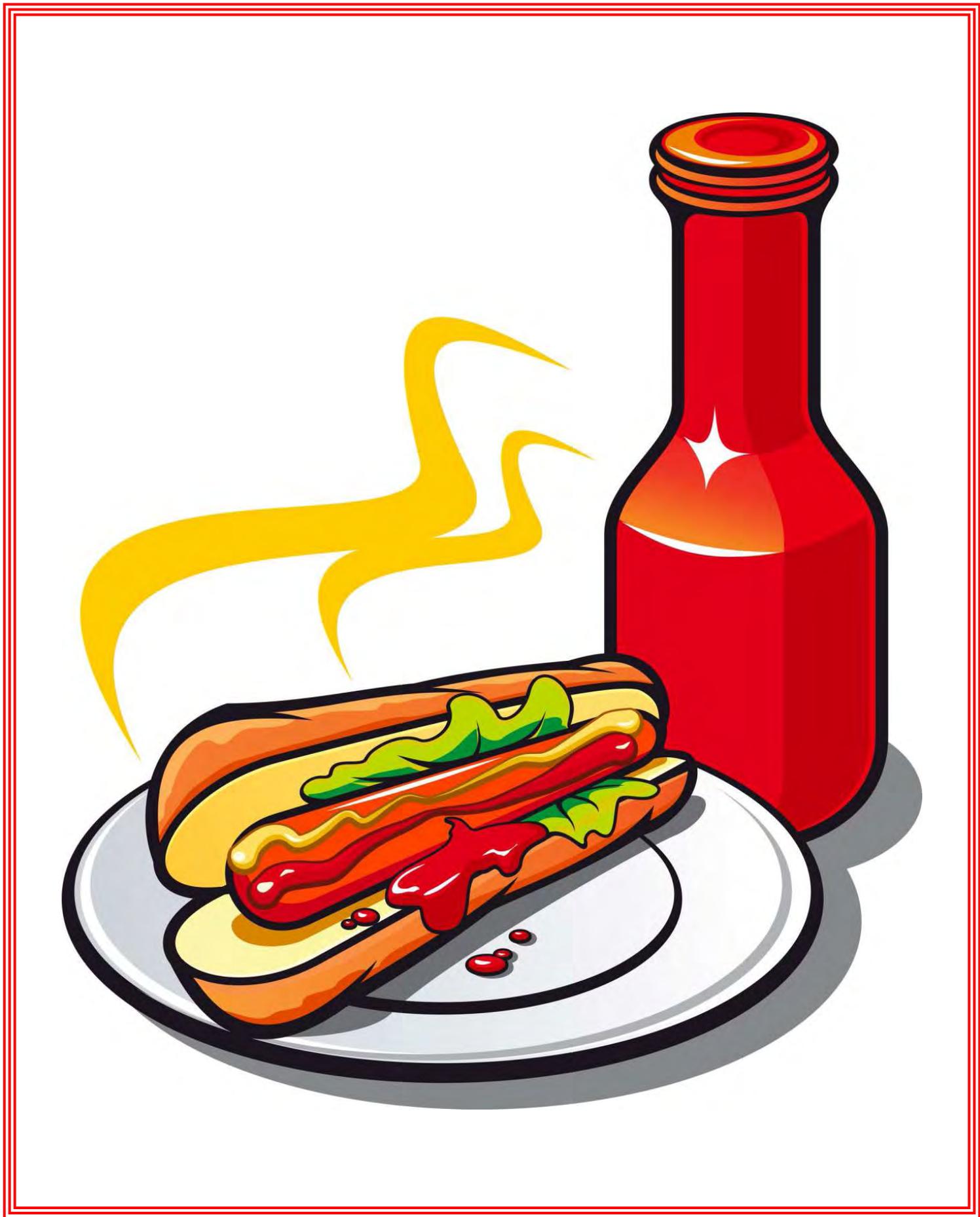
Healthy/Unhealthy Food Pyramid



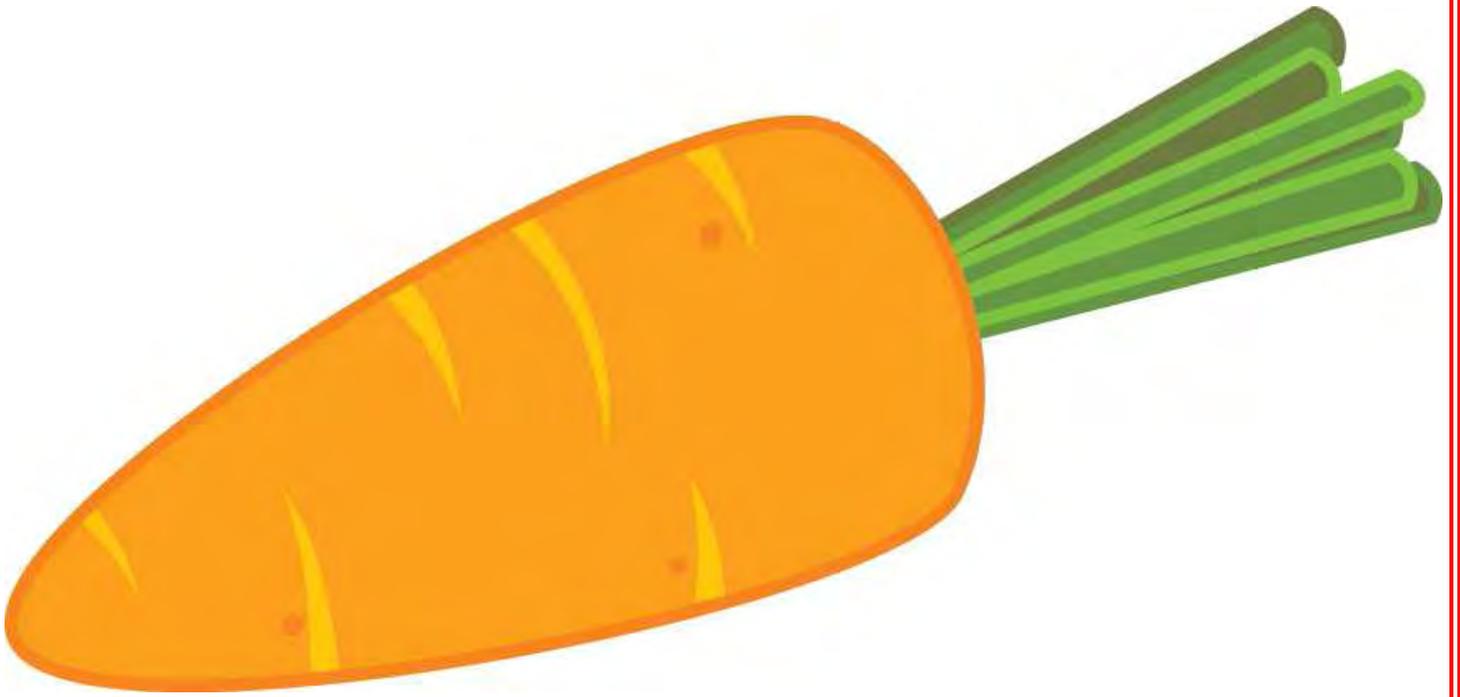


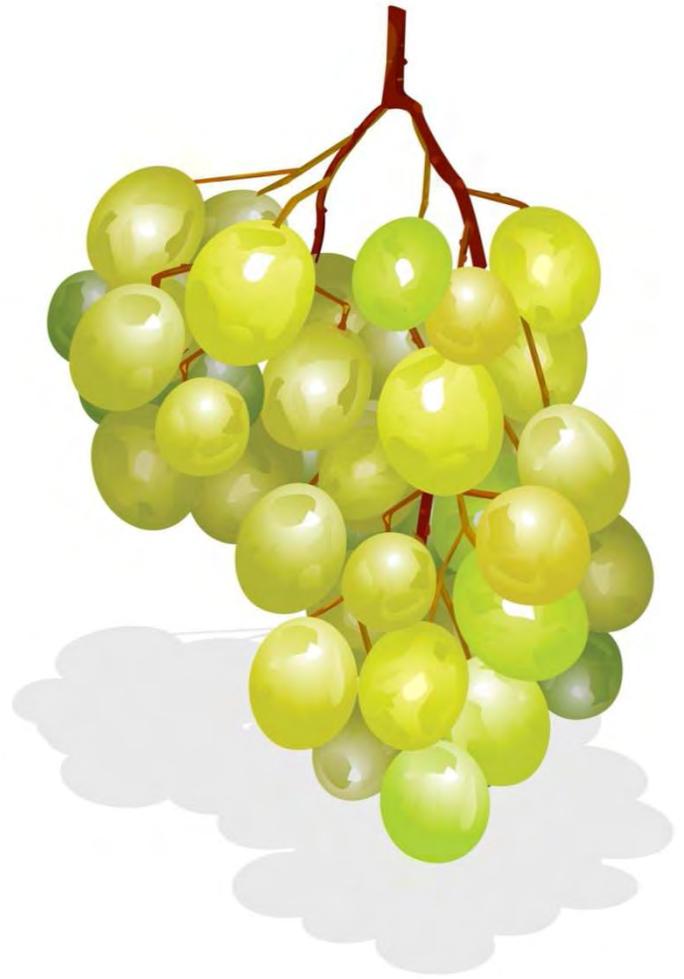


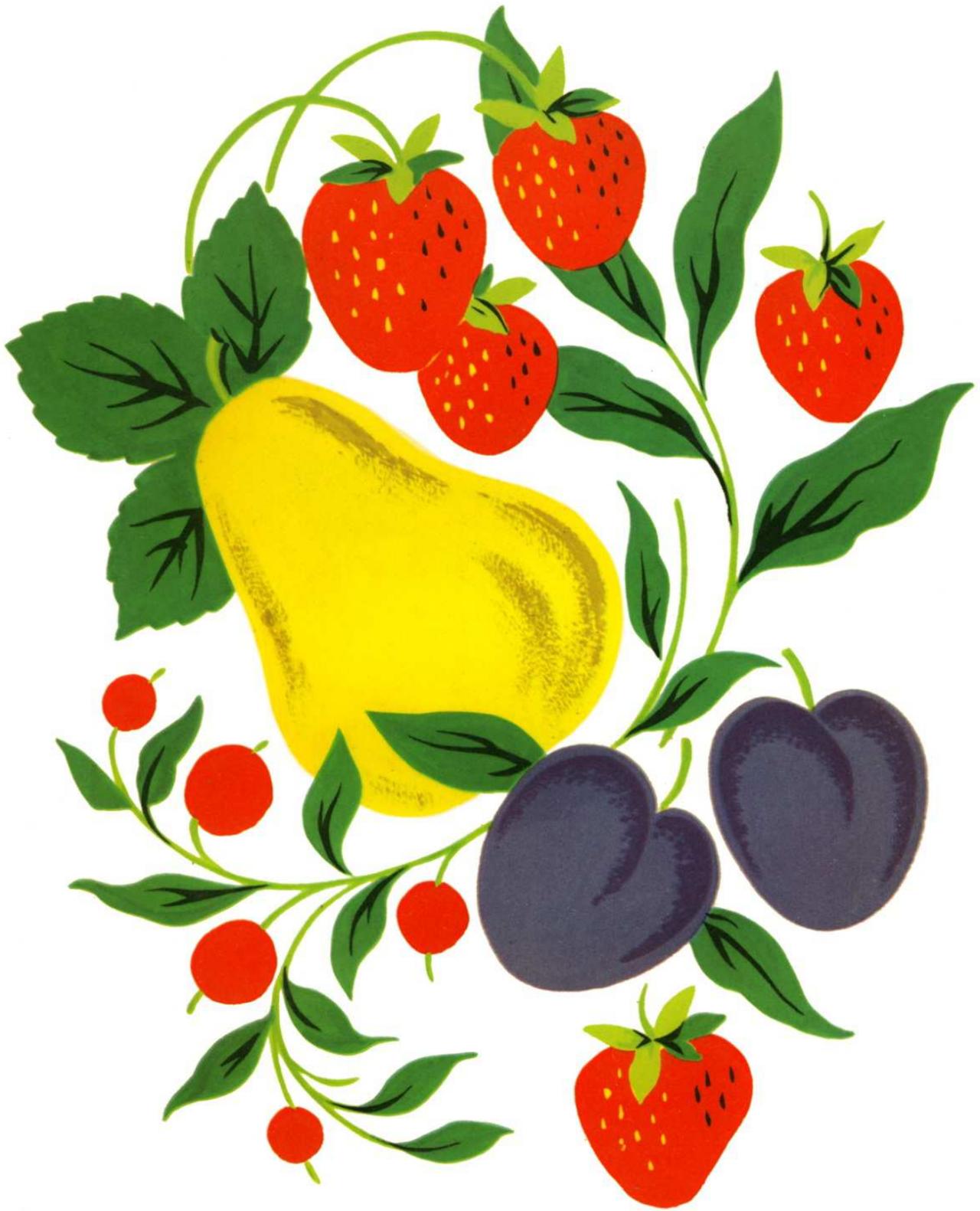


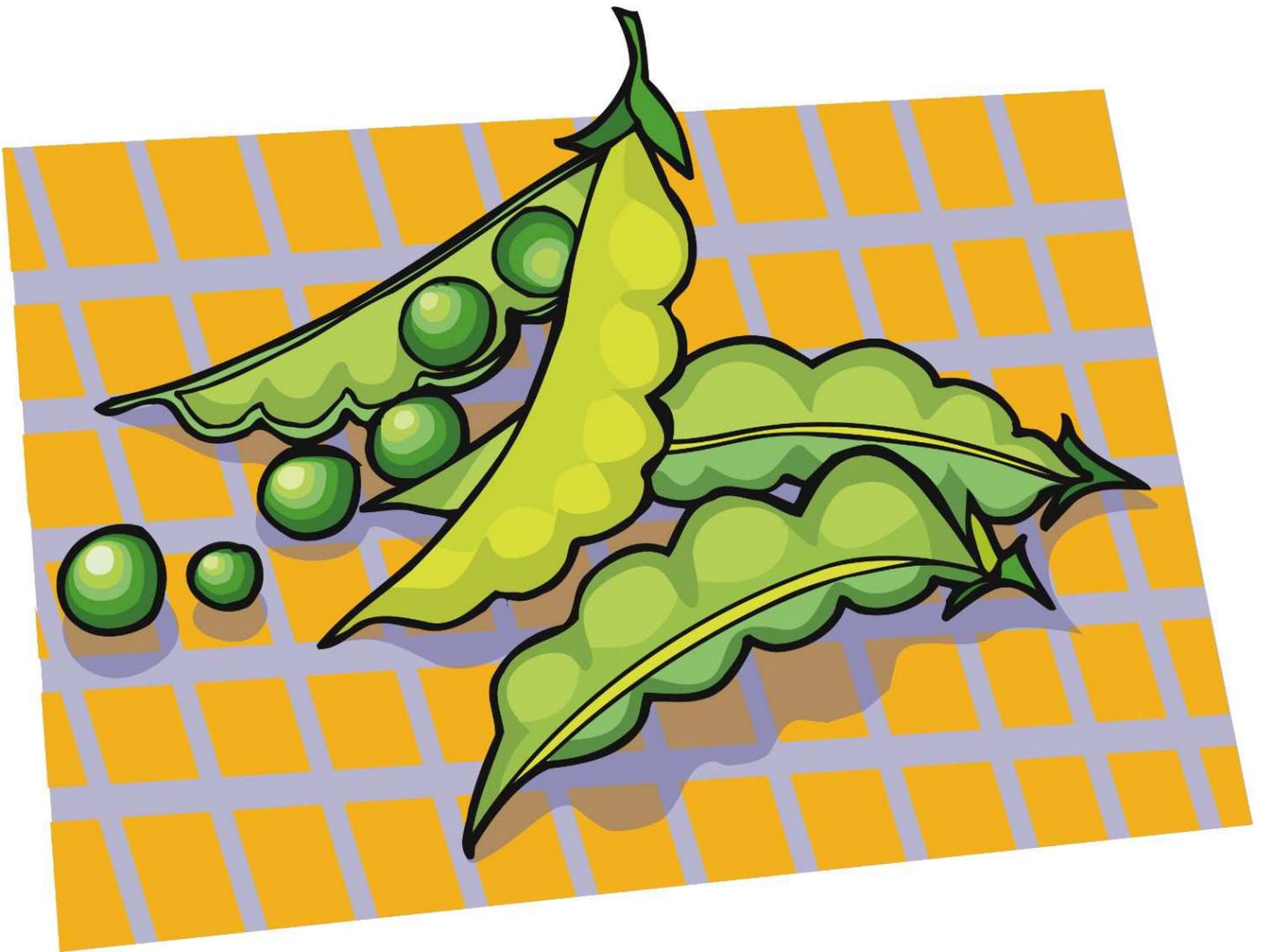




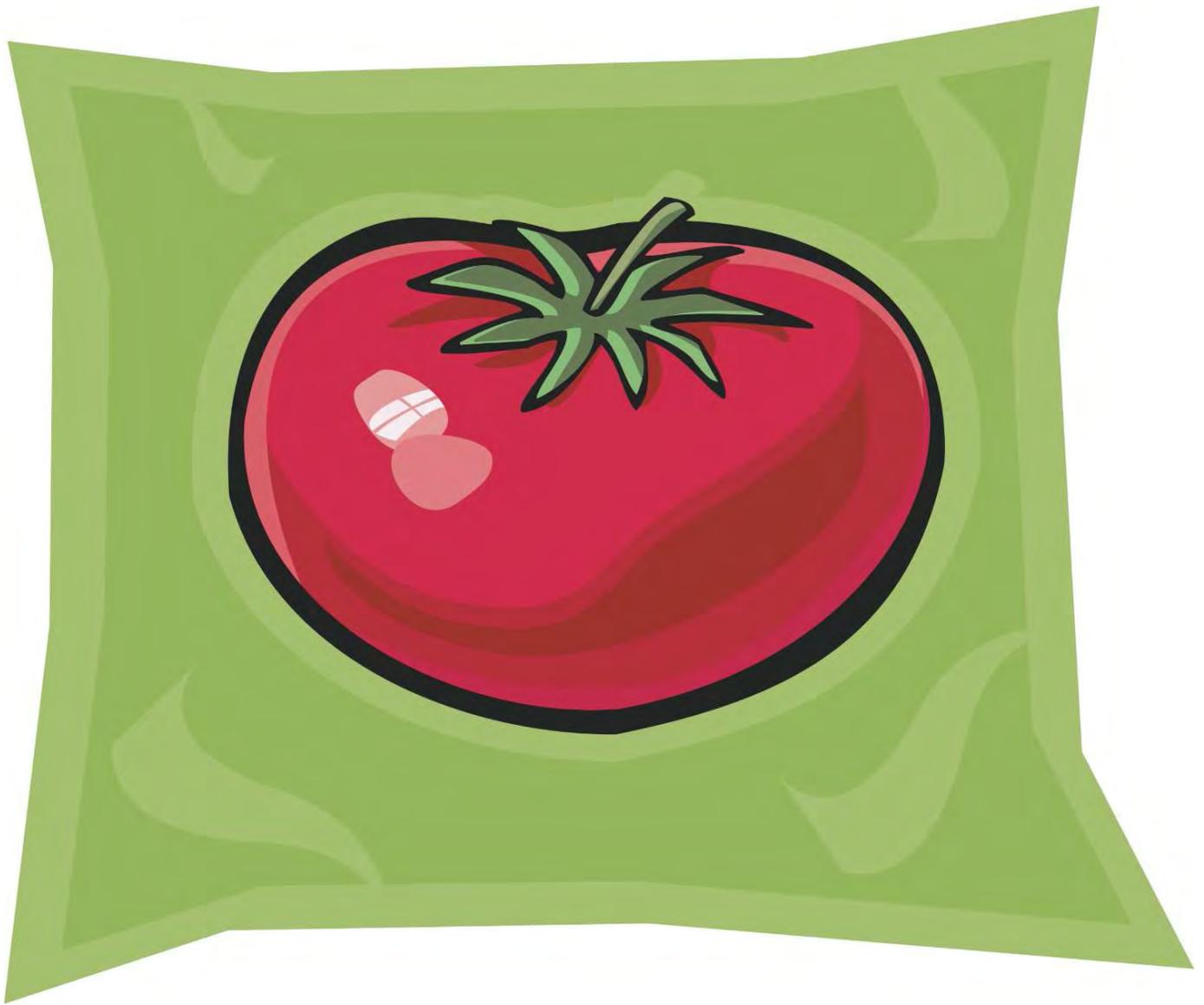


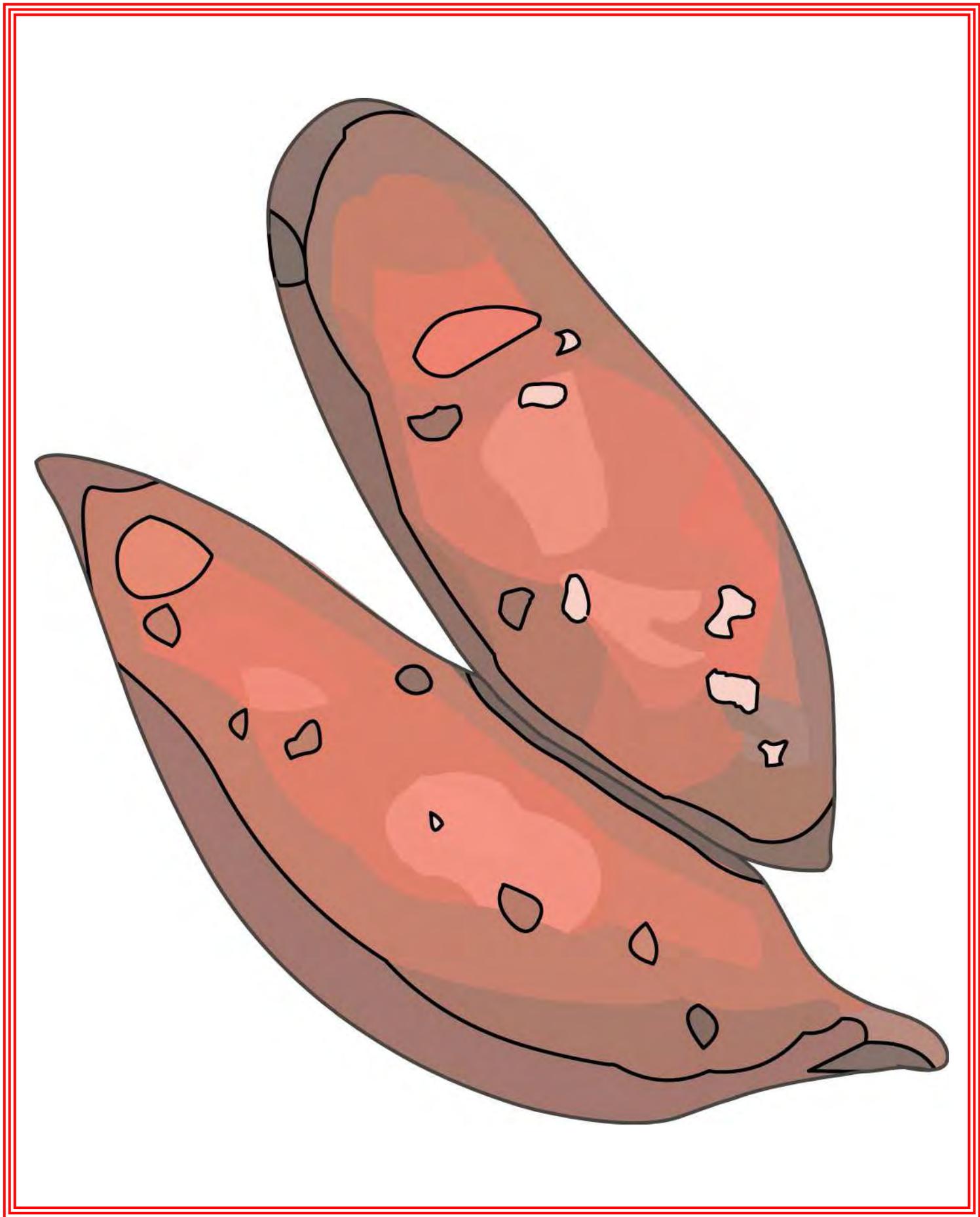


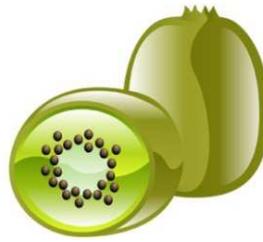
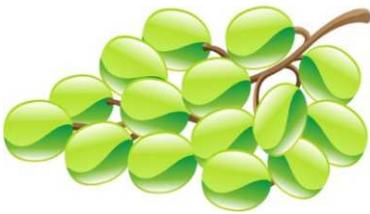
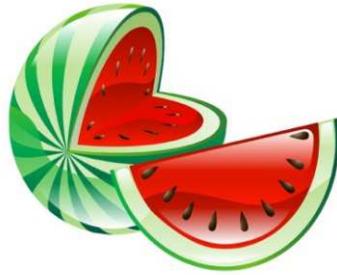
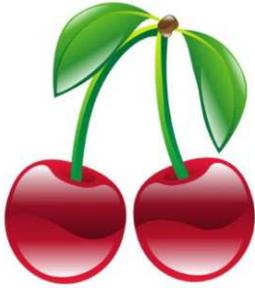


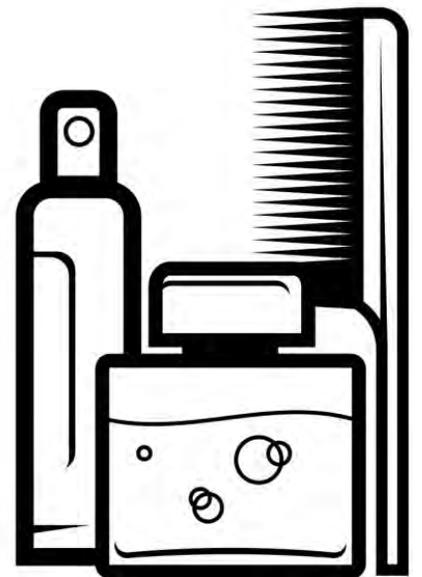
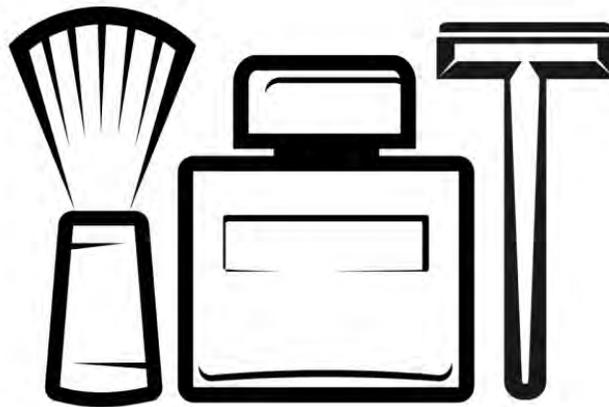




















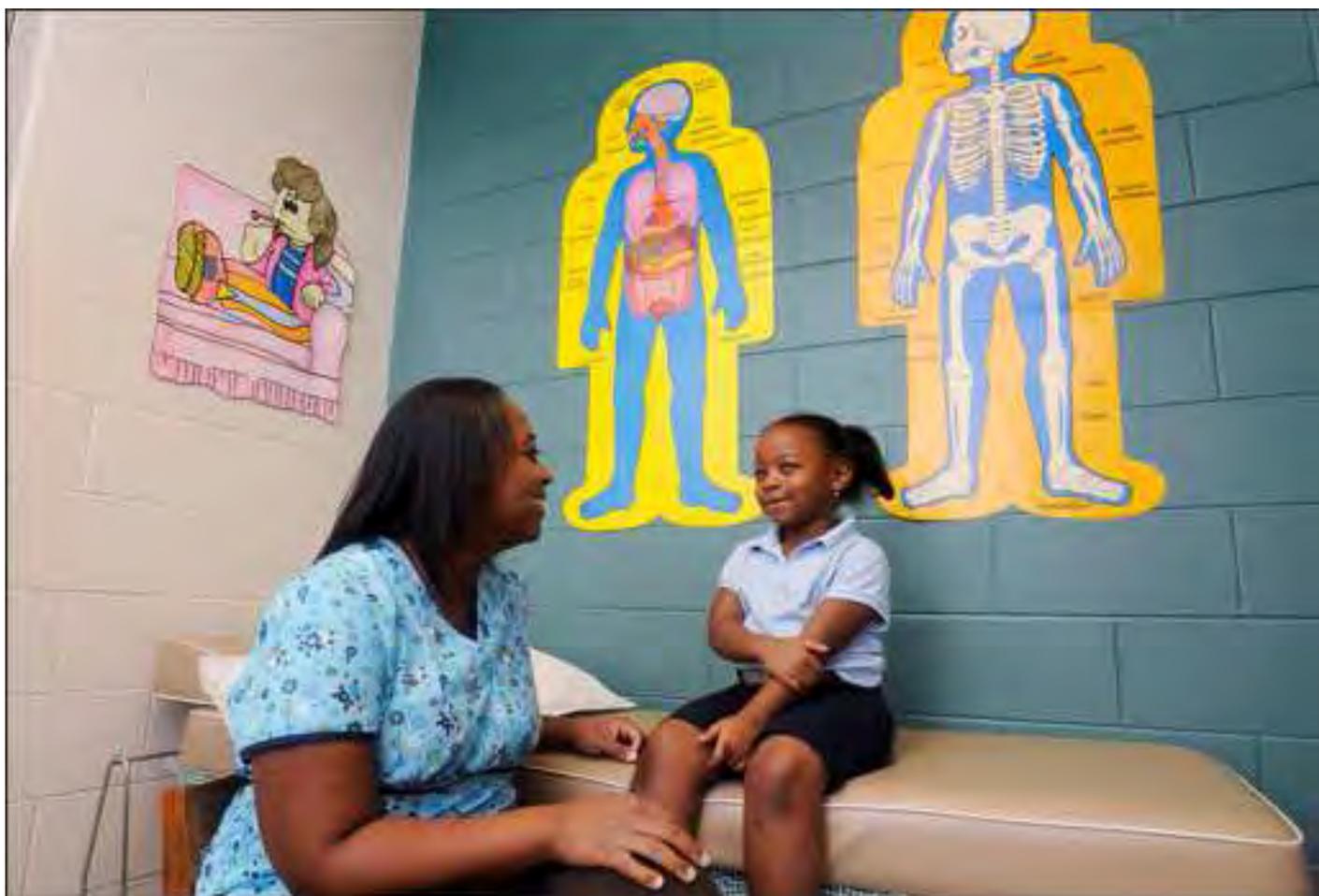




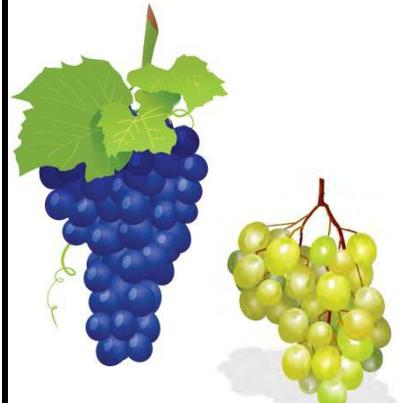
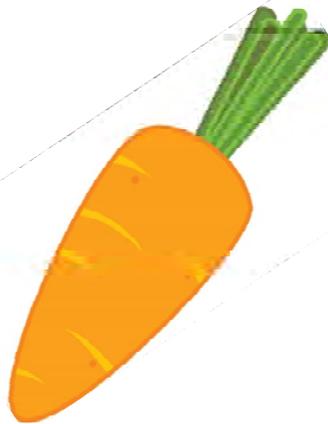








Good for You?



Activity #17: WHAT TO WEAR FOR THE WEATHER

Grades 4-12 (30 minutes)

PURPOSE

In this activity, refugee students become familiar with different weather conditions and how to be prepared.

See also: Module 6 *Stay Healthy and Activities for Grades K-2 Activity #15 Ready for Cold Weather*

SUPPLIES

- Ice cubes or crushed ice
- Freezer packs (to show slippery ice)
- Handouts:
 - *Rain*
 - *Snow*
 - *Mud*
 - *Windy*
 - *Sleet*
 - *Ice In trees*
 - *Leaves*
 - *Heat/Hot Sun*
- Note: Actual articles of clothing can be used instead of the handouts.
 - *Sweater*
 - *Raincoat*
 - *Jacket*
 - *Sweatshirt (hoodie)*
 - *Cap*
 - *Winter Hat*
 - *Winter Gloves*
 - *Boots (winter and rain)*
 - *Scarf*
 - *Umbrella*
 - *Sun hat*
- Handouts to color: *Umbrella, Snowman, Baseball Cap*



- Optional:
 - Snowballs
 - Instructor's clothing, to demonstrate what is worn in different types of weather.

DIRECTIONS

- Ask the students to look out the window and describe the weather. Ask them what the weather was like when they got up in the morning, and if they know what weather is expected in the evening. (If possible, check a weather report together.)



- Show the handouts that depict different kinds of weather: *Rain, Snow, Mud, Windy, Sleet, Ice In Trees, Leaves, Heat/Hot Sun.*
- Ask the students to feel the ice cubes (or freezer packs) and describe how they feel. Explain that during winter there can be ice, snow, sleet, and freezing rain, and the air and surfaces are cold.
- Show the handouts: *Sleet, Ice In Trees, Snow.*
- Show the clothing handouts (or actual clothing).
- Ask the students how they think they should dress during winter. Keep in mind that many refugee students have never had to wear a coat, gloves, or boots, so they will not know how to answer the question about appropriate clothing for different weather. They can choose from actual articles of clothing or guess from looking at the pictures on the handouts.
- Ask the students to match the weather handouts to the clothing handouts, or use actual articles of clothing.
- Discuss how it starts to get dark earlier in the winter and the temperature drops when the sun goes down.
- Optional: The instructor should put on each piece of personal clothing and ask the students when they should wear that clothing (e.g., winter jacket, rain boots, sun hat).
- Distribute the handouts for students to color. Suggest that they add clothing to the picture, such as a raincoat and boots with the umbrella.
- Optional: Discuss the names of the seasons that match the weather.

FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION

After completing the activity, ask the students the following questions:



- *Where can you get the clothing that you need for each type of weather?*
- *Why is it important to stay warm and dry in cold or rainy weather?*
- *Why is it important to drink fluids when it is hot?*
- *What weather did you experience before you came to America?*





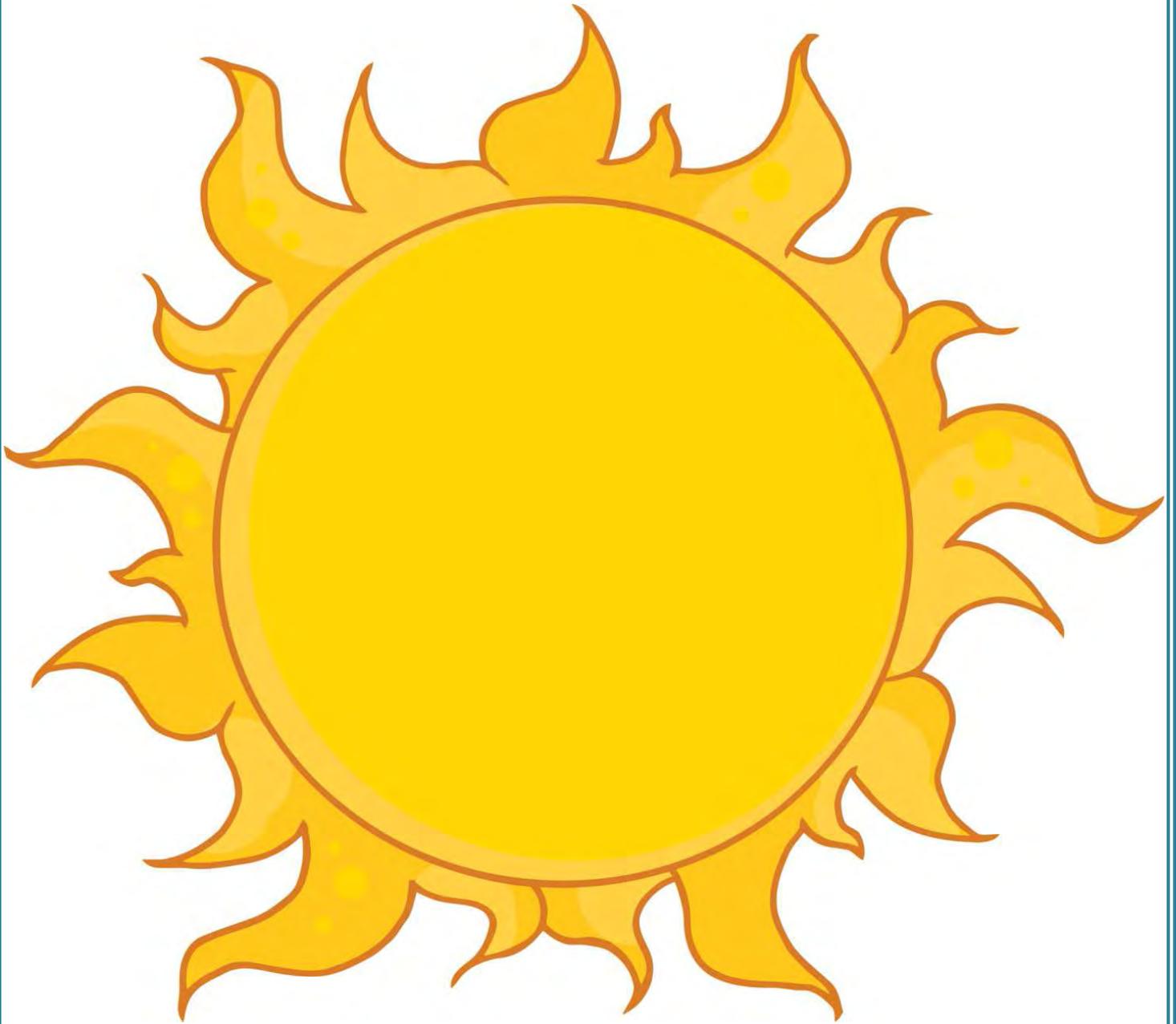


















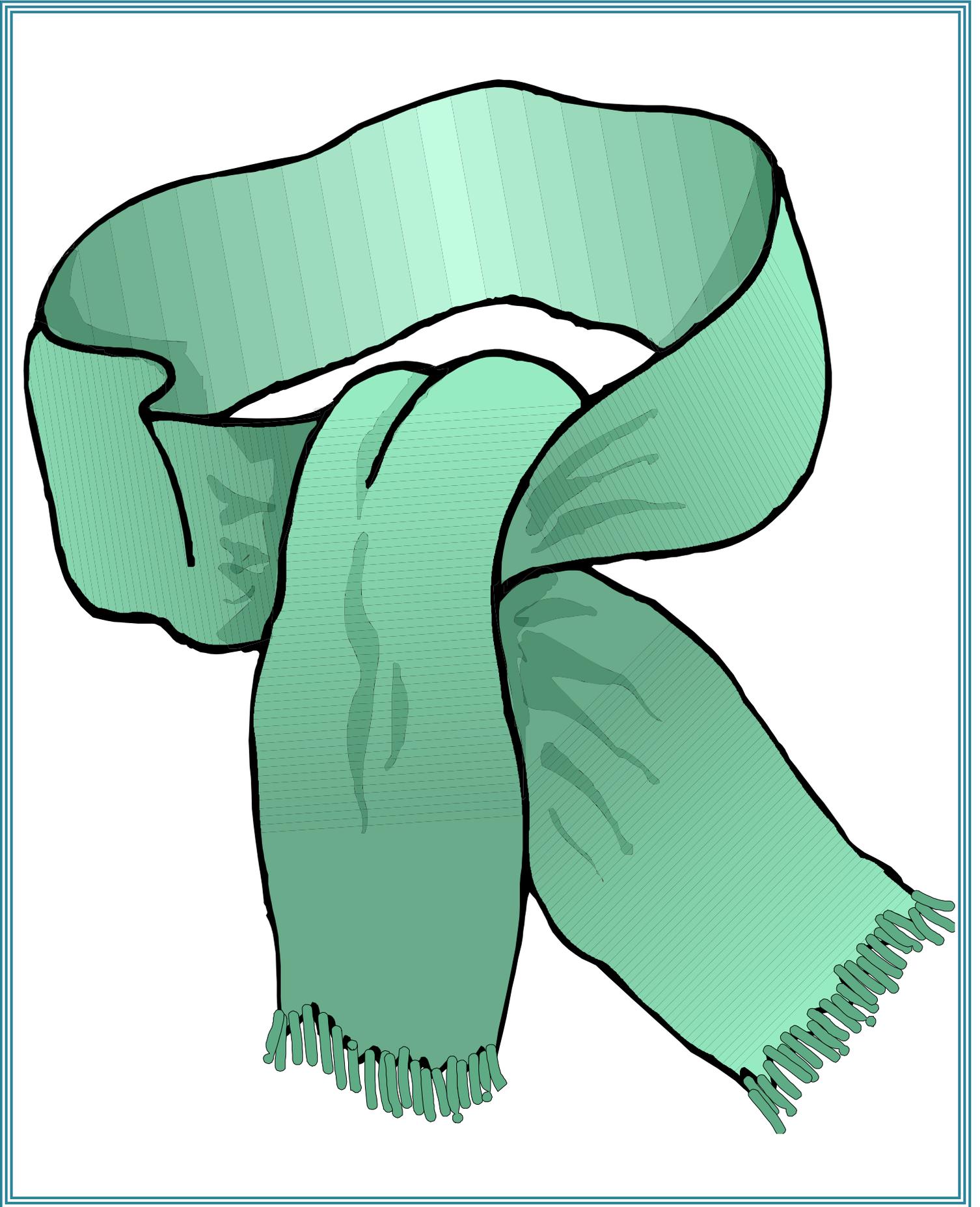










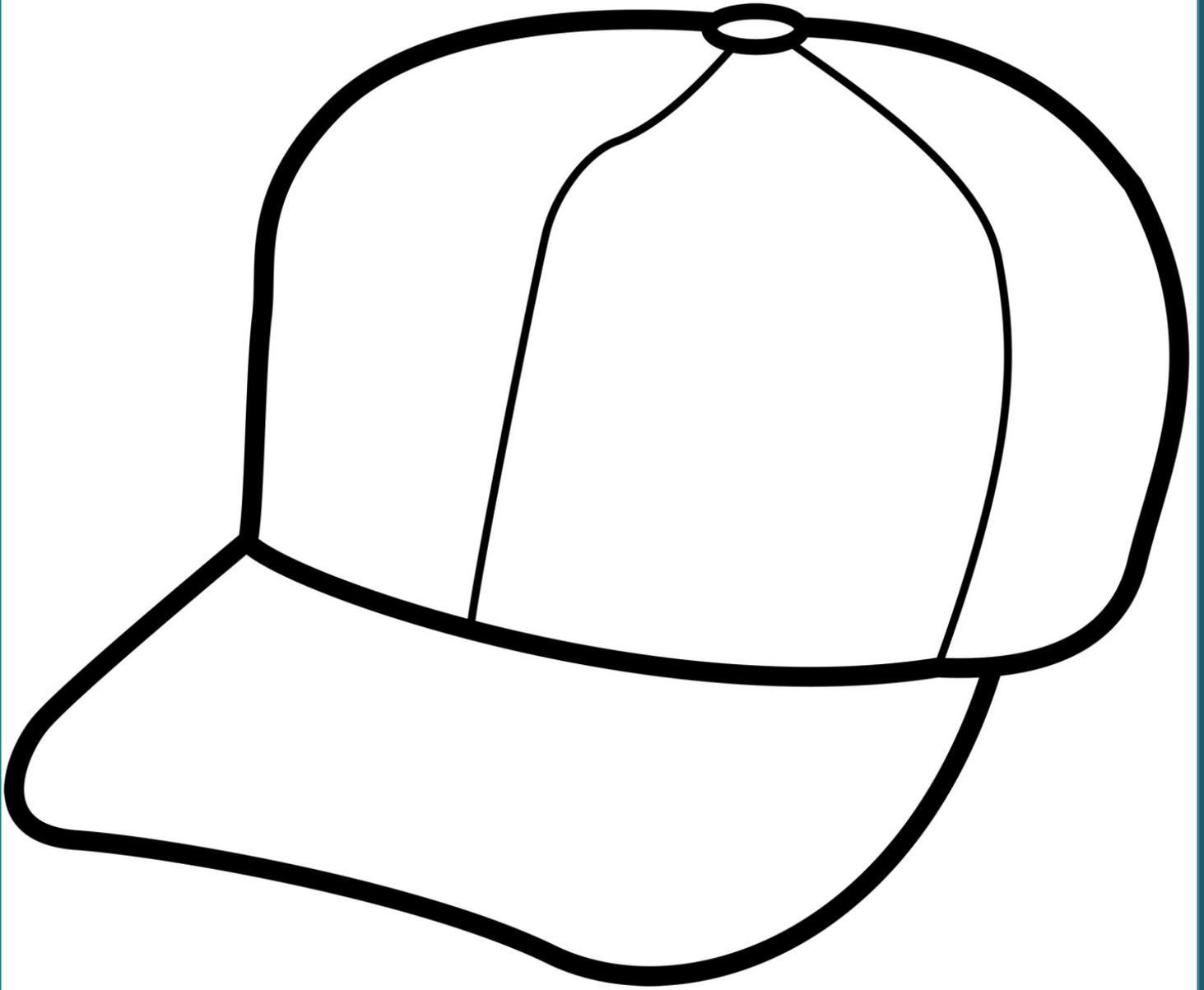












Activity #18: WHAT I LIKE ABOUT SCHOOL

Grades K-12 (30-45 minutes)

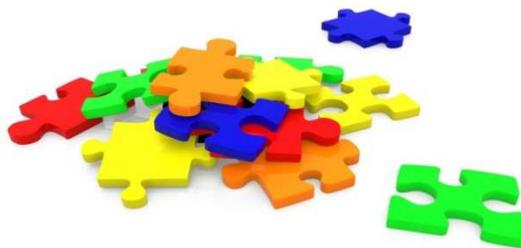
PURPOSE

In this activity, refugee students show what they like about their new school.

See also: Module 5 *Much To Learn* and Module 7 *Interests and Talents*

SUPPLIES

- Handout: *Puzzle Pieces*
- Handout: *Things I Like About School*
- Colored pencils, crayons, or markers
- Envelopes for storing puzzles
- Sample classroom boxes of puzzles (5-1000 pieces)
- Optional:
 - Magazines, scissors, glue sticks
 - Stickers related to school activities
 - Practice puzzles
 - Pictures of clip art school-related items printed from websites such as googleimages.com
 - Lamination of completed puzzles before they are cut into pieces



DIRECTIONS

- During the Refugee Academy, the students have begun to identify what appeals to them about their new school.

Several of the activities in the modules in the Welcome To Our Schools curriculum expose students to classroom and extracurricular activities, as well as supplies and equipment that are used in American schools.

Demonstrate how puzzle pieces are put together, using 5-piece puzzles as well as 50, 100, and even 500-1000 piece puzzles.



- The instructor should explain to the refugee students that they are going to be making their own puzzles that show what they personally enjoy about school.
- Show the students the handout *Puzzle Pieces* and explain that they are going to cover the pieces with pictures of things that they enjoy about school. They can use one or more of the following:
 - Crayons, colored pencils, or markers
 - Pictures cut from magazines
 - Stickers

- Their pictures can consist of:
 - A separate picture on each puzzle piece
 - Drawings that cover more than one piece
 - A complete picture that fills the entire puzzle.

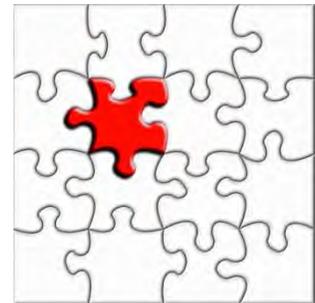
Demonstrate each technique using the *Puzzle Pieces* handout.

Students can start to envision their puzzle if examples are shown to them.

- Encourage the students to fill in each piece with color. For example, a piece can be colored completely in blue crayon and a sticker or magazine picture can be glued on top of the blue.
- Distribute the handout *Things I Like About School* to provide the students with ideas about what can be included on their puzzles.

If they spot something that they enjoy about school, they can cut a picture from the handout, draw a similar picture, or find one in a magazine.

- The instructor should explain to the students that when they are finished decorating the pieces, they are going to cut the puzzle on the lines provided on the handout. (Note that instructors may want to laminate the puzzles before they are cut.)
- Place puzzle pieces in an envelope marked with the student's name.
- Pair students so that they can exchange puzzle envelopes, put the puzzles together, and discuss the images on the puzzles.
- Encourage students to take their envelopes home and demonstrate the puzzle to their parents, discussing what they enjoy about school.
- Note that instructors can set up a separate puzzle table so that students have the opportunity to work on a large, complex puzzle.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

After completing the activity, ask the students the following questions:

- *What pictures did you put on your puzzle?*
- *Why did you choose them?*
- *Who else had those pictures?*

- *What pictures did you want to show but you didn't have room – or you had difficulty drawing or finding them?*
- *What is your favorite puzzle piece?*

The instructor should be aware that as students are decorating their puzzles and discussing the images that they have selected, they may mention what they dislike about school. Take advantage of these “teachable moments” to talk about how to cope with the more challenging aspects of their new school.

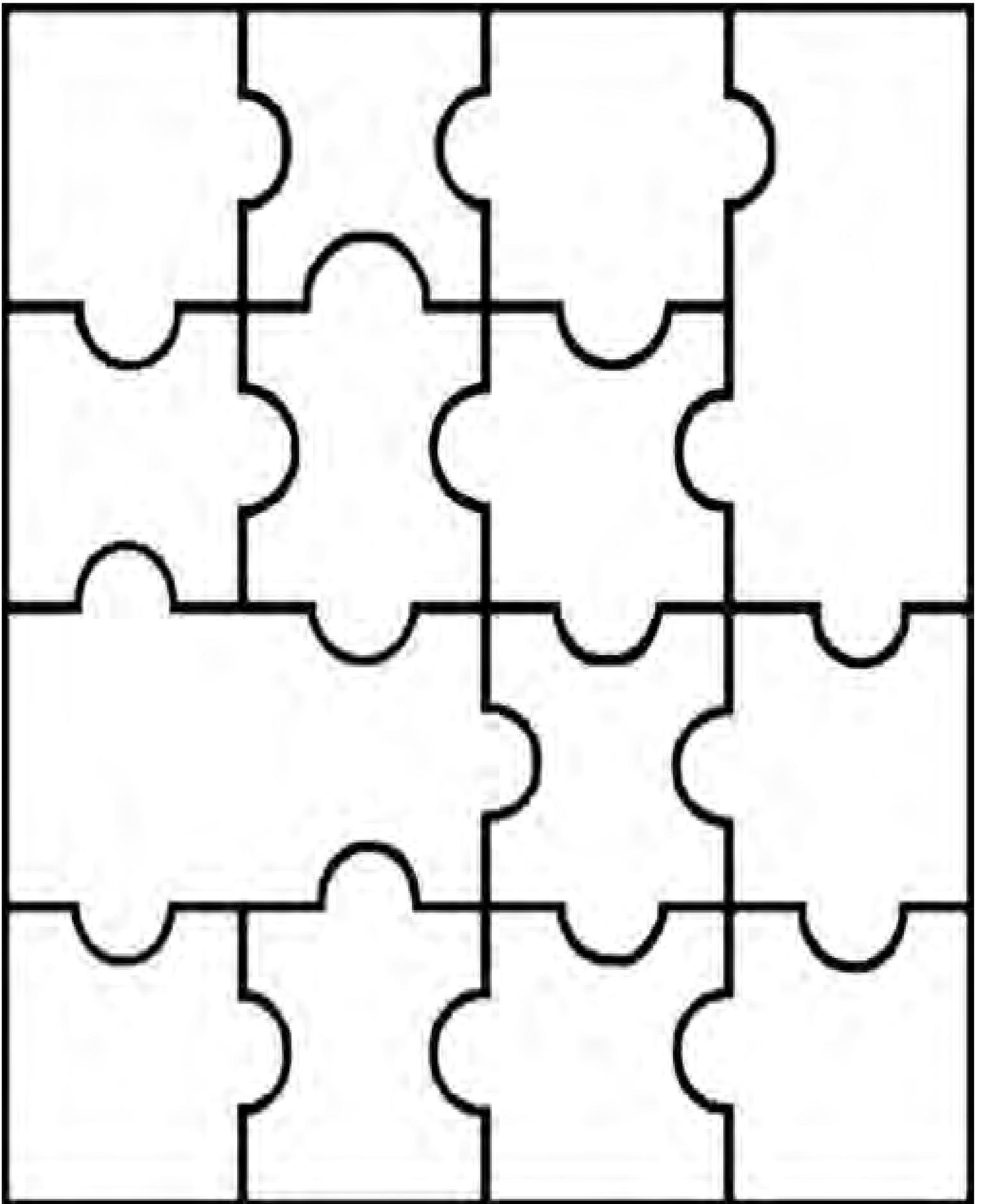
JOURNAL ACTIVITY

During the Refugee Academy, the students were encouraged to write or draw in a journal. Some students may have continued the process during school. Distribute journals (or notebooks/notebook paper), pencils, and crayons or colored pencils.

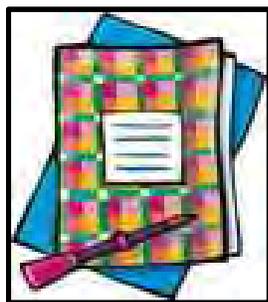
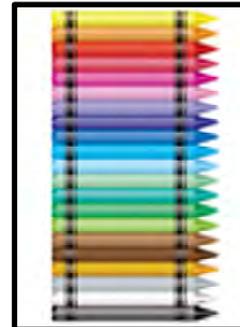
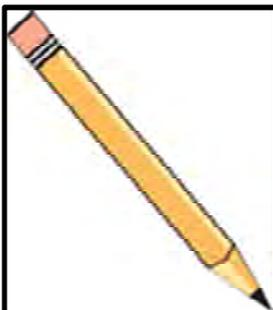
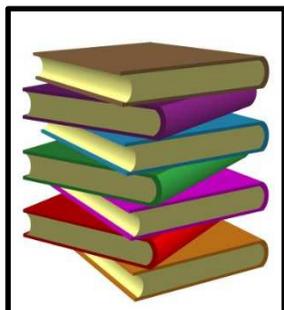
Ask the students to respond to the following questions in their journals:

- *What did I include on my puzzle and why?*
- *What other things about school can I add to the puzzle?*

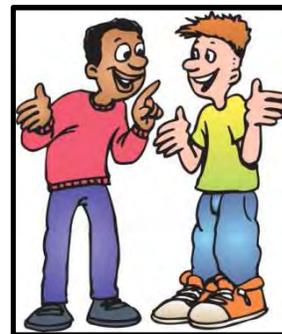
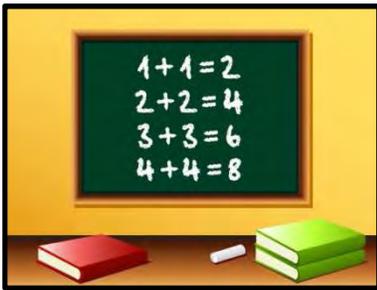
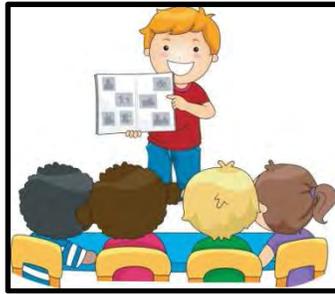
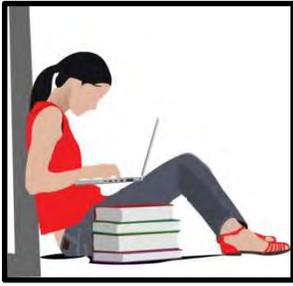




Things I Like About School









**REFUGEE
MINI-ACADEMY
CURRICULUM**

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WELCOME TO OUR SCHOOLS MINI-ACADEMY CURRICULUM INTRODUCTION

The refugee children in schools in the United States have fled their native countries from all over the globe. Many have experienced violence, have moved frequently, or have settled in refugee camps, living without essential resources, health care, or education. They arrive in America displaced from their homelands, expected to acclimate to a culture that is often radically different from what they have known.

The experience of displacement is one of the most significant traumas and losses that refugees of all ages can face. The lack of stability and safety, the constant disruptions, and the sometimes prolonged deprivation exact their toll on each family member. For children, it puts them at profound developmental risk, often impairing cognitive abilities as well as emotional, academic, or behavioral functioning.

Yet when refugee children arrive in the United States, if they are between the ages of 5 and 18, they are enrolled in an American school and expected to quickly adjust to their new way of living. Suddenly they are riding school buses; navigating school hallways, cafeterias, and locker rooms; sitting in classrooms; and trying to manage a new language, schoolwork, friendships, and after-school activities. The experience can be frightening, sometimes exhilarating, and overwhelming for even the most resilient children.

Welcome to Our Schools, developed by the Office of Refugee and Immigrant Services of the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA), is designed to ease the transition of refugee children into the elementary and secondary schools of New York State, and to empower their parents to be effective partners in the education of their children.

How to Use the Mini-Academy Curriculum

Mini-Academy instructors should match the activities from the ***Refugee Academy Curriculum*** and the ***Mini-Academy Curriculum*** to the needs of the students who are attending the Mini-Academy. It may be necessary to review the contents of the ***Refugee Academy Curriculum*** entirely with the students, or to blend some of the activities from the Refugee Academy Modules with activities from the ***Mini-Academy Curriculum***.

Although instructors may have experience working with refugee children, it is essential that during the Mini-Academy they view the world of *school* through the eyes of newcomers. A new school is difficult enough for American students who know the system. Refugee students have to juggle multiple concerns as they try to adjust to schools that are fast-moving, well-established in their routines, and challenging to anyone who is new to the system.

Refugee children are vulnerable, both academically and socially. Once resettled in the United States, their ability to successfully navigate the school experience is dependent on a number of factors such as age, culture, coping strategies, parental support, degree of interrupted schooling, and reception by the host community. The children may be living with new “families” who are relatives they never met before. They may be living with host families or guardians who are responsible for their care.

Some children have been exposed to extended violence in war zones and refugee camps while others have witnessed war-related events or death of family and community members. Studies of refugee children in a school environment find that exposure to war and persecution can result in significant delays in academic achievement. Depression, aggressive behavior, immaturity and physical ailments such as headaches and stomachaches are found to be common in the refugee school-aged population. All of these difficulties interfere significantly with the learning process. The students need attentive school staff, extra individual attention, and intensive support to tackle not only the academic concerns, but the social, emotional, material and health concerns as well.

Parental/guardian involvement in school is strongly associated with positive outcomes in academic performance and school behavior. In the case of refugee children, adjustment can be eased through parental involvement. Such involvement includes: creating a time and place at home to do homework; monitoring homework; encouraging and facilitating school attendance; alerting the school to problems or issues as they arise that may affect their child's performance or behavior; managing health care of the student; staying informed of student progress and grades; monitoring quality of school services; and communicating with teachers, including participation in parent/teacher conferences and the school Open House.

But many factors inhibit parental involvement in their child's education life. First, language serves as a major barrier. Refugee parents are unable to comprehend the telephone call that reports the child is absent from school (or is sick and needs to go home). They cannot understand notes sent home from the teacher. The homework is incomprehensible. They may be unaware of school events. Many do not participate in important parent/teacher conferences because of their inability to understand English, or because of their discomfort around teachers and other authority figures. Furthermore, parents are often unaware of community resources or unable to access them, and need an advocate who can help them find ways to meet their own needs.



In addition, refugee parents lack understanding about the workings of American school systems and may find the institution and the educational process intimidating. They are unfamiliar with New York State education law, rights and responsibilities, and obligations. They are not aware of the range of opportunities in schools, including academic, extracurricular, and vocational programs. Mandatory school attendance may be a brand-new concept, and they may have little understanding of the school's expectations of them as partners in the education of their children.

At the same time, American schools are not usually linguistically or culturally equipped to meet the special needs of refugee children. The schools struggle with language barriers and lack of information about the cultural background and history of the students. While most schools welcome refugee children, they are often anxious about communicating with the refugee children and their families. Teachers find that strategies, policies and expectations that accommodate the needs of their current students do not always work well for refugee children. School districts do not usually have the resources and are not set up to provide intensive orientation or to tailor curriculum and educational services to the specific and varying needs (academic, language, behavioral, cognitive) of the refugee student population. Schools find age-appropriate grade level placement challenging for students who lack a background of formal schooling or who have experienced significant interruptions in their education. Refugee children are often left on their own to master a new language, decipher expectations, and figure out how the American school system functions.

Recognizing the backgrounds of the refugee students, the Bureau of Refugee and Immigrant Affairs has created *Welcome to Our Schools* that consistently emphasizes three themes:



- Expose students to all aspects of the American Educational program so that they are familiar with how education works in their new country.
- Encourage students to take advantage of the multiple benefits of an American education.
- Reassure students that they will successfully adjust to their new schools.

Objectives

The Mini-Academy could consist of students who have recently enrolled in school, have experienced several weeks of school, or are a mixture of new and experienced students.

New students, whether they are in an entire Mini-Academy of newcomers or are mixed in with experienced students, must be taught the Key Points in the Modules in the **Refugee Academy Curriculum**.

The objectives for all of the activities are that students will:

- Review the Key Points of the **Refugee Academy Curriculum**
- Get reacquainted and develop new friendships
- Comfortably share observations and concerns
- Assist new students in adjusting
- Learn new information about school
- Participate in activities that are fun and rewarding

New Students in the Mini-Academy

The participants in a Mini-Academy may be new students who enrolled when school was already underway, and did not have the opportunity to participate in the Refugee Academy. They may have enrolled mid-year, when school was already underway. For those students, the **Welcome to Our Schools Refugee Academy Curriculum** should be used as a guide for Mini-Academy activities. The modules in the **Refugee Academy Curriculum** cover the following topics, all designed to assist refugee students in adjusting to American schools:

Module 1:	American Schools
Module 2:	Making Friends
Module 3:	Transportation and Time
Module 4:	School Rules
Module 5:	So Much to Learn!
Module 6:	Stay Healthy
Module 7:	Interests and Talents
Module 8:	Getting Help
Module 9:	Study Skills
Module 10:	Taking Tests
Module 11:	Technology and Schools
Module 12:	School Safety
Module 13:	Keeping Families Informed
Module 14:	Coping with Stress
Module 15:	Staying Safe
Module 16:	Hate Crime

Mini-Academy instructors can select Modules that seem most relevant to the Mini-Academy students, or can review highlights of each of the Modules. The handouts included in the ***Refugee Academy Curriculum*** and the videos in the ***Welcome To Our Schools*** program can be used for introducing topics to refugee students who are new to the school system.

Experienced Students in the Mini-Academy

The participants in the Mini-Academy may be students who participated in the Refugee Academy and have already been attending school. The instructors may determine that the experienced students need to review some of the Key Points in the ***Refugee Academy Curriculum***, such as study skills, taking tests, or coping with stress. They may need to repeat activities from the Refugee Academy modules for the purpose of sharing experiences, reinforcing key points, reflecting on growth, or addressing new issues.

This ***Mini-Academy Curriculum*** includes additional activities that can be conducted with experienced students. Emphasis in the additional activities is on building relationships with other refugee students.



Key Points — Mini-Academy



1. Refugee students can help each other.

During the Refugee Academy, the students were new to the school system and were learning the basics about how to navigate a typical school day. As they became more acclimated to the school, they learned the rules, procedures, and typical activities of their school. They learned about strategies for getting through times that are difficult, and they experienced the benefits and rewards of attending a new school. By the time they participate in a Mini-Academy, they are in a position to share what they have learned.

In the Mini-Academy, the experienced students may be joined by students who are brand new to the school. It is important for students to understand that no matter how much experience they have in American schools, they can all help each other.

For many experienced students, especially children in the elementary grades, it is hard to remember those first few days of school when everything was new and overwhelming. During the Mini-Academy it is not necessary for students to review the challenges of those first weeks, but it is important to share tips about how they get through the day. They can discuss what strategies they have developed that may reduce confusion or ease the stress. They can also reassure their peers who are new to the school that as the school year progresses, they will adjust and feel less like newcomers. Sometimes new students just need to hear from their peers that they will succeed in adjusting to school.

Instructors in the Mini-Academy should encourage students to share their experiences, good or bad, emphasizing what they have learned from the experiences. They should point out the resilience of the students, and their ability to solve problems and seek out help when it is needed.

An essential message is that the students should be able to rely on each other because they are all going through similar periods of adjustment. They have all had past experiences that are difficult to overcome. With assistance and reassurance from other refugee students, even if they do not speak the same language and have not shared a similar history, refugee students can feel comfortable that at least their refugee peers are looking out for them.



2. Adults in the school are available to help them.

During the Refugee Academy and the first few days of school, refugee students were undoubtedly introduced to a number of adults who can provide assistance. However, like anyone entering a new environment,



this information is often difficult to absorb before school is underway. The refugee students may have become familiar with their Academic Coach, classroom teachers, and perhaps other school district personnel (e.g., classroom paraprofessionals, cafeteria personnel, etc.), but they may not be aware of all of the adults who stand ready to assist them.

Refugee students may not realize that there are guidance counselors, school nurses, physical education teachers and coaches, and school social workers and psychologists who can help them with questions and problems. They may not know who is available to help them, how to approach adults, and what the procedures are for requesting assistance. This information is especially important for students who have just enrolled in the school.

Instructors should use the Mini-Academy to connect the refugee students with school-based adults, even if they have met them before. They should invite the adults to the Mini-Academy, introduce them, tell the students how to reach the adults, and ensure that the Academic Coaches know how to connect adult school personnel with students. A classroom project or social activity is an excellent means of showing the students that the adults are kind, approachable, and willing to help.

Instructors should include personnel the students may see daily, such as hall monitors, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, and school-based law enforcement. Again, the students may have met them during the Refugee Academy, but the Mini-Academy provides a chance for them to talk to familiar adults and become acquainted with adults who are there to provide assistance.



3. Friendships are the foundation for ensuring successful adjustment to new schools.

Although educators put a lot of emphasis on refugee students learning the rules and procedures of school and adjusting to the demands of an academic curriculum, it is the development of friendships that is critical for new student adjustment.



Many refugee students have had to leave behind not only their personal belongings, but important relationships. They miss their friends. It is difficult for them to connect with new peers and then build friendships that are comforting and rewarding.

The attitude of students at school can be determined by the status of their friendships, especially for students in middle or high schools. For refugee students, the development of new friendships is even more challenging because of language barriers. During a Mini-Academy it is important to cultivate relationships, even if students do not speak the same language (or English), and to review the many ways that students can make friends.

The Key Points from *Refugee Academy Curriculum Module 2: Making Friends* should be reinforced during the Mini-Academy.



4. *Students are trying to balance personal life and school life, often resulting in stress.*

During the Refugee Academy, refugee students had the opportunity to learn about the way a school system works in America, how they can maintain their health and hygiene, how they can participate in extracurricular activities, what they can do to study and stay organized, and a vast array of other topics.

Although the review of these topics was undoubtedly helpful as the students had to adjust to new school experiences, the information was more than likely overwhelming. Once students actually entered the school and participated in classes and school events, they may have become highly stressed as they tried to fit in to their new environment and apply the skills that they learned in the Refugee Academy.

New students who have entered school after it is underway may be particularly stressed. In addition, many refugee students are coping with challenges in their personal lives, such as housing conditions, parental stress, health problems, and financial pressures on their families.

A Mini-Academy can provide an opportunity for students to release stress. The environment of the Mini-Academy should be relaxed and fun. The activities should be designed to include all of the students, giving them opportunities to share their experiences, discuss their concerns, and support their peers.

Students should have the chance to interact informally, develop camaraderie, and share openly with each other, as the instructors guide and support.

Refugee students should leave a Mini-Academy feeling reassured and motivated to tackle another school day.

Activity #1: STORIES ABOUT SCHOOL

Grades K-12 (60 - 90 minutes)

PURPOSE

In this activity, students work together to highlight the ups and downs of a typical school day, and to share suggestions about adjusting to a new school.

SUPPLIES

- 5 sets of 40 laminated Story Cards (or copies of each picture – see Mini-Academy handouts)
- 2-4 desks pushed together to create a table
- Journals, notebooks, or notebook paper
- Pencils, colored pencils, crayons, for writing/drawing in journals

DIRECTIONS

- Introduce the activity by explaining to the students that they are going to have the opportunity to work with other students to create a story.
- Divide the large group into five small groups. There should not be more than 5 in a group, if possible.
- Distribute a set of laminated cards to each group and ask the students to lay out the cards on the table, in any order.
- Tell the students that, using the laminated pictures, they are to create a story that describes a day at school for a refugee student. They can decide on their own main character, selecting the age, gender, native country, and daily routine.



- The students are to rearrange the cards so that they are in the order of their story. They should keep rearranging the cards until their story starts to emerge. Each group should end up with a different order of pictures. For example, one group may start with cards that depict a bathtub and breakfast, while another group may start with a picture of a stack of books and a student playing soccer.

Students in grades K-3 should decide on at least 5 cards to include in their story.

Students in grades 4-6 should use at least 10 cards in their story.

Students in grades 7- 12 should use at least 20 cards in their story.

After all of the stories are created, the small groups will share their stories with the large group.

- ❑ Explain to the students that they are telling a story, not just giving a step-by-step description of the school day.

Step-by-step: Then Mahar went to his locker.

Story: Mahar went to his locker and realized that he had forgotten his math book.

The stories should include events that students in the group have experienced or witnessed. The story should include positive experiences and daily challenges. The students should be encouraged to move the cards around until they agree upon the events of the stories.

- ❑ All students in the group should have the opportunity to contribute to the story, even if they do not speak English. Explain to students that when they tell their story to the large group, every member of their small group should have a chance to tell part of the story.



Some students will need translators and some will be unwilling to speak in front of the large group, but every student should be given the opportunity to describe what is happening in at least one of the pictures.

- ❑ The instructor should circulate, assisting the groups in deciding how to build their stories around the pictures. The groups should reach consensus on the story line, so instructors should watch for individuals who may be dominating the group.

Instructors should remind the students that they are to include scenes in their stories that show what a day is like for a day at school for a refugee student.

- ❑ New students may have difficulty participating in the activity. Encourage the students in the small groups to teach the new students about the pictures on the cards. The emphasis of the activity should be on group work and working together, not on which group can create the best story.

- ❑ The instructor should give the students a 10-minute warning to finish up their stories and put the laminated cards in their final order. Each group will have to decide how they are going to present the story. They do not have to write down their story unless they are more comfortable presenting with notes.
- ❑ Groups can decide on a spokesperson to facilitate their presentation, or they can just take turns when they present their stories. The type of presentation will be determined by the comfort level of the students, not only in speaking in front of the large group, but in speaking English.

The instructor should determine the order of the presentations. Regardless of the order, the *final* story should be the one that is the most entertaining.

- ❑ As each group tells their story, they should hold up the pictures that they selected.

FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION

After all of the stories are told, the instructor should discuss the following:



- ✿ *Did you see any themes in the stories? Were activities repeated?*
- ✿ *What were the feelings of the characters in the stories?*
- ✿ *How would you be able to help the main characters?*
- ✿ *Have you ever experienced anything in the stories?*

If there is time, give the students a chance to use the same cards to create a different story. Keep the same groups if they are working well together, or mix up the groups to facilitate new perspectives and relationships.



JOURNAL ACTIVITY

During the Refugee Academy, the students were encouraged to write or draw in a journal. Some students may have continued the process during school. Distribute journals (or notebooks/notebook paper), pencils, and crayons or colored pencils.

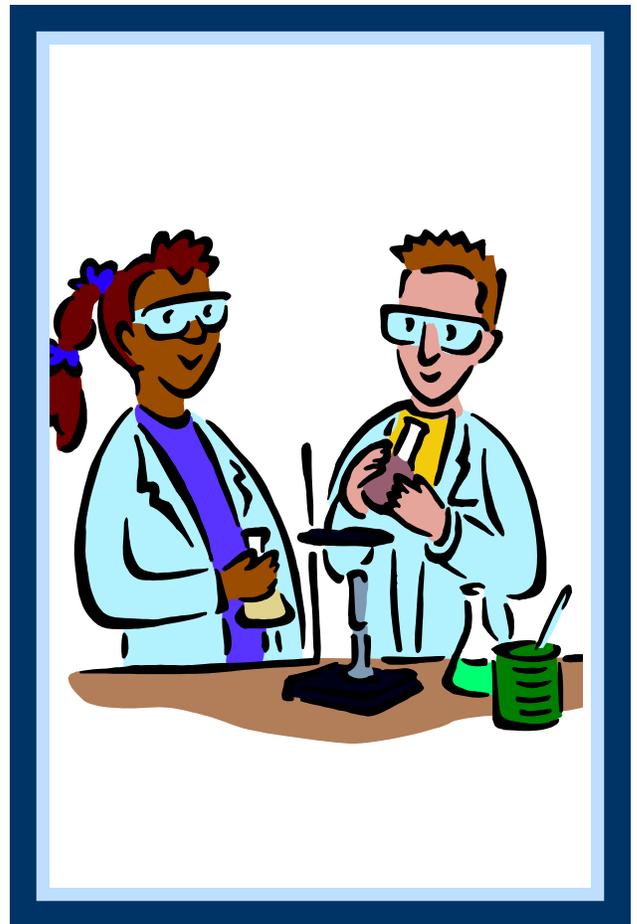
Ask the students to respond to the following question in their journals:

- ✿ *What will my next day at school be like, and how can I prepare for it?*



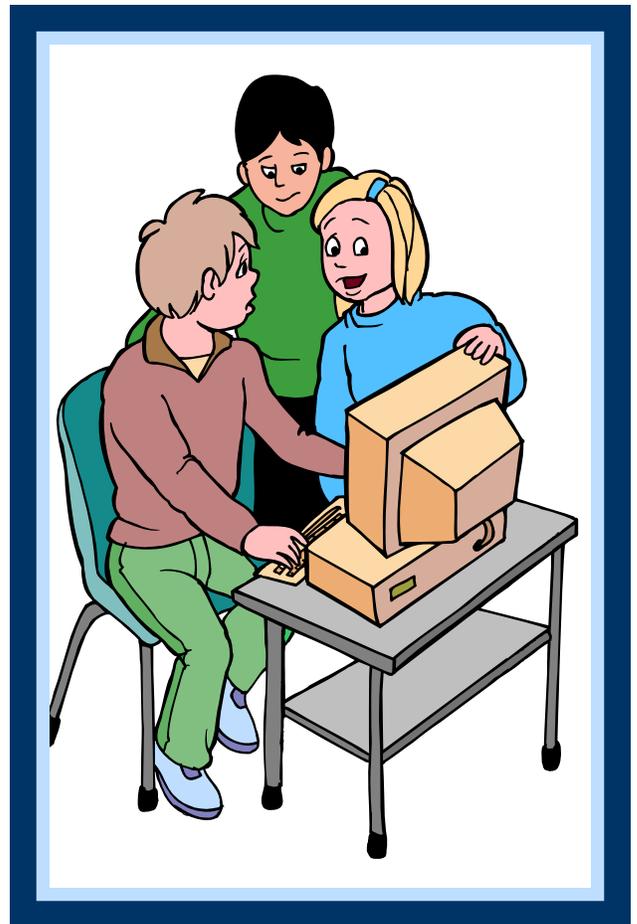
Show the videos ***Refugee Student Interviews***, ***Refugee Parent Interviews***, and ***A Day in Elementary School, A Day in Middle School, or A Day in High School***, using the ***Guide to the Videos*** for discussion.

STORY CARDS

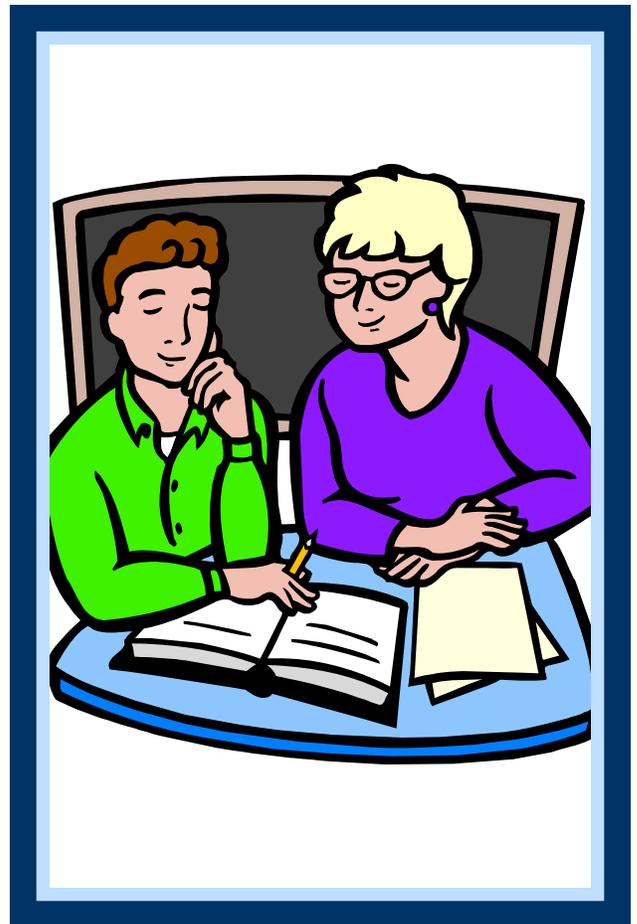
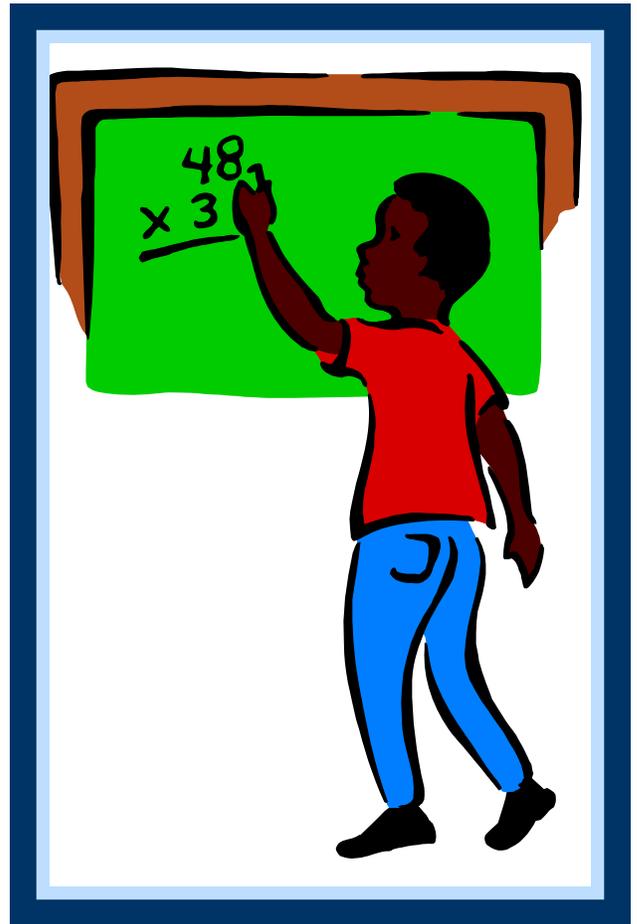












Activity #2: WE ARE ALL CONNECTED

Grades 4-12 (30 - 45 minutes)

PURPOSE

In this activity, students are encouraged to rely on each other for support.

SUPPLIES

- Ball of yarn at least 4" in diameter (or several smaller balls of yarn). Do *not* use a ball of string or twine.
- Journals, notebooks, or notebook paper
- Pencils, colored pencils, crayons, for writing/drawing in journals
- Optional guests who are responsible for providing guidance and support to refugee students, including other refugee students
- Room for a large circle of the entire group of students, instructors, and guests



DIRECTIONS

- Arrange the group in a large circle in a classroom, playground, or gymnasium. Include instructor/guests in the circle, allowing one instructor to be outside of the circle, facilitating the activity. The circle should be small enough to allow for tossing a ball of yarn back and forth. If necessary, form two circles, but one large circle is preferable.
- The instructor in the circle should begin the activity by loosely tying the end of the ball of yarn around his/her wrist and then answering the following question posed by the facilitator:

Who would you turn to if you had a problem?

In answering the question, the instructor should provide specific explanations, elaborating on the response. For example:

If I had a problem with a friendship, I would talk to another friend to get ideas about what to do – or I would go directly to my friend to talk things out. If I was having a problem with my job, I would talk to _____ because s/he always has good ideas.

The instructor then tosses the ball of yarn to a student on the other side of the circle.



- ❑ The receiving student loosely wraps the yarn around his/her wrist.

The question is repeated, the receiving student answers it, and then the ball is tossed to another student or adult across the circle.

- ❑ Continue wrapping the yarn, answering the question, and tossing the ball until a “spider web” formation begins to occur in the circle. (If more than one ball of yarn is used, then tie the yarn ends together and continue the activity.)

As the question is being answered, the facilitator can provide additional information about who to seek out for assistance with a problem. Some students may be new to the school and have no idea who they can turn to if they have a problem. In that case, the facilitator should stress that the members of the circle are an excellent resource. Stop and take the time to introduce the new student to the circle. (If all of the students are new, this activity is an opportunity to introduce classmates and instructors as a valuable source of support and problem-solving.)

- ❑ Continue to ask students who they would turn to if they had a problem. Student responses should be praised as they answer the question. For example:

Good choice – sounds like you have made a good friend.



I'm glad you mentioned Mrs. _____. She's always available to answer any questions, so anyone here can stop by her office. Do you know where her office is?

Thanks for mentioning me. I love to solve problems, so don't forget that you can bring me your questions.

If a student cannot answer the question, provide suggestions, but do not press the student to respond. Point out someone in the circle who is a good problem-solver. The purpose of the activity is for the students to see that they are all connected and can rely on each other.

- ❑ Keep tossing the ball until every student has received the ball of yarn and has had a chance to answer the question.

Make sure that students are not wrapping the yarn too tightly around their wrists.

Be sensitive in case students feel uncomfortable with the yarn around their wrists because of past experiences in their native countries. If a student feels uncomfortable in the circle, suggest that the student join the facilitator in assisting the group.

- ❑ As the yarn “spider web” is formed, the facilitator should point out to the students that they have a circle of friends they can turn to if they have a problem. Acknowledge that they have all experienced the same fears, confusion, and excitement about entering a new school, and are connected by similar experiences.
- ❑ The facilitator should direct the entire connected circle to do a series of movements together, even though all of the students are all connected by the yarn. The movements include turning, bending, reaching, etc. These movements may be challenging because they are all connected, but should be fun to try to carry out. (The instructor in the circle may have to demonstrate the motion.)



The students should not be concerned if they get tangled. ***The instructors should encourage laughter, not perfection in maintaining the circle.***

In some cases, not all of the students will move in response to the direction because it does not apply to them. As a result, the web may get twisted, but the students will still be connected. The facilitator should point out that even when something gets a little more complicated, the individuals in that circle are still connected.

The facilitator should give the instruction for the movement and then ask the follow-up question.



Touch the floor with one finger if you have ever gotten confused in your new school.

(How did you figure out what to do?)



Turn to the right if you have ever worried about being late to class.

(What happens when you are late?)



Touch your knee if you have found an American food that you really like.

(What food did you discover?)



Turn to your left if you have tried to make new friends but it was hard to do.

(Where can you find new friends?)



Take a bow if you have learned some words in English.

(What English word do you use a lot in school?)



Look at the people next to you. Find out their names and shake hands.

(Can you turn to anyone in this circle if you have a problem?)

- ❑ The yarn web can then be unraveled by releasing the yarn from the wrists and dropping it to the floor. Then the facilitator and students gather up the yarn. Alternatively, the process of tossing the ball can be reversed, one student at a time. The latter may result in a mass of tangled yarn, but the students will work together to solve the problem.

FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION

Conduct a discussion that reassures students that there are a number of sources for assistance in solving problems, including fellow refugee students.

Recognize that the students have had different life experiences, come from different countries, and have different teachers and classmates, but they can always know that there are students in the school who know what they are going through as they adjust to American schools. Encourage the students to reach out to each other.

Discuss:

- *How are we all connected?*
- *What can we do to get to know each other better?*
- *For those of you who have been in school already, who should new students go to if they have a problem?*
- *How will you connect with someone in this circle when you go back to school?*



JOURNAL ACTIVITY

During the Refugee Academy, the students were encouraged to write or draw in a journal. Some students may have continued the process during school. Distribute journals (or notebooks/notebook paper), pencils, and crayons or colored pencils.

Ask the students to respond to the following question in their journals:

- *How can I continue to connect with other refugee students and help them to solve problems?*



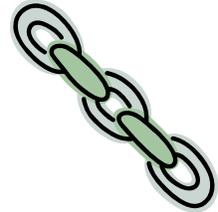
Show the videos ***Refugee Student Interviews***, ***Refugee Parent Interviews***, and ***A Day in Elementary School, A Day in Middle School, or A Day in High School***, using the ***Guide to the Videos*** for discussion.

Activity #3: LOOP-D-LOOP

**Grades K-12 (60 minutes for K - 3)
(90 minutes for 4 - 12)**

PURPOSE

In this activity, students work together to create paper chains called Loop-D-Loops that represent diversity and connections between students.



SUPPLIES

- At least 10 packages of multicolored construction paper
- Large tables or 4-6 desks pushed together to create a table
- Magazines (at least one per student) that can be cut up for the activity. The magazines should have many pictures and advertisements that will remind refugee students of their new lives in America, particularly American schools. Suggested titles, often available at the offices of pediatricians, libraries, and through PTA donations, are:



Ranger Rick
National Geographic Kids
Kids Sports Illustrated
Ladybug
Family Fun
New Moon
Jack and Jill
Nick Jr.
Weekly Reader

- Scissors
- Magic markers or crayons that can be used on construction paper
- Glue, glue stick, or paste
- Optional: Staplers (for making paper chains, instead of glue)
- Sample paper chain with 3 or 4 links

DIRECTIONS

- ❑ Explain to the large group that they are going to divide into small groups and make paper chains called Loop-D-Loops, after decorating construction paper with pictures and words from magazines.

Demonstrate gluing pictures and words from magazines on three different colors of construction paper, selecting pictures that remind students of school experiences and life in their new country.



After gluing the pictures, the instructor should cut the pieces of construction paper into one inch strips, glue or staple loops, and make a paper chain.

Explain that each group is to make as many loops as they can. A giant chain called the Loop-D-Loop will be made when all of the loops are linked together to form one long chain.

Groups can divide up tasks (e.g., picture cutters, chain makers, etc.) or everyone can work on the task at once. Remind the students that when the loops are made the pictures will be cut into strips.

- ❑ Encourage the groups to select pictures that are personally meaningful. They do not have to justify the selection of a picture or word, but should not arbitrarily cut out anything in the magazines. The instructor should ask the students about the pictures and words that they have selected:



- *How does that picture/word remind you of school or your new life in America?*

Since the selected picture will eventually be cut up when the chain loops are created, the focus should be on the selection of the pictures, not on the quality of the craftsmanship.

Encourage students to mix up the colors of the loops.

- ❑ The instructor should circulate among the groups, encouraging them to work together to complete the task, making sure that all students have the opportunity to participate. If a student is struggling with a task such as cutting paper or finding pictures, guide the student to another activity such as gluing the pictures or making the loops.
- ❑ If a group seems to be falling behind in making the loops, point out to the entire group that the more loops that are created, the longer the Loop-D-Loop.

When there are 15-20 minutes left in the activity, stop the activity and have the entire group work together to connect all of the short chains into one long Loop-D-Loop chain.

The giant Loop-D-Loop chain can be connected as a circle chain, or kept as one long chain.

Ask the students to count the number of links together with the instructor.

If possible, hang the giant Loop-D-Loop chain around the room. Or give each student a section of the chain to decorate their own space at home.

FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION

After the links are counted and the Loop-D-Loop is either hung up in the room or distributed to the students, ask the students the following question:

How is this group like the giant Loop-D-Loop?

Discuss:

- the strength of the chain by linking together
- how small groups of friends (links) can join together with new friends
- how the many colors add beauty and interest to the chain
- the variety of choices of pictures and words on the chain
- the skills that it took to make the chain, including communication and teamwork
- the process of working together to create the chain.



JOURNAL ACTIVITY

During the Refugee Academy, the students were encouraged to write or draw in a journal. Some students may have continued the process during school. Distribute journals (or notebooks/notebook paper), pencils, and crayons or colored pencils.

Ask the students to respond to the following question in their journals:

- *What was the best part about making the Loop-D-Loops?*



Show the videos ***Refugee Student Interviews***, ***Refugee Parent Interviews***, and ***A Day in Elementary School, A Day in Middle School***, or ***A Day in High School***, using the ***Guide to the Videos*** for discussion.

Activity #4: THUMBS UP, THUMBS DOWN

Grades K-12 (45 - 60 minutes)

PURPOSE

In this activity, students will have the opportunity to share their observations and opinions about their school experiences so far.

SUPPLIES

- (See list below)
- Journals, notebooks, or notebook paper
- Pencils, colored pencils, crayons, for writing/drawing in journals



DIRECTIONS

- The instructor will need a variety of objects that are related to school. The objects should be easily recognizable to the students, with an occasional object that is unusual or unfamiliar. For example:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ A piece of fruit▪ CDs of music groups▪ Teen magazines▪ Textbooks▪ Science/Lab equipment▪ Math tools (calculator, blocks, ruler, compass, etc.)▪ Fast food such as French fries▪ Food from the cafeteria▪ Deodorant▪ Toothpaste▪ Sports equipment▪ Gym clothes▪ Locker padlock▪ Hall pass▪ Report card▪ Computer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Test▪ Homework notebook▪ Musical instrument▪ Picture of a school bus, or toy school bus▪ Clock▪ Calendar▪ Art supplies▪ Library books▪ Workbooks▪ Pompoms (if there are cheerleaders in the school or athletic events that students can attend)▪ Journal▪ Picture of a favorite teacher, Academic Coach or other adult who is well liked by the students
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Unfamiliar objects:

- A food that the students may not recognize such as a kiwi, avocado, Portobello mushroom, etc. (The instructor can also include foods that may

be familiar to the refugee students, but not necessarily to American students)

- A new children’s book recommended by the school librarian
 - A jar of liquid soap, or other hygiene product
 - An educational board game
 - The school district Internet policy
 - A map showing directions to the guidance counselor or school social worker’s office
 - Local newspapers
 - A brochure to a local college
 - A New York State Regents diploma
 - Magazines specializing in specific hobbies or topics
 - A playbill or program for a school event
- The instructor should explain the meaning of “thumbs up” and “thumbs down,” demonstrating examples.



The group should then practice 👍 thumbs up 👍 and 👎 thumbs down 👎 with objects that are familiar to them, such as a piece of fruit, a CD of a music group, or a magazine.

The instructor asks:

Do you like this (name the object)?

- After each object, the instructor should ask the students why they voted the way that they did. If there are students who are voting differently than others, ask them why their opinion differs. For example, a student may vote “thumbs down” when a paintbrush is held up, explaining that they do not feel that they are very good in art.

Each discussion is an opportunity to support personal expression of views, to provide information about the object, and to reassure students and bolster their confidence.

The instructor should then hold up objects that may be unfamiliar to the students, prompting discussion. The objects should be selected based on the grade levels of the students.

- The instructor should conclude the activity by asking each student to identify something in school that they did not know about before they entered school, but now they really enjoy.



JOURNAL ACTIVITY

During the Refugee Academy, the students were encouraged to write or draw in a journal. Some students may have continued the process during school. Distribute journals (or notebooks/notebook paper), pencils, and crayons or colored pencils.

Ask the students to respond to the following question in their journals:

- *How can I learn more in school?*



Show the videos *Scenes from School: Refugee Student Interviews*, *Scenes From School: Refugee Parent Interviews*, and *A Day at School* (Elementary, Middle School, or High School), using the **Guide to the Videos** for discussion.

ACTIVITY #5: WHO'S GOT YOUR BACK?

Grades K-12 (45 - 60 minutes)

PURPOSE

In this activity, refugee students have the opportunity to review the sources of assistance in the school and are reassured that peers and adults are available to support them.



SUPPLIES

- Large enough space for two rows of students
- Journals, notebooks, or notebook paper
- Handout: We Have Your Back!
- Pencils, colored pencils, crayons, for writing/drawing in journals and coloring the handout
- Optional: Small hand mirror or pocket mirror for each student, wrapped in wrapping paper

DIRECTIONS

- **If there are students who are new to the school**, the instructor should review the Key Points in *Module 8: Getting Help*, including distribution of Handout 8-1 *Teachers*, Handouts 8-2 *Academic Coach* and 8-3 *Parent Note*. The students should be given the specific names and locations of the adults in the school who are there to assist them. If possible, the instructor should invite teachers, guidance counselors, school law enforcement personnel, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, and other adults from the school to meet the students personally.
- If the students have participated in the Refugee Academy and have been attending school, the instructor should remind students of the adults who are available to them in the school.
- The instructor can also invite the adults listed previously (e.g., teacher, guidance counselor, etc.) to reconnect the students to adults they met at the Refugee Academy.



Discussion Questions



Lead an introductory discussion on the questions below, encouraging guests to participate in the discussion and help answer questions.

- *What do you like best about school so far?*
- *What would you change?*
- *Is there anything that still confuses you about school?*
- *Who do you go to when you have a question about schoolwork?*
- *Who helps you with your homework?*
- *What do you do if you have a problem with another student?*
- *What if you cannot understand an assignment?*
- *Who can help you with problems in the cafeteria?*
- *Who can you turn to if you are feeling sad or worried?*
- *Who knows what you like to do?*
- *Who knows what you are good at, and when you need help?*
- *What does it mean when someone says, “I’ve got your back?”*
 - The instructor should explain that the students and adults in the large group will look out for each other and are available to help one another.
 - New students should know that experienced students will guide them and answer questions and “watch their back.”
 - All of the students should be reminded that the Academic Coaches, fellow students, and adults in the school “have your back.”
- At the conclusion to the discussion of the last question, the instructor should ask the students to line up in two rows behind each other, with about 2 feet of space between rows. The instructor and adult guests should also be included in the rows. **Start the rows in the front of the room.**

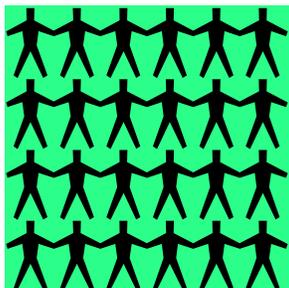
Row 1 = the front row

Row 2 = the second row, standing behind the front row

This exercise will be confusing at first, but the confusion makes it all the more enjoyable. The instructor should be giving directions and participating at the same time.

The purpose of the exercise is for the participants to realize that everyone in the room “has their back” in case they need help.

Once the two rows are formed, the instructor should instruct **Row 1** to ask together loudly, “Who’s got my back?”



Row 2 should respond loudly, “We’ve got your back!”

Row 1 should turn around and face Row 2, then ask the question again. Row 2 responds again.

Then **Row 1** should quickly move around Row 2 and line up in a row behind them. They should mix the order of their row so that it’s not the same as it was before.

The **original Row 2** (now standing in front) asks together, “Who’s got my back?” and turns around to face the row behind them.

The **original Row 1** (now standing in the second row) responds quickly with “We’ve got your back.” Then they all quickly move again.

The instructor should keep moving the rows behind each other, mixing up the people in the rows and picking up the speed. The instructor can occasionally ask one student to ask the question and the entire group should respond “We’ve got your back!”

The faster the speed the more amusing the activity, but no matter what the pace the students should comprehend that they can rely on each other.

Finish with a round of applause for each row.

- The instructor should distribute the handout *We Have Your Back!* for students to color, asking them to describe what the drawing represents. The instructor should point out that each student (circle in the center) can look in any direction and find support, not only from other refugee students and Academic Coaches, but from peers and adults in the school.



JOURNAL ACTIVITY

During the Refugee Academy, the students were encouraged to write or draw in a journal. Some students may have continued the process during school. Distribute journals (or notebooks/notebook paper), pencils, and crayons or colored pencils.

Ask the students to respond to the following question in their journals:

- *Who has my back?*



Show the videos *Scenes from School: Refugee Student Interviews*, *Scenes From School: Refugee Parent Interviews*, and *A Day at School* (Elementary, Middle School, or High School), using the **Guide to the Videos** for discussion.

OPTIONAL FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITY Grades 7-12:

In this optional follow-up activity, students recognize that they can balance self-reliance and independence with support from helpful adults.

A hand mirror or pocket mirror should be obtained for each student, wrapped as a surprise gift.

The instructor should explain to older students that there is **one person** who the students can depend on to know them the best. The instructor should ask the students who they think that person might be.

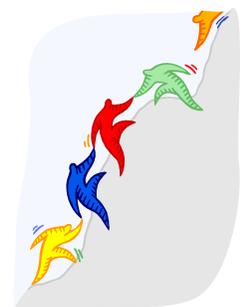
- *Who knows what you enjoy?*
- *Who knows what you are good at?*
- *Who know where you have to work harder?*
- *Who knows how to solve problems?*
- *Who knows when it's time to get help from an adult?*

The students will answer with a variety of responses, including teachers, Academic Coaches, etc.

The instructor should distribute the wrapped pocket mirrors and ask the students to open the presents. Then, asking the same questions again, the instructor should direct the students to look in the mirrors and see if they can find new answer to the questions. Stress that the students have learned a great deal in a short amount of time and they should be proud of themselves.

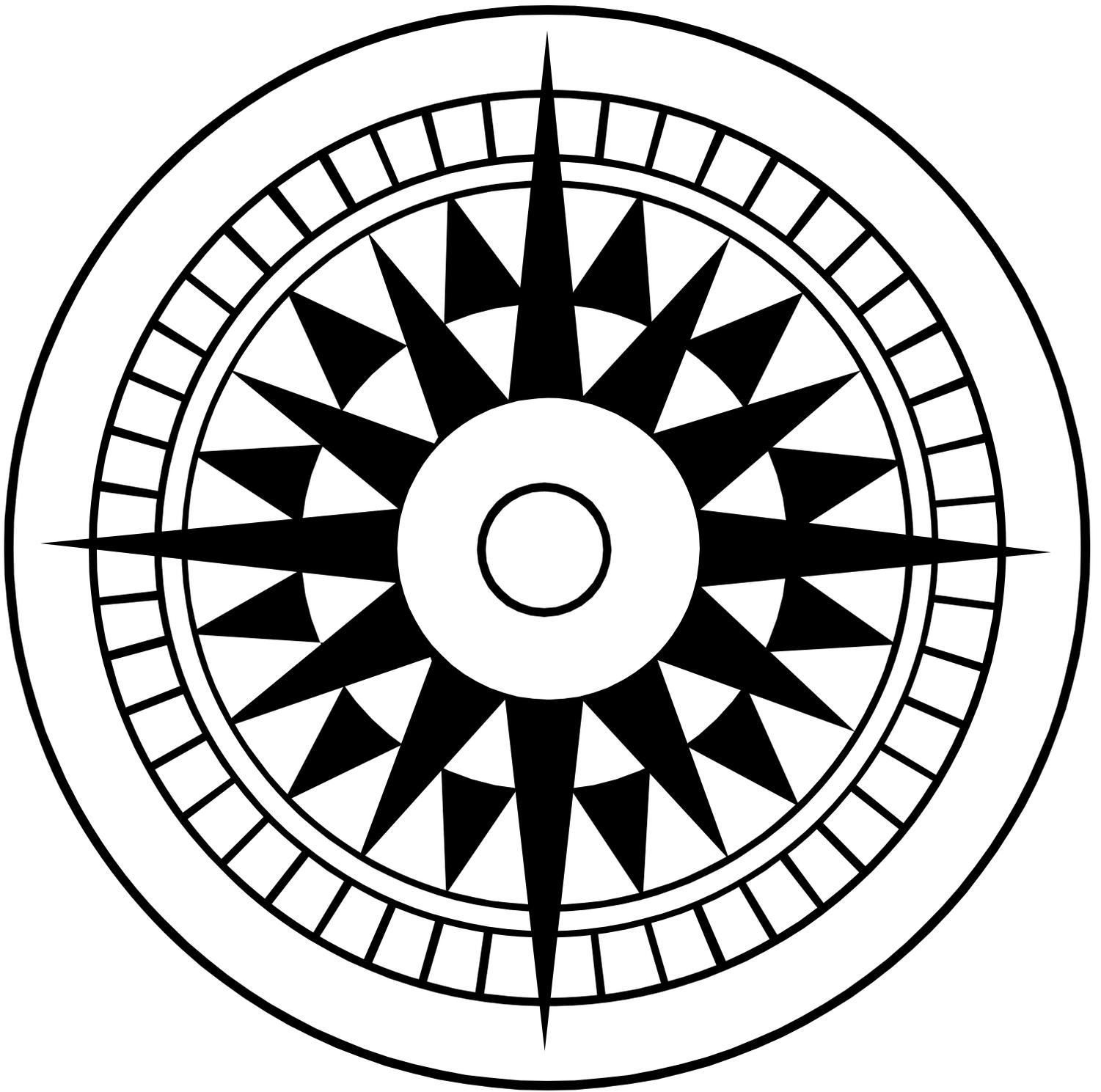
Note: Although this follow up exercise is about developing confidence and self-esteem, it is very important that older students realize that there are some problems that they cannot solve by themselves. The instructor should discuss the circumstances when students should never be afraid to ask for help, such as:

- difficulties with schoolwork
- concerns about conditions at home
- observations and concerns about safety, personal or school



- emotional problems such as fear, depression, loneliness, anger
- confusion about school procedures.

The instructor should stress that students who have confidence are never afraid to reach out to others for information and support.



Handout: We have Your Back!

ACTIVITY #6: WHAT MAKES YOU HAPPY? WHAT MAKES YOU SAD?

Grades K-12 (30 - 45 minutes)

PURPOSE

In this activity, refugee students address the topic of stress in adjusting to a new school and new culture.

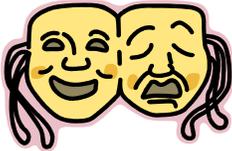


SUPPLIES

- Handout: *Show How You Feel*
- Colored pencils, crayons, or markers
- Journals

DIRECTIONS

- During the Refugee Academy, the students may have had the opportunity to participate in activities in *Module 14: Coping with Stress* from the **Welcome To Our Schools** to curriculum. (The instructor may choose to introduce or review the *Module 14* activities before conducting this activity.)



The activities in *Module 14: Coping with Stress* and this activity *What Makes You Happy? What Makes You Sad?* can be sensitive because students will be asked to share their fears and worries. The instructor should be aware that dividing the students into pairs or small groups may be more comfortable for the students, rather than asking them to express themselves in a large group.

- For all students, regardless of their time of enrollment in school, the handout *Show How You Feel* can be a starting point for discussion. Distribute pencils, colored pencils, and crayons, and ask the students to quietly complete the handout. Circulate, observing what makes the students happy and what makes them sad.
- Either divide the students into pairs or small groups to discuss their pictures, or share instructor observations with the entire class (without identifying specific pictures).
- The goal of the discussions should always be reassurance that the students have similar concerns and they can talk to each other and adults in the school about their fears and worries. The instructor should emphasize the role of the Academic Coach in providing support, and school and community resources that will help students.



JOURNAL ACTIVITY

During the Refugee Academy, the students were encouraged to write or draw in a journal. Some students may have continued the process during school. Distribute journals (or notebooks/notebook paper), pencils, and crayons or colored pencils.

Ask the students to respond to the following questions in their journals:

- *How do you feel about school?*
- *Who can you talk to about how you feel?*



Show the videos *Scenes from School: Refugee Student Interviews*, *Scenes From School: Refugee Parent Interviews*, and *A Day at School* (Elementary, Middle School, or High School), using the **Guide to the Videos** for discussion.



WHAT MAKES YOU HAPPY?

WHAT MAKES YOU SAD?

ACTIVITY #7: WHERE ARE YOU FROM?

Grades 5-12 (60 - 90 minutes)

PURPOSE

In this activity, refugee students have the opportunity to show where they are from on a large world map, as well as the travels that they took to get to the United States.



Note: The emphasis in this activity should always be on the *route* of travel. Some refugee students may be uncomfortable recalling their travel experiences, and some younger students may not remember their native countries or their travels to the United States. Instructors should determine if the students can participate comfortably in this activity.

SUPPLIES

- Large wall map of the world on a bulletin board, with room for a display
- Colored yarn
- Camera or video camera
- Computer or tape recorder
- Pushpins

DIRECTIONS

The end result of this activity will be several strands of yarn stretching on a map from the native countries of the refugee students to locations in New York State. The yarn will not show a direct route, but will follow the travel steps taken by the refugee students. Surrounding the map will be photographs and stories of the travels of the refugee students. (If the instructor determines that recalling the travels may make some students uncomfortable, the yarn can show a direct connection from a native country to New York State. The photographs and stories can be about the students and their current interests.)

- The instructor should begin by showing the students a large map of the world, identifying the location of New York State.

- The instructor should then ask each student to identify the name of their home country or the area of the world that they are from. Some students may be able to find the spot on the map. The instructors should put a pushpin in the country and then attach a piece of colored yarn (about 2 yards) to the pushpin. The student's name should be placed next to the pushpin. If there are a large number of students, or if the pushpins are clustered on one area of the map, each pushpin can be assigned a number. A key to the numbers can be placed next to the map, with the names of the students. (For example, #1 could be Maria, #2 Mohammed, etc.)
- The instructors, with assistance from the Academic Coaches, ESL teachers, and translators, should interview the students about their travels to the United States. The emphasis should be on the route that refugee students took, not on the trials and tribulations of leaving their native country and working their way toward the United States. The interviews can be recorded on a computer or on a tape recorder and then transcribed.

Sample interview questions can be:

- *What country did you live in before you left for the United States? Where was the first place that you went to after you started your travels? Where did you go after that?*
- *How did you travel? (bus, wagon, walking, plane, train, etc.)*
- *Where did you live before you came to this town?*



Some students will not remember the route that they took, or the countries that they traveled through to move toward the United States. The instructor's goal is to be able to stretch the piece of yarn from the pushpin to the United States, with additional pushpins along the way, marking the route of travel.

For example, a student may have gone through 3 countries in Africa before flying to London, then to New York City, then to another city in New York State. The yarn should show the route. (If the student is not sure, then a direct route to the United States can be shown with the piece of yarn.)

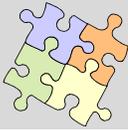
Instructors should always keep in mind that remembering the past may be difficult for some students, so emphasis should always be on plotting the route on the map, and not on the challenges of leaving home. If remembering the travel experiences will be stressful to the students, then the yarn should simply go from the native country to New York State.

- The instructor should then take a photograph of each student, with permission from the student. (Instructors should recognize that in some cultures the taking of photographs is not allowed.)

The photographs, labeled with the name of the students, should be displayed around the map, each with a paragraph that describes the route of travel. Those who view the display should be able to look at the photo of the student, read the

paragraph about their travels, and then follow their route by finding their pushpin and following the yarn to New York State.

- Instructors may wish to videotape the students talking about their travels, and then show the video on a television located next to the map.
- The display can also be a portable exhibit that can be moved to different classrooms so that many students get the chance to discuss what travels were necessary for the refugee students to come to America.



Discussion Questions



After the display is completed, the instructor can discuss the following with the refugee students and share these discussion questions with classroom teachers:

- *What countries are the students from?*
- *How did they travel?*
- *Where did the students live before they came to our town?*
- *Who traveled the farthest? Who had many stops along the way?*
- *What was it like to travel so far?*



JOURNAL ACTIVITY

During the Refugee Academy, the students were encouraged to write or draw in a journal. Some students may have continued the process during school. Distribute journals (or notebooks/notebook paper), pencils, and crayons or colored pencils.

Ask students to respond to the following question in their journals:

- *Do you plan on traveling when you grow up? Where would you go and how would you travel?*



Show the videos *Scenes from School: Refugee Student Interviews*, *Scenes From School: Refugee Parent Interviews*, and *A Day at School* (Elementary, Middle School, or High School), using the **Guide to the Videos** for discussion.

ACTIVITY #8: SCRAPBOOK FOR NEWCOMERS

Grades K-12 (120 minutes)

PURPOSE



In this activity, refugee students have the opportunity to create a scrapbook that will inform newcomer refugee students about what to expect in American schools.

SUPPLIES

- Cameras (at least one for each group of 4 students)
- Scrapbook album with 20+ pages
- Colored paper and scissors
- Glue/paste
- Colored markers
- Computer
- Computer software for printing photographs (or other source for printing photos)
- Journal



Optional:

- Scrapbook supplies, available from craft stores, online sites and stores that specialize in scrapbooking or scrapbook clubs (stickers, colored paper shapes, printed letters, illustrations, labels, etc.)

Instructors may want to invite a local scrapbook expert to show examples of how scrapbook pages can be enhanced with scrapbooking supplies.

- Video *A Day at School* (Elementary, Middle School, or High School version)

DIRECTIONS

- The instructor should explain to the refugee students that they are going to be making a scrapbook that will be shown to new refugee students as they enroll in school. The scrapbook will depict refugee students participating in school activities, with a written description that provides additional information. The

scrapbook will consist of photographs, drawn illustrations, and decorations that enhance the photographs.

- The students can work in pairs or in small groups, depending on the number of available cameras. The students will be responsible for taking pictures of routine school activities, such as:
 - Using a locker
 - Changing into sneakers for physical education
 - Loading a backpack
 - Filling out notebook paper with name and date
 - Raising hands in class
 - Paying for lunch in the cafeteria
 - Cheering for a sports team.

- The instructor should ask the students to generate a list of activities that they would like to photograph, reminding the students that they should capture basic activities that may be unfamiliar to the newcomers.

- The instructor may want to show the large group the video *A Day in School* (selecting the Elementary, Middle School, or High School version) for examples of what can be included in the scrapbook.

- The instructor should emphasize that the students are not to interfere with ongoing school activities and should gain permission from other students as they take the pictures. Teachers and administrators can also be included in the scrapbook, as long as permission has been granted to take photographs.

- The instructor should monitor the students as they cover the school grounds taking pictures. The students should be able to explain what they are doing, and should concentrate on limiting the photographs to the purpose of the project. The instructor should encourage the refugee students to include themselves in the photos.



Once the photos have been collected, selected, and printed, the organization of the scrapbook should be developed. The students can determine the sequence of the photos, and then divide up the pages to be decorated. They may wish to show sections such as *transportation*, *classroom activities*, and *after-school sports*, or they may wish to show the timeline of a school day.

- The instructor can divide up the pages among the students, providing colored paper, markers, stickers, and scrapbooking materials, if available. The students should glue the photographs, write or dictate information about what is shown in the photo, and decorate the page with related illustrations, vocabulary, and other decorations.

The students should include their names on an Author Page, as well as an introduction that explains the purpose of the scrapbook.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITY

- As a follow-up activity, the refugee students who created the scrapbook can be responsible for meeting individually with newcomers and showing the pages of the scrapbook, to help the students acclimate to their new school.

The instructor should make sure that school administrators, guidance counselors, Academic Coaches, and teachers are aware of the scrapbook as a resource for discussing school with newcomers.



Discussion Questions



After the activity is completed, the instructor can discuss the following questions with the refugee students:

- *What would you want new students to know about the school? Did you include it in the scrapbook?*
- *Would you enjoy making a scrapbook of your own? What would you include in the scrapbook?* (Students can make scrapbooks about their native country and family traditions, new friends, life in the new school, plans for the future, favorite hobbies, etc.)



JOURNAL ACTIVITY

During the Refugee Academy, the students were encouraged to write or draw in a journal. Some students may have continued the process during school. Distribute journals (or notebooks/notebook paper), pencils, and crayons or colored pencils.

- *If I were sharing the scrapbook with a new student, what would I want to tell the student as we looked at the scrapbook pages?*



Show the videos *Scenes from School: Refugee Student Interviews*, *Scenes From School: Refugee Parent Interviews*, and *A Day at School* (Elementary, Middle School, or High School), using the **Guide to the Videos** for discussion.

ACTIVITY #9: COMPLETING ASSIGNMENTS IS REWARDING!

Grades 1-12 (60 minutes)

PURPOSE

In this activity students will have the opportunity to create a personal assignment notebook that will help them organize their studying, and will reward themselves for completing assignments on time.

SUPPLIES

- 3-ring binder for each student
- Blank 3-hole-punched paper, any color
- Handout: *Assignment Sheet* (Monday - Friday)
- Colored pens, pencils, or markers, crayons



Optional: Colored stars or other stickers

DIRECTIONS

- The instructor should make one set of the handout *Assignment Sheet* (Monday - Friday) per student and ask the students to insert the handout pages into a 3-ring binder.
- The instructor should then explain to the students that good study habits begin with writing down assignments. Using the *Assignment Sheet*, the instructor can demonstrate how the form is filled out every day for each class.
- The instructor should discuss the importance of developing habits when writing down assignments. Students who develop the habit of writing down every assignment as soon as it is given are more organized and prepared for class.
- The instructor should explain when and how teachers will give assignments. Some teachers will distribute a syllabus, some will write assignments on the board, and some will announce assignments at the end of class. Students in grades 1-12 will have assignments to complete either in class or as homework.
- The instructor can review the Key Ideas in *Module 9: Study Skills* in the *Refugee Academy Curriculum*.

- The instructor should discuss the importance of the students taking responsibility for checking their assignment notebook every night and recording the status of their assignments. Do they need to ask for help the next day? Checking the **Ask for Help** box will remind them to consult with teachers, tutors, ESL teachers, or Academic Coaches. Is there more to do on the assignment? Checking the **More to Do** box and drawing or writing a note about what else needs to be done, will remind students that they have not yet completed the assignment.

For new students, the concept of many different subjects and teachers, resulting in many different types of assignments, may be bewildering. The instructor should reassure the students that if they record their assignments daily, they will see how they can keep track of their work and monitor deadlines.

- The instructor can guide the group in completing the handout *Assignment Sheet* with imaginary assignments that the instructor provides.
- After discussing and practicing the recording of assignments, the instructor should discuss the value of establishing *personal* incentives and awards for completing assignments. Many students rely on teachers and parents to monitor their assignments, check their homework, and reward them when they have done well on their schoolwork. If the students establish their own reward system, they are more inclined to be invested in completing the work so that they can earn a reward. The instructor should point out that the students themselves should assume the responsibility for keeping track of their assignments and completing them on time, and should develop their own personal reward system.

In this case, the reward system should be the development of a personal symbol that is recorded on the *Assignment Sheet*. Every time an assignment is completed, the student checks the box next to **Done!** and then draws their own personal symbol next to the **Reward** box. The goal is to have an *Assignment Sheet* covered with reward symbols.

Suggested symbols are:



- The word “congratulations” in a native language



- A star, exclamation point, smile, sun, or other cheerful symbol



- A drawing of something personal such as a family pet or favorite flower



- A series of colored shapes that represent the type of assignment, such as a blue triangle for easy work, a yellow circle for fun assignments, and a red square for work that was hard, but finished on time.

Although a written symbol may not seem like a significant reward to adults, it is important to the students because *they* get to determine if they have earned it. The students can develop internal motivation, rather than relying on adults to determine whether they deserve recognition or not.

The students should be encouraged to share their personal reward system with their teachers and Academic Coaches, so that their progress in achieving the rewards can be acknowledged and monitored. Emphasis should always be on the *tracking and completion* of the work, to encourage the development of organizational skills so that students can get their assignments done on time. Classroom teachers can work with the students on the *quality* of the work, encouraging them not only to get the assignments done on time, but to make sure that they are done carefully and accurately.

If available, the instructor can also provide stickers, gold stars, pencils, and other forms of rewards that can be given to students. However, the personal symbols on the *Assignment Sheet* should be stressed so that the students look forward to rewarding themselves, rather than waiting for the instructor to check on their completion of assignments and then distribute tangible rewards. The ultimate goal is for the students to feel motivated to complete their assignments because they feel a sense of accomplishment, not because they will receive something from the teacher.

After discussing the process of recording and rewarding assignments, the instructor should ask the students to create a cover page for their 3-ring binder. They can decorate a blank sheet of 3-hole-punched paper to insert in the beginning of their 3-ring assignment binder. The students should be encouraged to include pictures of their personal reward systems in the illustrations on their cover pages.



Discussion Questions



- *When will you write down your assignments?*
- *What will you do if you don't understand the assignment?*
- *Where will you get help with your assignments?*
- *What will be your reward symbol for completing an assignment?*
- *Will you reward yourself if you hurried through the assignment and did not work your hardest?*
- *Who will you tell about your reward system?*



JOURNAL ACTIVITY

During the Refugee Academy, the students were encouraged to write or draw in a journal. Some students may have continued the process during school. Distribute journals (or notebooks/notebook paper), pencils, and crayons or colored pencils.

- *When will I write down my assignments, and when will I check to make sure that I have completed all of my work?*
- *Where will I go for help if I have trouble completing my assignments, so that I don't fall too far behind?*



Show the videos *Scenes from School: Refugee Student Interviews*, *Scenes From School: Refugee Parent Interviews*, and *A Day at School* (Elementary, Middle School, or High School), using the **Guide to the Videos** for discussion.

ASSIGNMENTS - MONDAY

MATH

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for help | <input type="checkbox"/> More to do |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Done! | <input type="checkbox"/> Reward |

READING or ENGLISH

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for help | <input type="checkbox"/> More to do |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Completed | <input type="checkbox"/> Reward |

SOCIAL STUDIES

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for help | <input type="checkbox"/> More to do |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Completed | <input type="checkbox"/> Reward |

SCIENCE

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for help | <input type="checkbox"/> More to do |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Completed | <input type="checkbox"/> Reward |

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for help | <input type="checkbox"/> More to do |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Completed | <input type="checkbox"/> Reward |

Handout: Assignment Sheet

ASSIGNMENTS - TUESDAY

MATH

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for help | <input type="checkbox"/> More to do |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Done! | <input type="checkbox"/> Reward |

READING or ENGLISH

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for help | <input type="checkbox"/> More to do |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Completed | <input type="checkbox"/> Reward |

SOCIAL STUDIES

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for help | <input type="checkbox"/> More to do |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Completed | <input type="checkbox"/> Reward |

SCIENCE

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for help | <input type="checkbox"/> More to do |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Completed | <input type="checkbox"/> Reward |

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for help | <input type="checkbox"/> More to do |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Completed | <input type="checkbox"/> Reward |

Handout: Assignment Sheet

ASSIGNMENTS - WEDNESDAY

MATH

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for help | <input type="checkbox"/> More to do |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Done! | <input type="checkbox"/> Reward |

READING or ENGLISH

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for help | <input type="checkbox"/> More to do |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Completed | <input type="checkbox"/> Reward |

SOCIAL STUDIES

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for help | <input type="checkbox"/> More to do |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Completed | <input type="checkbox"/> Reward |

SCIENCE

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for help | <input type="checkbox"/> More to do |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Completed | <input type="checkbox"/> Reward |

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for help | <input type="checkbox"/> More to do |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Completed | <input type="checkbox"/> Reward |

Handout: Assignment Sheet

ASSIGNMENTS - THURSDAY

MATH

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for help | <input type="checkbox"/> More to do |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Done! | <input type="checkbox"/> Reward |

READING or ENGLISH

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for help | <input type="checkbox"/> More to do |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Completed | <input type="checkbox"/> Reward |

SOCIAL STUDIES

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for help | <input type="checkbox"/> More to do |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Completed | <input type="checkbox"/> Reward |

SCIENCE

- | | |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for help | <input type="checkbox"/> More to do |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Completed | <input type="checkbox"/> Reward |

Handout: Assignment Sheet

ASSIGNMENTS - FRIDAY

MATH

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for help | <input type="checkbox"/> More to do |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Done! | <input type="checkbox"/> Reward |

READING or ENGLISH

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for help | <input type="checkbox"/> More to do |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Completed | <input type="checkbox"/> Reward |

SOCIAL STUDIES

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for help | <input type="checkbox"/> More to do |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Completed | <input type="checkbox"/> Reward |

SCIENCE

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for help | <input type="checkbox"/> More to do |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Completed | <input type="checkbox"/> Reward |

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for help | <input type="checkbox"/> More to do |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Completed | <input type="checkbox"/> Reward |

Handout: Assignment Sheet

ACTIVITY #10: SCHOOL RULES THEATER

Grades K-12 (60 minutes)

PURPOSE

In this activity, new and experienced refugee students will have the opportunity to review and practice school rules by observing skits presented by volunteer non-refugee students.



SUPPLIES

- Six volunteer non-refugee students from the local school who are willing to role-play. (Instructors may want to invite a theatre class or Drama Club to assist with this activity.)
- Classroom setup to be used as a stage setting for role-playing (4-6 desks, chalkboard, teacher's desk, doorway) with enough room to simulate a hallway and space for gym or recess
- Props for the role-playing (determined by the actors)
- Locker set up in class (or a large box designed to simulate a locker), overfilled and disorganized

DIRECTIONS

- The instructor should meet with six non-refugee students who have volunteered to role-play examples of school rules. The volunteer students will be demonstrating the incorrect way to behave in school, followed by the correct way to behave. The volunteer students should know that they are helping refugee students to review basic school rules. The emphasis should be on having fun while informing refugee students about what is expected of them in school. The instructor will provide the skit topics (see below).

The volunteer students should assume the roles of teacher, students, and principal. Each acting assignment (see below) should be a skit, demonstrating the inappropriate way of behaving in school and then the appropriate behavior.

It is important that the volunteer actors understand that they can speak aloud in English, but their acting should be heavily dependent on *acting out* the scene because the refugee students may not understand English. The volunteer actors can exaggerate their behaviors, expressions, and reactions.

- The volunteer actors may need time before the activity to work out their skits, or they can take a few minutes to plan right before they show each skit. They may also wish to gather props such as textbooks, a whistle for gym class, chewing gum, etc.
- Before the skits begin, the instructor should ask all of the volunteers and the refugee students to introduce themselves. Then the instructor can explain that the volunteer students are going to demonstrate school rules.
- The instructor should read the following acting assignments, one at a time. The instructor should ask the refugee students to decide which of the skits depict students following school rules. Refugee students who are experienced in attending an American school may be familiar with what is appropriate, but new refugee students will be learning the school rules for the first time.

Acting Assignments:

1. Show how you are NOT to enter a classroom, sit in class, raise your hand, and disrupt class by chewing gum, interrupting, and distracting other students. One or more students can misbehave while the others are the teacher and other students.
2. Now show the appropriate way to behave in class.
3. Show the inappropriate way to behave in the hallway and maintain a locker. (Note: The instructor will have to explain the part of the classroom that is to be the stage for the hallway.) The locker is overstuffed and disorganized. The principal is walking down the noisy, rambunctious hallway.
4. Now demonstrate how to organize the locker and behave appropriately in the hallway.
5. Show how students should NOT behave in gym class, with a student not participating, another being too rough, and another student hiding the ball or generally disrupting the activity. One student should be clearly left out of the activity. The “coach” can keep trying to get the attention of the gym class.
6. Now show how students play together effectively as a team and include new students.
7. Show how a student is completely disorganized.
8. Now demonstrate how different students keep themselves organized with binders, backpacks, assignment notebooks, etc.



Discussion Questions



- *What are some school rules that you learned today?*
- *What will you do when you are not sure about school rules?*



JOURNAL ACTIVITY

During the Refugee Academy, the students were encouraged to write or draw in a journal. Some students may have continued the process during school. Distribute journals (or notebooks/notebook paper), pencils, and crayons or colored pencils.

- *What school rules surprised you?*



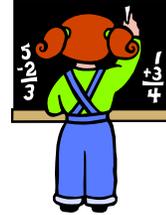
Show the videos *Scenes from School: Refugee Student Interviews*, *Scenes From School: Refugee Parent Interviews*, and *A Day at School* (Elementary, Middle School, or High School), using the **Guide to the Videos** for discussion.

ACTIVITY #11: LOOK WHAT I CAN DO!

Grades K-12 (60 minutes)

PURPOSE

In this activity, students have the opportunity to reflect upon what they have learned so far in their new school, and share what they have learned with their families.



SUPPLIES

- Multiple copies of each of the handouts: *Look What I Can Do!* (Handouts in stacks on a table)
- Colored pencils, crayons, markers
- Journal

DIRECTIONS

- The instructor should begin the activity by asking the students about what they have learned in their new school, such as:
 - How the cafeteria works
 - What subjects are taught
 - What supplies they need
 - What the classroom rules are
 - What teachers want and do
 - How to behave in the halls
 - What the school rules are
 - Techniques for staying organized
 - What skills they have
 - What interests and talents they did not know that they had
 - How technology is used
 - How families are involved in the school.

- The instructor should ask the students to gather around the table of handouts and look at each handout carefully. Then each student should be asked to select the handouts that depict something new that they have learned about in school.

The students can select as many handouts as are relevant, or the instructor can limit the number of handouts that the students can take.

- The instructor should explain to the students that they are to color the handouts and then take them home to share with their families, showing examples of what they have learned in their new school



Discussion Questions



- *Show me the handouts that you selected. What have you learned?*
- *What will you tell your family about what you have learned?*



JOURNAL ACTIVITY

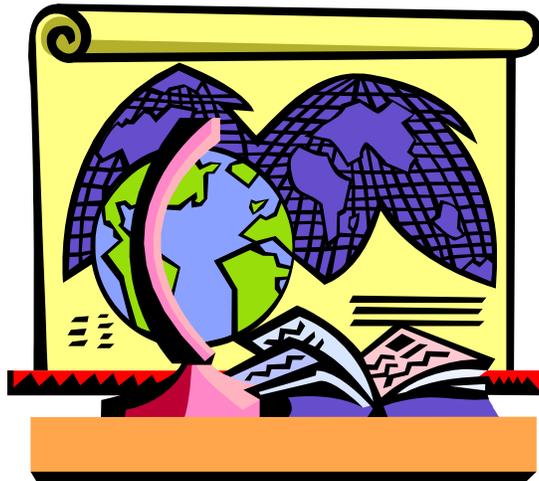
During the Refugee Academy, the students were encouraged to write or draw in a journal. Some students may have continued the process during school. Distribute journals (or notebooks/notebook paper), pencils, and crayons or colored pencils.

- *Beyond the pictures that I colored, what else have I learned in my new school?*



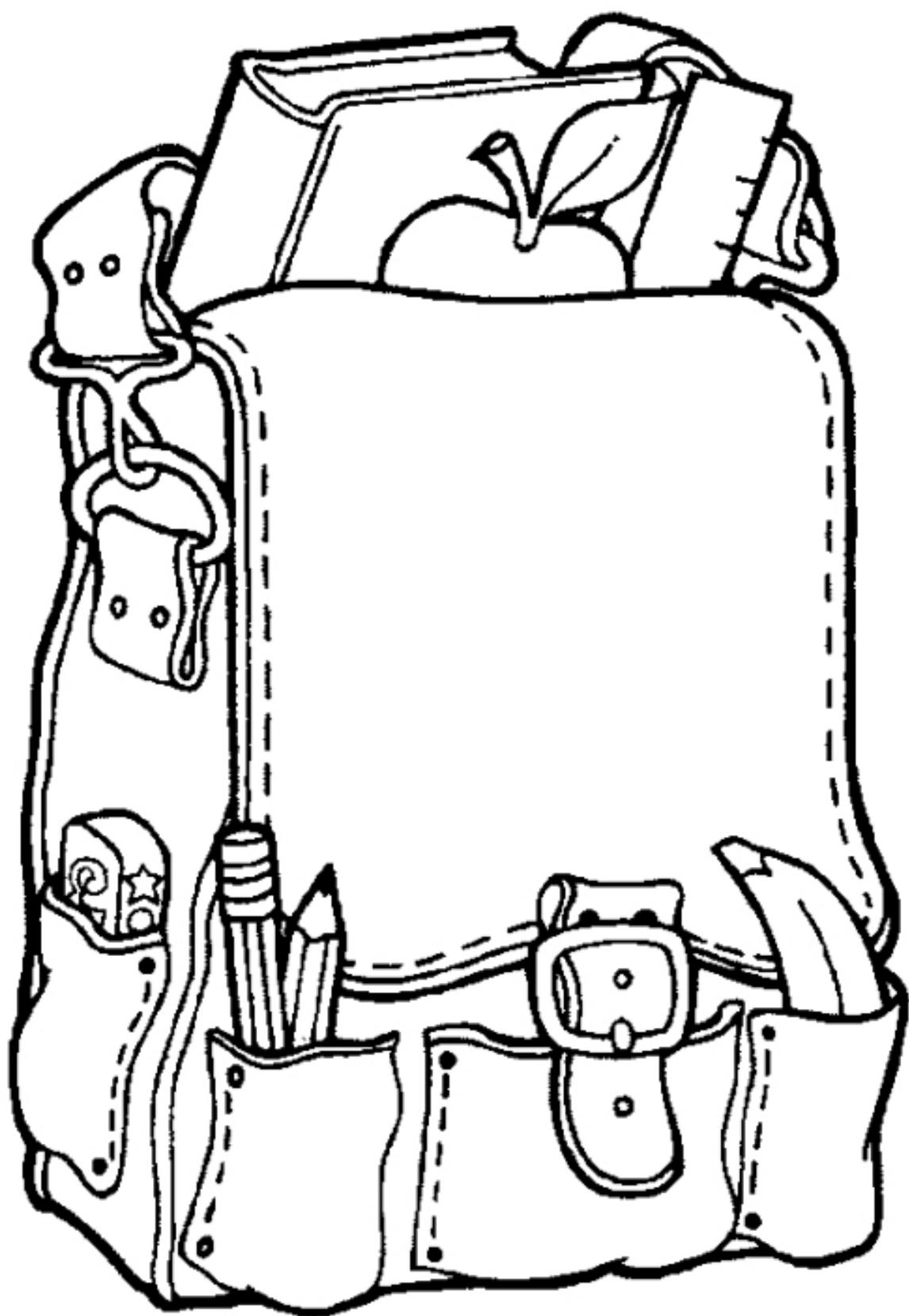
Show the videos *Scenes from School: Refugee Student Interviews*, *Scenes From School: Refugee Parent Interviews*, and *A Day at School* (Elementary, Middle School, or High School), using the **Guide to the Videos** for discussion.

Mini-Academy Activity 11



Look What I Can Do!

**Handouts
Pictures to Color**



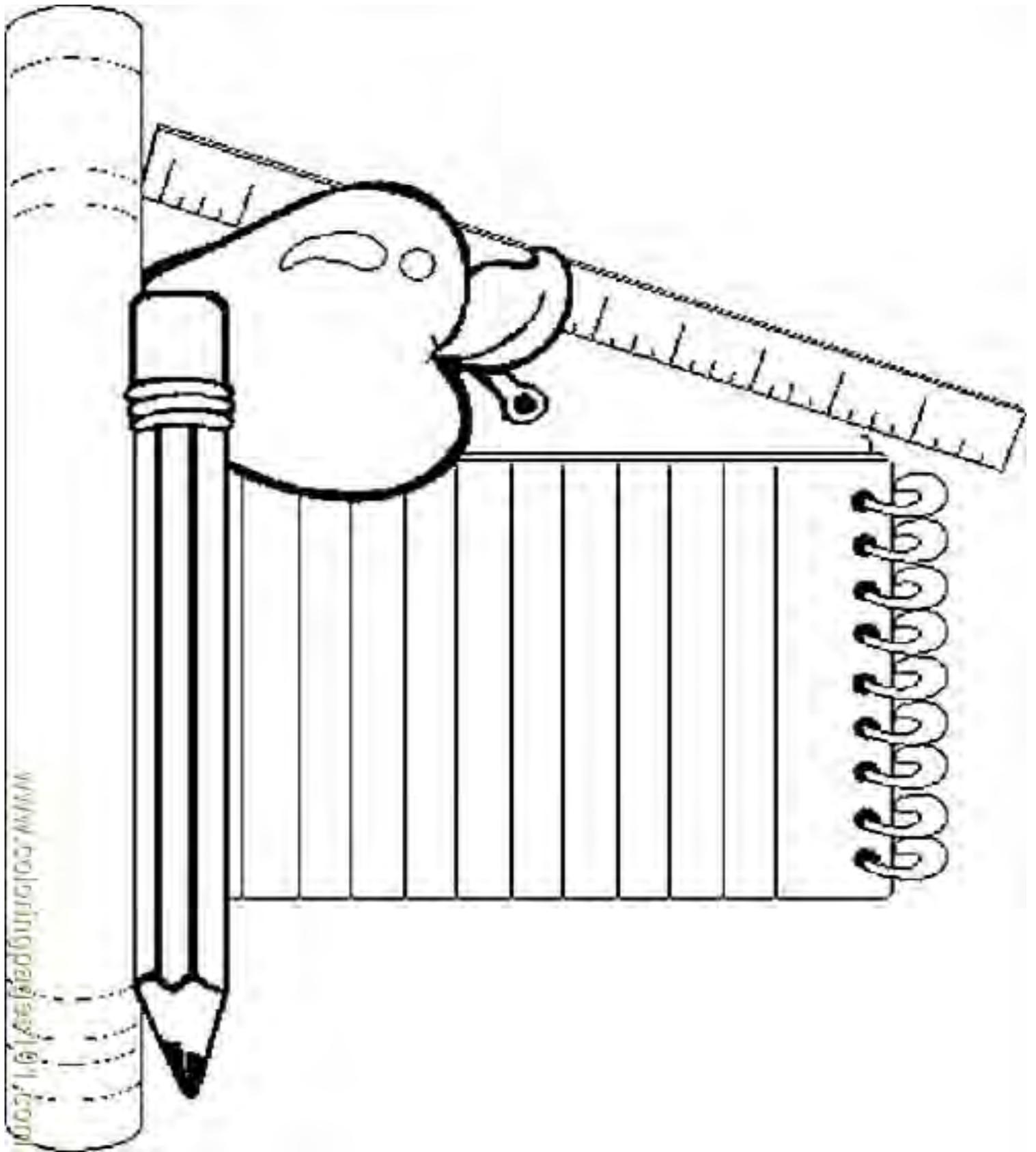
Activity 11 - Handout 1



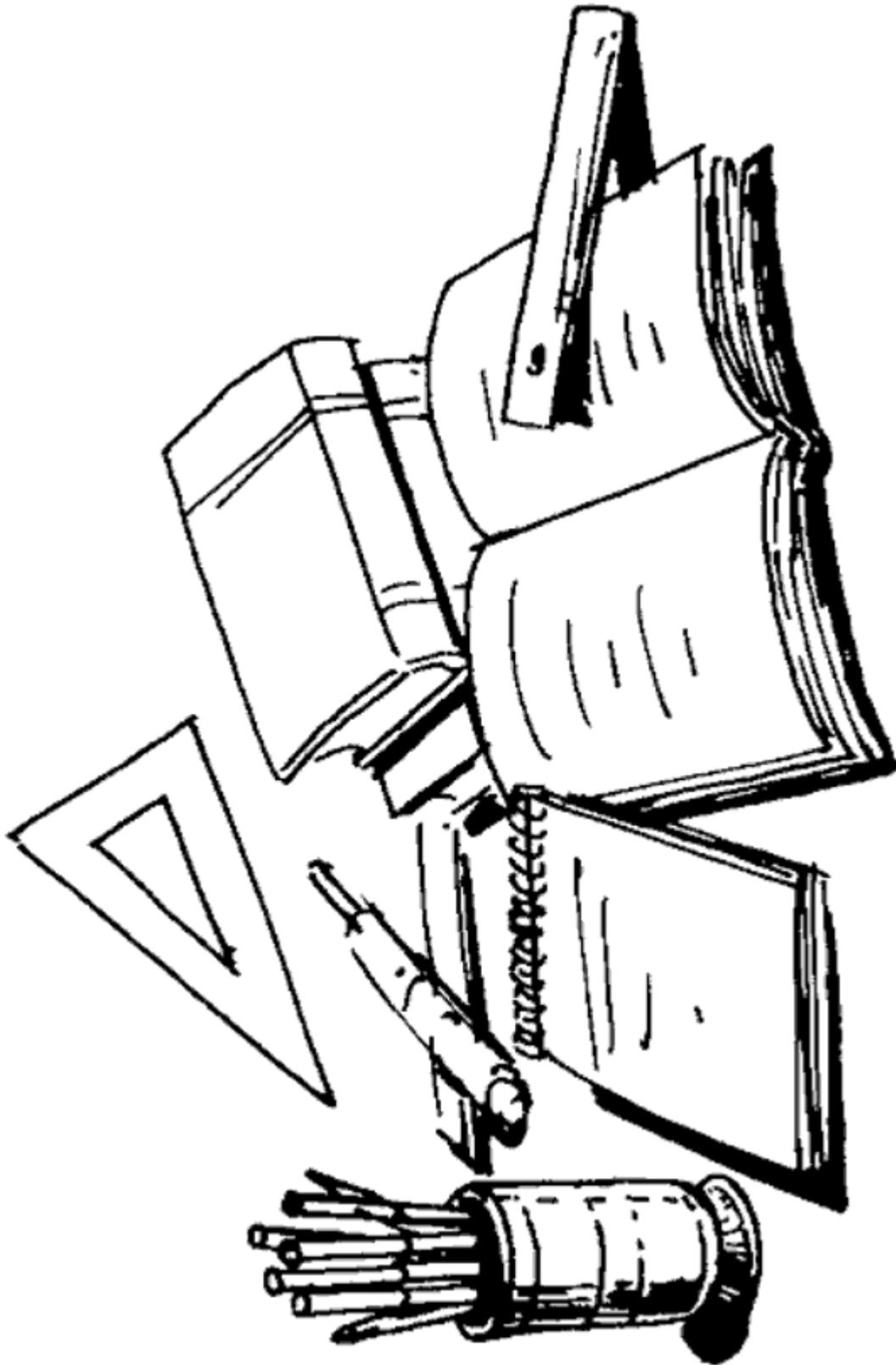
Activity 11 - Handout 2



Activity 11 - Handout 3

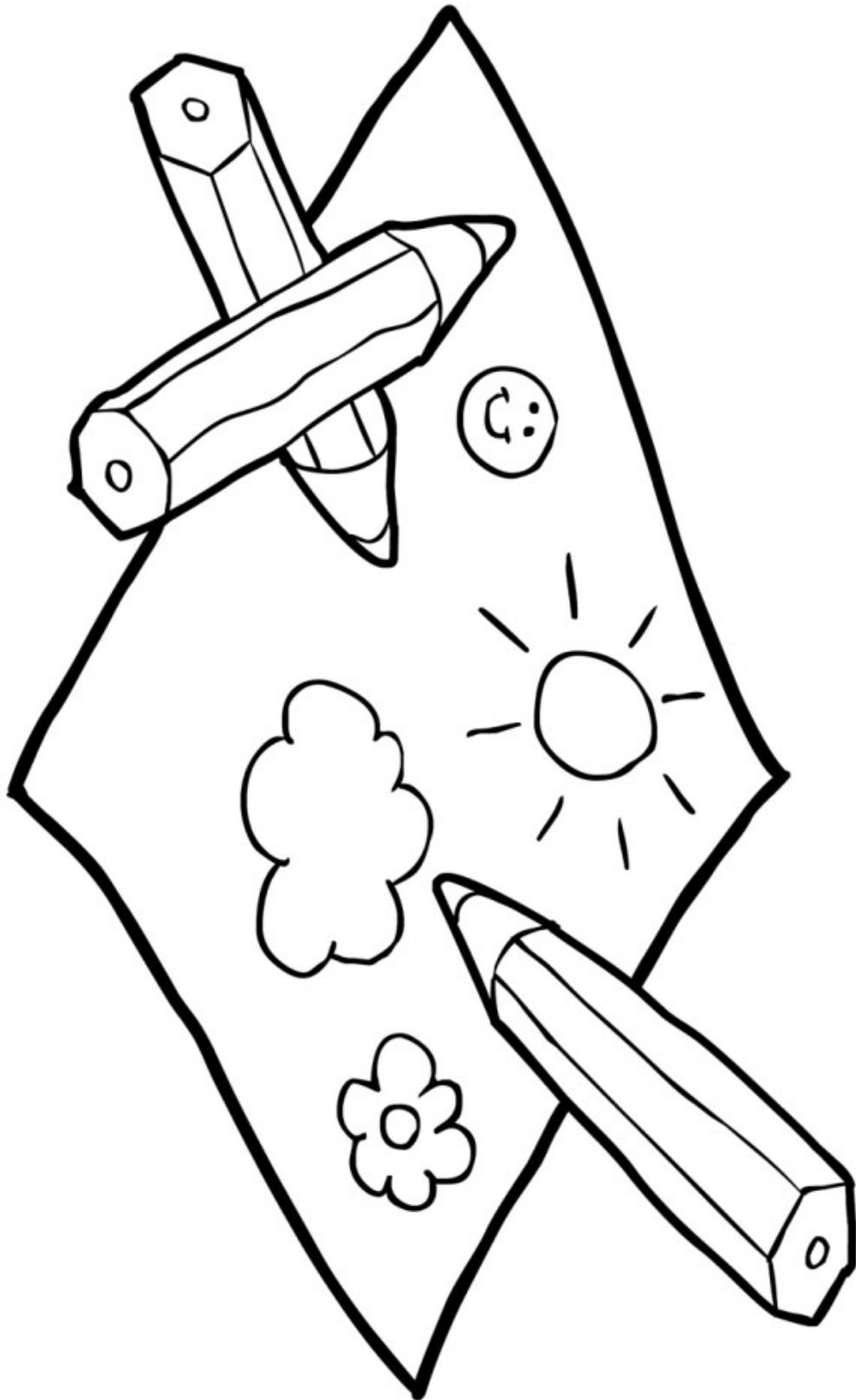


Activity 11 - Handout 4



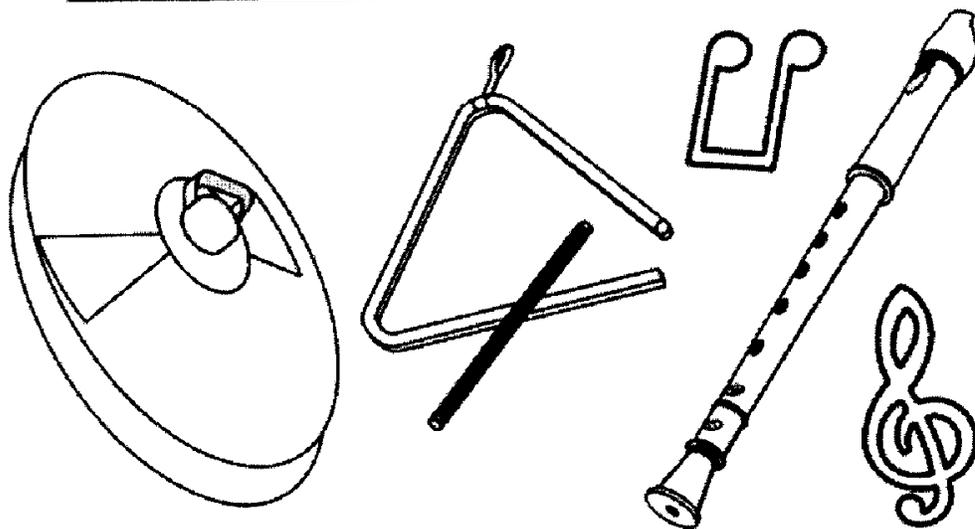
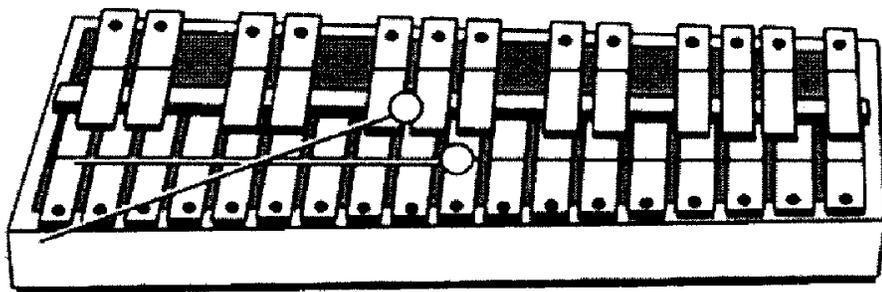
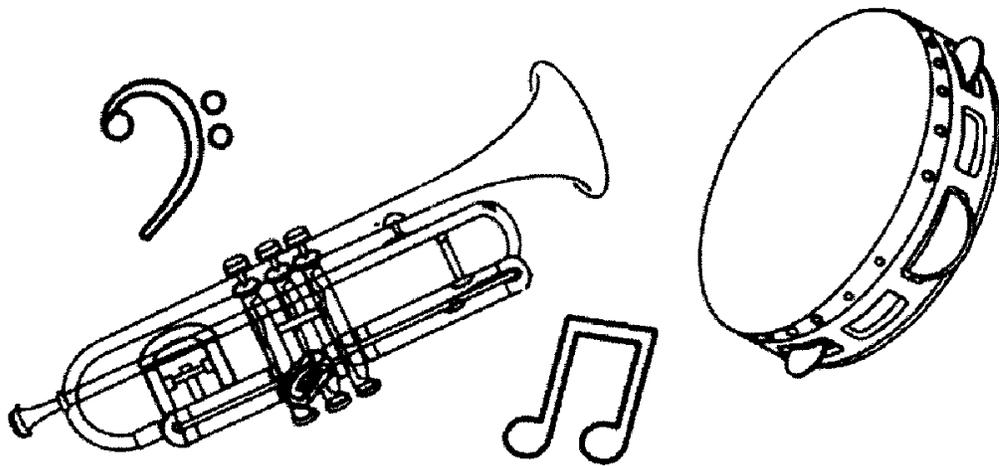
Activity 11 - Handout 5







Activity 11 - Handout 8



Activity 11 - Handout 9



Welcome to Our Schools

Parent Programs





Welcome to Our Schools

Parent Program 1: Welcome

PURPOSE

The purpose of the two Parent Programs is to provide information about American schools, reassuring parents that the Academic Coaches will provide guidance and support to refugee students and their parents throughout the school year, beginning with the Refugee Academy.

OBJECTIVES



The objectives of the Parent Programs are to:

- Reassure parents that the Refugee Academy and the Academic Coaches will provide guidance and support to refugee students.
- Inform parents of the goals and activities of the Refugee Academy.
- Inform parents that even if they do not understand what their children are learning in school, they can be involved in education by showing interest, encouragement, and support for hard work and achievement.
- Provide accurate information about the expectations and procedures of American schools, and refute myths and misinformation.
- Build communication between school personnel and parents.
- Build communication among refugee parents.
- Inform parents about school and community resources for students and families.
- Inform parents about school-related paperwork that will facilitate enrollment and preparation for school.
- Inform parents about parental responsibilities in preparing students for school.

FORMAT

The format of the Parent Programs should be a combination of presentations by the Academic Coaches and other school personnel, tours of the school, and discussions related to the details of preparing students for school.



The Academic Coaches should organize the programs, selecting the activities that will be included so that they are connected to the Refugee Academy.

The activities of the Parent Programs can be implemented in any order, depending upon the amount of time available. The activities selected may be determined by:

- the comfort level of the parents and their familiarity with the school and the Refugee Academy
- the number of languages that need to be translated during the program
- the needs and concerns of the parents
- access to school facilities
- the topics and questions that have been raised by the students in the Academy
- the number of parents attending and their connections with each other
- the arrangements that have been made for child care and transportation.

The Academic Coaches and other presenters can determine the pace of the Parent Programs, recognizing that modification of the agenda may have to be made as the programs progress. They should allow significant time for questions and for a general review of the material that has been covered during the program. The presenters should keep in mind that the background of the participants may range from significant experience with formal education programs to no experience at all.

It is also important to recognize that the information provided in the Parent Programs can be overwhelming and confusing to parents, especially if they are trying to learn new terminology, listen to the translator, and understand what the Academic Coaches are explaining. Teachers of English as a Second Language and translators will be critical participants in the presentations.

Repeatedly reassure parents that the information will be reviewed with the students and at the second parent meeting. Provide contact information, and make it clear that parents can call the Academic Coaches at any time.

Parent Program 1: Welcome



Supplies (Parent Program 1)

- 1) Student Handout 1-1: *Please Visit Our School* should be distributed to students in the Refugee Academy during the first session. Follow up with phone calls and a second copy of the handout to achieve parent attendance.
- 2) Post signs with pictures and arrows outside of the school and throughout the hallways to direct parents to the Parent Program. Volunteer greeters and translators would be especially helpful in welcoming parents to the Parent Program.
- 3) If possible, provide refreshments.



- 4) Handouts (provided at the end of Parent Program 1.)

Student Handouts (in this order)	
Number & Grade Level of Handout	Name of Handout
8-2 (grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12)	Academic Coach
1-2 (grades K-5)	School Supplies
1-3 (grades 6-8, 9-12)	School Supplies
3-1 (grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12)	Getting to School
3-2 (grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12)	School Subjects
2-1 (grades K-5)	After-School Activities
2-2 (grades 6-8, 9-12)	After-School Activities
13-1 (grades K-5)	School-Home Communication
13-2 (grades K-5)	School Events
Parent Handouts	
1	Academic Coach Information
2	Tardy Note
3	Absent Note

- 5) Teacher-prepared supply lists for September (if available)
- 6) School map, modified with illustrations
- 7) Sample school lunches
- 8) Video *A Day In School* (Elementary, Middle School, or High School)
- 9) Video *Refugee Parent Interviews*

ACTIVITIES

PARENT PROGRAM 1

- **Discuss Parent Handout #1: *Academic Coach Contact Information*.**

- **Invite parents to introduce themselves, if it seems appropriate.**
Parents who are familiar with the school and the Academic Coaches, or have had a chance to meet other parents, may be willing to introduce themselves. Some parents, however, may be nervous or wary, and unwilling to speak up.

Make the introductions informal by asking each individual to give their name and their native country and then finding the country on the map. Follow up with school-related questions, such as:

Have you ever been in this school?

Have you had a chance to meet any other parents?

Was the room easy to find?

- **Distribute maps of the schools** that the children will be attending. Use a chalkboard, overhead, or LCD projector to point out different aspects of the school facilities. If possible, add illustrations to the rooms on the map to show the purpose of the rooms (e.g., science equipment, swimming pool, basketball hoop, desks, musical instruments).

The maps should be used to familiarize the parents with the variety of educational programs offered by the school district.

The maps can also be used as a guide when parents tour the school.



Show the video *A Day In Elementary School (or Middle School or High School)*, using the **Guide to the Videos.**

Prior to the viewing of the video, suggest scenes that the parents should look for such as school supplies, classroom activities, and lunch in the cafeteria. After showing the video, highlight scenes that would be of interest to the parents and discuss any questions that they may have about a day in school.

- **Review the packet of Student Handouts** (see Supplies) that have been used in the Refugee Academy. Explain that students have received the same handouts and the parents can use them to discuss with their children how they all can prepare for the new school.



Show the video *Refugee Parent Interviews*. Discuss questions from the *Guide to the Videos*.

- **Discuss *Parent Handout 2: Tardy Note* and *3: Absent Note*.** Explain the school policies about punctuality and attendance.
- **Discuss how parents can facilitate the development of student friendships**, as discussed with the students in Module 2. The primary role of the parents, especially with secondary level students, is to inform their children that it takes time to build new friendships, they should choose their friends carefully, and they have a better chance of developing friendships if they participate in a number of school activities.



Discuss opportunities for after-school and community activities.

- **Discuss the school lunch program**, explaining to parents that the students can either bring their lunch in a lunch box or bag, or can purchase all or part of their lunch at school. Discuss the paperwork required for free lunch, explaining how the parents can get assistance in completing the forms. Emphasize that the information is confidential.

Show the parents examples of typical school lunches that might be served in the cafeteria. Discuss the social aspects of the cafeteria and how the students may be very clear about what they bring for lunch.

- **Discuss the different forms of transportation available** to students going to and from school, and when they attend after-school and athletic events. Stress that a strict transportation schedule is followed by school and city busses, and students are expected to be at school on time.

If possible pass out bus schedules or specific information about the bus or subway that each child will be taking to school.

Describe the availability of a “late bus” if the school offers bussing for after-school activities. Explain that occasionally students will go on a bus or a class field trip and will need parental permission.

Some parents will be literate in their own language, or many languages including English. They will be able to take notes as the Academic Coaches are explaining the responsibilities of parents.

Other parents will not only be unfamiliar with the English language, they may not be literate in their native language. Draw illustrations on the board that parents can use to remind them of tasks they need to do in order to help their children prepare for school.

- **Tour the school building**, even if it is not the building that the students will be attending. Draw a picture of the route of the tour beforehand, explaining to parents what they will see. During the tour tell the parents what the students have been learning in the Refugee Academy. Point out the:



- “Main” office where parents check in when they enter the school
- School store
- Lockers and locker combinations
- Cafeteria, including the process of getting a tray, moving through the line, paying for lunch, and buying items from vending machines
- Gymnasium, including locker rooms and locked storage for gym clothes, facilities, outdoor athletic fields, equipment, and trophy showcases
- Science labs/Computer labs
- Offices of the administrators, guidance department, and Academic Coaches
- Auditorium, with information about school events for parents
- Art and Music rooms
- Nurse’s office
- Library
- Water fountains and rest rooms

Academic Coach



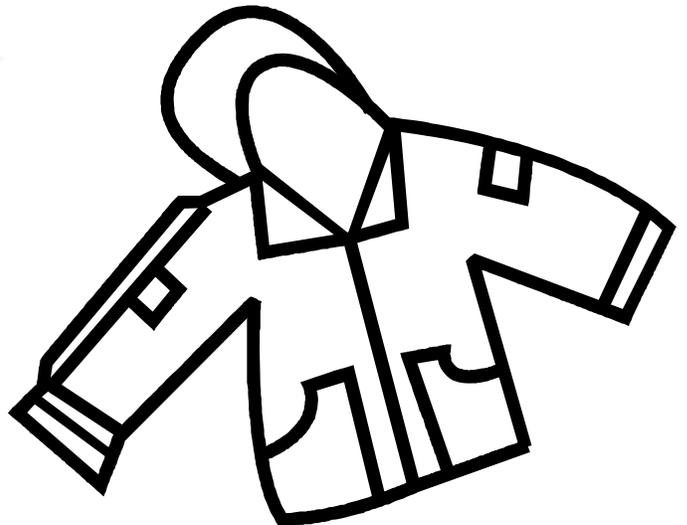
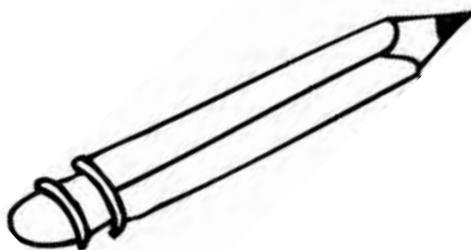
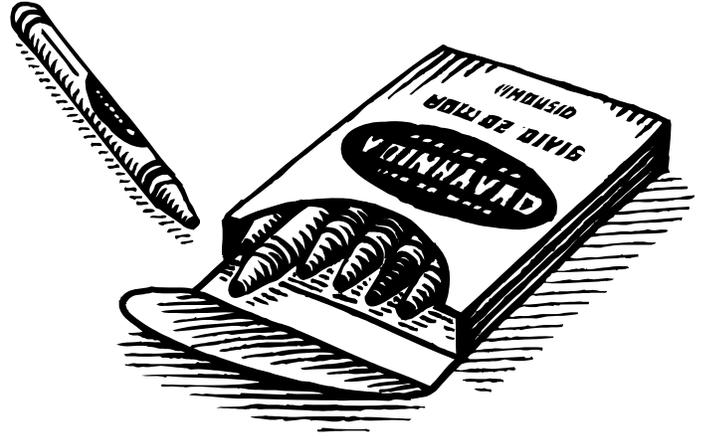
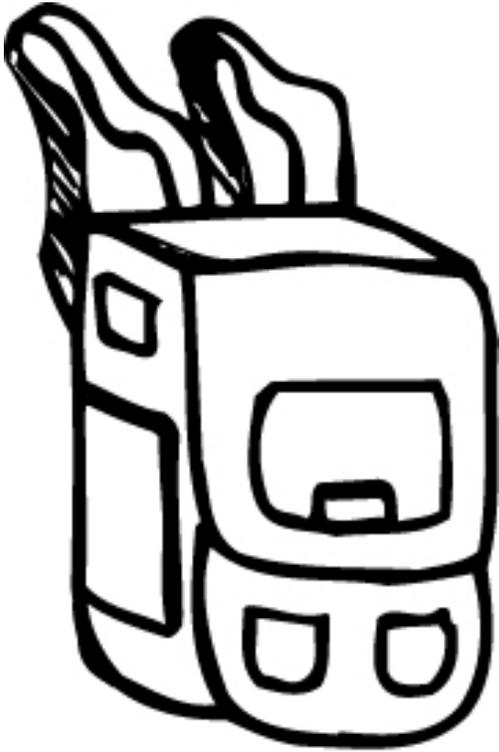
Name:

School:

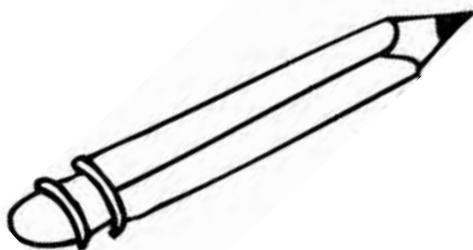
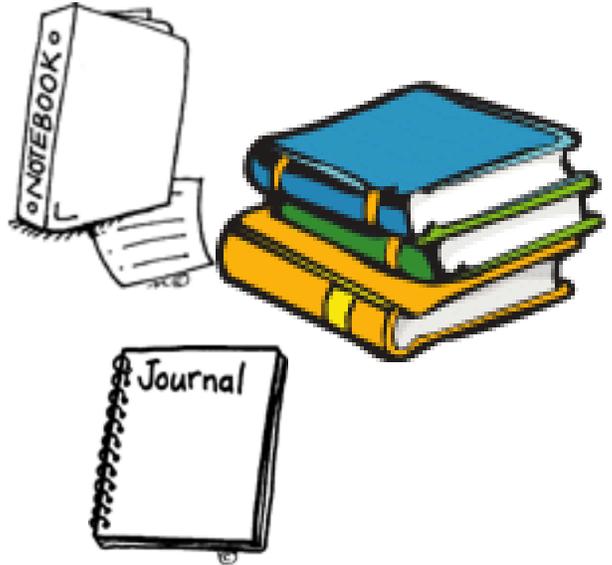
Phone Number:

Email Address:

How I can find my Coach?



Handout 1-2: School Supplies (K-5)



GETTING TO SCHOOL



School Bus Number: _____

Morning Time: _____

Home Time: _____

Bus Stop: _____



City Bus Number: _____

Morning Time: _____

Home Time: _____

Bus Stop: _____



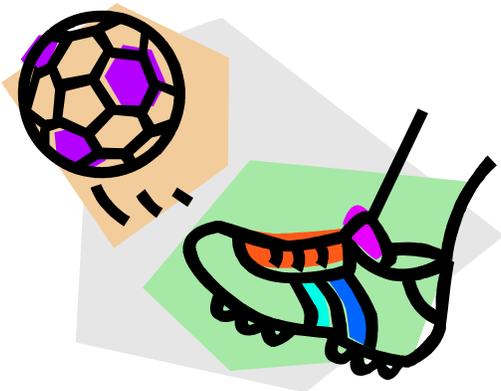
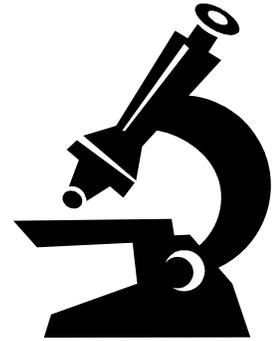
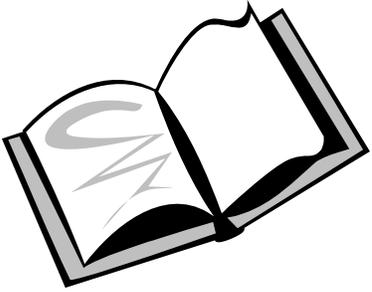
Morning Time: _____

Home Time: _____

Walking to School _____

SCHOOL STARTS: _____

SCHOOL SUBJECTS



After School Activities

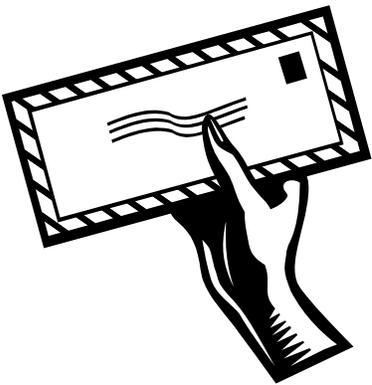


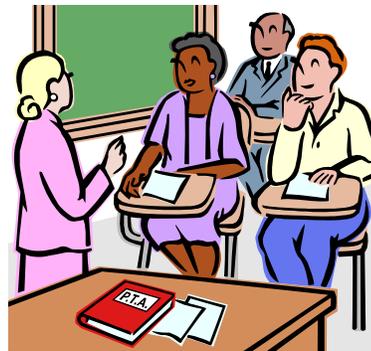
Handout 2 – 1 (K-5)

After School Activities



Handout 2 – 2 (6-12)





Handout 13-2: School Events

ACADEMIC COACH INFORMATION



NAME: _____

LOCATION: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

EMAIL: _____

SAMPLE LATE NOTES



1) PLEASE EXCUSE _____ FOR BEING LATE TO SCHOOL DUE TO ILLNESS.



2) PLEASE EXCUSE _____ FOR BEING LATE TO SCHOOL. SHE HAD A DOCTOR'S APPOINTMENT.



3) PLEASE EXCUSE _____ FOR BEING LATE TO SCHOOL. SHE MISSED HER TRANSPORTATION TO SCHOOL.

PARENT SIGN NAME: _____ **DATE:** _____

SAMPLE NOTES FOR ILLNESS



PLEASE EXCUSE _____'S ABSENCE

ON _____ DUE TO ILLNESS.
(date of absence)

PARENT SIGN NAME: _____ DATE: _____



Welcome to Our Schools

Parent Program 2: Ready for School

PURPOSE

The purpose of the two Parent Programs is to provide information about American schools, reassuring parents that the Academic Coaches will provide guidance and support to refugee students and their parents throughout the school year, beginning with the Refugee Academy.

OBJECTIVES



The objectives of the Parent Programs are to:

- Reassure parents that the Refugee Academy and the Academic Coaches will provide guidance and support to refugee students.
- Inform parents of the goals and activities of the Refugee Academy.
- Inform parents that even if they do not understand what their children are learning in school, they can be involved in education by showing interest, encouragement, and support for hard work and achievement.
- Provide accurate information about the expectations and procedures of American schools, and refute myths and misinformation.
- Build communication between school personnel and parents.
- Build communication among refugee parents.
- Inform parents about school and community resources for students and families.
- Inform parents about school-related paperwork that will facilitate enrollment and preparation for school.
- Inform parents about parental responsibilities in preparing students for school.

FORMAT

The format of the Parent Programs should be a combination of presentations by the Academic Coaches and other school personnel, tours of the school, and discussions related to the details of preparing students for school.



The Academic Coaches should organize the programs, selecting the activities that will be included so that they are connected to the Refugee Academy.

The activities of the Parent Programs can be implemented in any order, depending upon the amount of time available. The activities selected may be determined by:

- the comfort level of the parents and their familiarity with the school and the Refugee Academy
- the number of languages that need to be translated during the program
- the needs and concerns of the parents
- access to school facilities
- the topics and questions that have been raised by the students in the Academy
- the number of parents attending and their connections with each other
- the arrangements that have been made for child care and transportation.

The Academic Coaches and other presenters can determine the pace of the Parent Programs, recognizing that modification of the agenda may have to be made as the programs progress. They should allow significant time for questions and for a general review of the material that has been covered during the program. The presenters should keep in mind that the background of the participants may range from significant experience with formal education programs to no experience at all.

It is also important to recognize that the information provided in the Parent Programs can be overwhelming and confusing to parents, especially if they are trying to learn new terminology, listen to the translator, and understand what the Academic Coaches are explaining. Teachers of English as a Second Language and translators will be critical participants in the presentations.

Repeatedly reassure parents that the information will be reviewed with the students and at the second parent meeting. Provide contact information, and make it clear that parents can call the Academic Coaches at any time.

Parent Program 2: Ready for School



Supplies (Parent Program 2)

1) Student *Handout 1-1: Please Visit Our School* should again be distributed to students in the Refugee Academy prior to the second Parent Program. Follow up with phone calls and a second copy of the handout to achieve 100% parent attendance. Parents who did not attend the first program may need to be brought up to date about information that was covered in the first session. They may also need a tour of the school. Plan for short follow-up meetings with parents who missed Parent Program 1.

2) Even though parents may have attended Parent Program 1, post signs with pictures and arrows outside of the school and throughout the hallways, to direct parents to the Parent Program. Volunteer greeters and translators would be especially helpful in welcoming parents to the Parent Program.

3) If possible, provide refreshments.



4) Handouts (provided at the end of Parent Program 2.)

Student Handouts (in this order)	
Number & Grade Level of Handout	Name of Handout
8-1 (grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12)	Teachers
4-1 (grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12)	School Rules
5-1 (grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12)	School Calendar
6-1 (grades K-5)	Stay Healthy
6-2 (grades 6-8, 9-12)	Stay Healthy
7-1 (grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12)	What Do You Enjoy?
7-2 (grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12)	After School Plans
8-3 (grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12)	Parent Note
9-1 (grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12)	Homework
10-1 (grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12)	Taking Tests
12-1 (grades 6-8, 9-12)	Zero Tolerance

5) Video: *Refugee Parent Interviews*

ACTIVITIES

PARENT PROGRAM 2

- **Invite parents to introduce themselves**, even if they attended the first Parent Program. The parents who are familiar with the school and the Academic Coaches and have had a chance to meet other parents, may be willing to introduce themselves. Some parents, however, may still be nervous or wary, and unwilling to speak up.

Make the introductions informal. For each introduction, mention to the parent a topic that has been covered in the Refugee Academy. For example:

Tonight we are going to talk about the school rules that we have been discussing in class.

Your children have been talking about their interests and talents, and we have been discussing activities they can do after school.

We want to talk about homework tonight, so that you will be prepared when your children have schoolwork to do when they get home from school. (Define “homework.”)



- **Distribute the packet of Student Handouts** and explain each handout. Stop often to ask for questions, or to review the information if parents look befuddled.

Review of the handouts can be tedious and confusing, especially if multiple translations are occurring while the Academic Coaches are presenting. To break up the presentation, pause often to ask specific questions, such as:

Have any of your children shown an interest in sports?

Have you seen the (YMCA, Boys/Girls Club, etc.) in your neighborhood?

Do your children like American food?

If Module 8 has been covered in the Refugee Academy, ask parents if the students brought home *Handout 8-3: Parent Note* for the parents to sign. Discuss the contents of the handout and complete it together, if necessary.

Handout 10-1: Taking Tests may require more discussion time, as the Academic Coaches may want to describe specific placement tests that the students will be taking (or have taken). Emphasize that the purpose of the tests is to assist in determining the best educational approach for the students so that they can achieve in their new school. Explain to parents that they can meet with the teachers and Academic Coaches to go over any test results.

Handout 12-1: Zero Tolerance covers a particularly serious subject. The parents may be uncomfortable with the topic (and the pictures on the handouts). The focus of the discussion should be on how parents can inform their children about what is not tolerated in American schools, and how they can stay safe.



Show the video *Refugee Parent Interviews*. Discuss questions from the **Guide to the Videos**.

- **Tour the area of the school that has computers**, describing to the parents the school policies about the use of computers. Inform parents about the availability of free computers in the community (e.g., library, recreation centers) and discuss the importance of monitoring computer use.
- **Observe classes and athletic events** if they are being held in the school building during the Parent Program. Discuss that the programs are free if they are sponsored by the school. Community programs usually require a fee that can be reduced or eliminated if requested. Student participants in extracurricular programs may need uniforms, snacks, permission slips, and equipment. Reassure parents about supervision and safety.

TEACHERS

Help you to learn



Tell you what to study



Answer your questions



Help you with problems

WANT YOU TO SUCCEED!!



2012

January						
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2013

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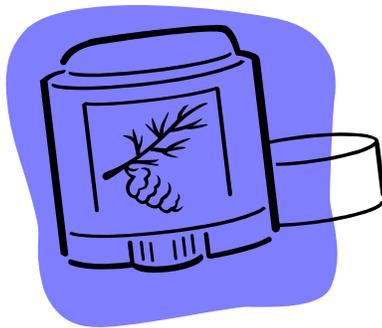
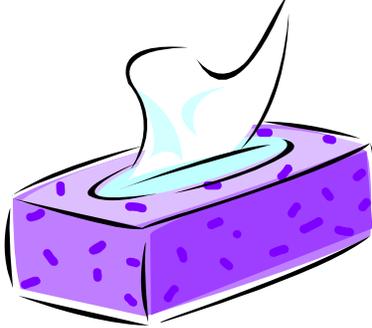
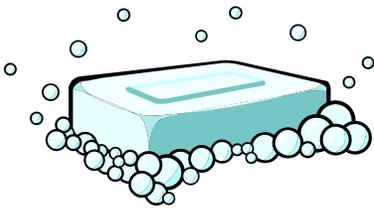
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STAY HEALTHY!



STAY HEALTHY!



WHAT DO YOU ENJOY?



AFTER SCHOOL PLANS

Name: _____

Activity: _____

Time: _____

Contact: _____

Place: _____

Fee: _____

Need: _____ **Permission from parents**

_____ **Uniform**

_____ **Equipment**

_____ **Transportation**

_____ **Snack**



Name of Student :

MY CHILD SHOWED ME THE NAME OF THE COACH.

I WILL CALL THE SCHOOL IF I HAVE ANY QUESTIONS.

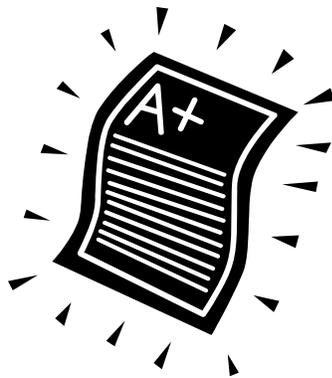
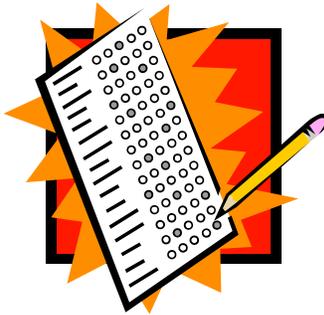


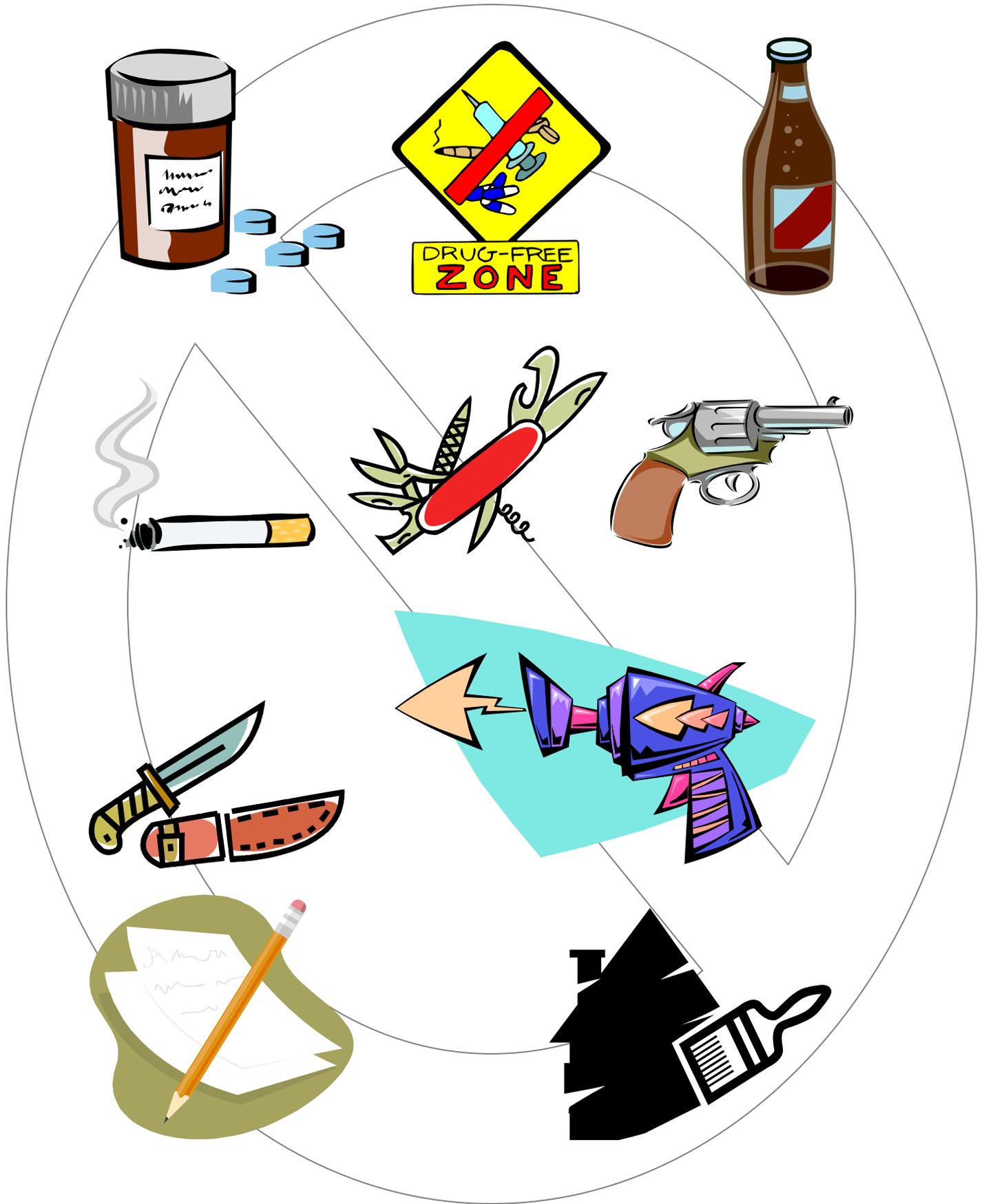
NAME OF PARENT:

HOMESCHOOL



Handout 9-1: Homework





Handout 12-1: Zero Tolerance



Welcome to Our Schools

Parent Program 3: School Check-Up

PURPOSE

The purpose of Parent Program 3 is to provide information about American schools, reassuring parents that the Academic Coaches will provide guidance and support to refugee students and their parents throughout the school year.

OBJECTIVES



The objectives of the Parent Programs are to:

- Reassure parents that the Refugee Academy and the Academic Coaches will provide guidance and support to refugee students.
- Inform parents of the goals and activities of the Refugee Mini-Academies, held throughout the school year.
- Inform parents that even if they do not understand what their children are learning in school, they can be involved in education by showing interest, encouragement, and support for hard work and achievement.
- Provide accurate information about the expectations and procedures of American schools, and refute myths and misinformation.
- Build communication between school personnel and parents.
- Build communication among refugee parents.
- Inform parents about school and community resources for students and families.
- Inform parents about school-related paperwork that will facilitate enrollment and preparation for school.
- Inform parents about parental responsibilities in preparing students for school.

FORMAT

The format of Parent Program 3 should be a combination of presentations by the Academic Coaches and other school personnel, tours of the school, and discussions related to the details of preparing students for school.



The Academic Coaches should organize the programs, selecting the activities that will be included so that they are connected to the Refugee Mini-Academy.

The activities of Parent Program 3 can be implemented in any order, depending upon the amount of time available. The activities selected may be determined by:

- the comfort level of the parents and their familiarity with the school and the Refugee Academy
- the number of languages that need to be translated during the program
- the needs and concerns of the parents
- access to school facilities
- the topics and questions that have been raised by the students in the Academy
- the number of parents attending and their connections with each other
- the arrangements that have been made for child care and transportation.

The Academic Coaches and other presenters can determine the pace of Parent Program 3, recognizing that modification of the agenda may have to be made as the programs progress. They should allow significant time for questions and for a general review of the material that has been covered during the program. The presenters should keep in mind that the background of the participants may range from significant experience with formal education programs to no experience at all.

It is also important to recognize that the information provided in Parent Program 3 can be overwhelming and confusing to parents, especially if they are trying to learn new terminology, listen to the translator, and understand what the Academic Coaches are explaining. Teachers of English as a Second Language and translators will be critical participants in the presentations.

Repeatedly reassure parents that the information will be reviewed with the students and at the second parent meeting. Provide contact information, and make it clear that parents can call the Academic Coaches at any time.

Parent Program 3: School Check-Up



Supplies (Parent Program 1)

1) Student *Handout 1-1: Please Visit Our School* should again be distributed to students in the Refugee Academy prior to the third Parent Program. Follow up with phone calls and a second copy of the handout to achieve parent attendance.

Parents who did not attend the first or second program may need to be brought up to date about information that was covered in the earlier sessions. They may also need a tour of the school. Plan for short follow-up meetings with parents who missed earlier Parent Programs.

2) Even though parents may have attended Parent Programs 1 and 2, post signs with pictures and arrows outside of the school and throughout the hallways to direct parents to the Parent Program. Volunteer translators would be especially helpful in welcoming parents to the Parent Program.

3) If possible, provide refreshments.



4) For parents who have not attended a Parent Program, share the student and parent handouts that have been distributed earlier. They are an effective means of reviewing information about school rules, schedules, and supplies, and show important messages about health and hygiene, after school activities, and school-home communication.

5) Arrange for new parents to see the video *A Day in Elementary School* (or Middle School or High School). Instructors may also choose to show videos from different grade levels so that parents are informed about the activities of all of the students in the school district.

6) Gather pictures from magazines that show friends interacting. The pictures will be used in a discussion about friendship, so the friendship of the children in the photos should be self-explanatory.

7) Highlight the key points to share with parents from the article *Helping Your Child With Homework* on page 9 of this *Welcome to Our Schools Parent Program 3*.

8) Using a globe or world map, identify the native countries of parents attending Parent Program 3. Talk about how the diverse backgrounds of the students enhances the educational program for all of the students in the district.

ACTIVITIES

PARENT PROGRAM 3

- **Invite parents to introduce themselves**, even if they attended the first two Parent Programs. The parents who are familiar with the school and the Academic Coaches and have had a chance to meet other parents may be willing to greet other parents. Make the introductions informal, but respect the traditions of different cultures.



Explain to the parents the topics that will be covered in Parent Program 3:

Tonight we are going to talk about how your children are adjusting to school. They have been faced with a lot of new experiences and have done very well. We will talk tonight about how they can enjoy new friendships and keep up on their schoolwork.

It may be necessary to take questions immediately, in case parents have pressing concerns. Do not wait until the end of the program if there is a topic that most of the parents obviously need to discuss. (Maintain confidentiality; do not identify specific students.) Keep reassuring parents that there are a number of adults in the school system responsible for helping the children and their families adjust to their new life in America.

- **Discuss how refugee students can make friends** in a variety of ways, including in class, on the bus or playground, in local neighborhoods, in extra-curricular activities, and in community organizations. **Share pictures of friends (cut from magazines) so that parents get a visual image of the theme of friendship.**

Point out to parents that younger children tend to make friends more quickly, connecting over similar interests or shared activities. Teachers in the elementary grades often assign “buddies” to assist new students in adjusting to the classroom routine.

Middle school and high school students tend to be more exclusive, and it is difficult for new students to enter into existing groups of friends or friendships that are well established. Friendships in grades 6-12 can also be fleeting, when a word or a look can quickly change a relationship. Friendships also change as students become adolescents and relationships with the other gender influence communication, interests, attitudes, and priorities.

For many refugee students it is not only difficult to comprehend the nuances of relationships, but they do not know how to relate to their peers. They often do not know how to interpret communication between fellow students and are confused and frustrated. They may feel socially isolated, or may deliberately isolate themselves from others so that they do not have to struggle with the pressure of trying to make new friends.

Some refugee students may decide that friendships are far more interesting than schoolwork. They may connect quickly with a variety of friends, or may be absorbed into a group that welcomes a new friend. These new friends could be well-intentioned, but a distraction.

And then there are the bullies. There will be students who will tease or even physically bully refugee students. They may be encouraged by their peers, or may lead others in harassing new students. Refugee students may handle this by ignoring them and forming new friendships, or they may feel scared and overwhelmed, perhaps even unwilling to go to school.



The new friends could be a serious negative influence and, although they may feel welcoming and supportive to new students, they interfere with the student's ability to benefit from an American education.

What can parents do?

- Parents can find out what is happening in the school by attending school events, routinely asking students about school activities, keeping a family calendar, and reviewing school newsletters and websites with help from translators.
- Parents can call the Academic Coach whenever a friendship does not seem appropriate. It is often difficult to determine by the appearance, or even by the behavior of another student, whether the friendship is a positive one. Parents should not hesitate to ask if they have any concerns. Academic Coaches and guidance counselors can monitor the situation, talk to the student, and perhaps steer the student in a more positive direction.
- Parents should encourage students to join clubs and to sign up for after-school events and activities in local community organizations. Not only do the students have the chance to meet new friends, but they can develop new skills and interests.
- Parents of middle school students should require that their children participate in at least one school club. High school students should have a least two activities (volunteer, sports, clubs) in addition to their schoolwork.



- Parents can encourage students to volunteer in local community organizations. Students who volunteer tend to concentrate more on helping others than on their own frustrations. As a result, they improve their self-esteem because they are helping others and are making a contribution, they acquire essential skills that are applicable beyond school, and they may find an interest that they never knew they had. For parents, a child who is volunteering is a child who is using time in a positive manner. Guidance counselors can connect students with appropriate volunteer opportunities.

- Parents should research to determine where their children can go after school if no one is home. This is a problem for all parents, especially if adults in the family are employed. Encourage parents to talk to neighbors and other family members about sharing supervision, or to research community agencies that sponsor after-school programs. The refugee parents may not realize that teenagers need supervision after school, not only because they may be too young to stay home legally, but they also may need guidance so that they do not develop unhealthy relationships and get involved in activities that are unsafe or illegal.



- Instructors should review the characteristics of a “good friend” so that the parents know what the students have been told. These qualities are discussed in the Refugee Academy *Module 2: Making Friends*.

- **Discuss the challenges of balancing school work, after-school activities, family activities, and friendships.** Explain that the students will discuss in the Refugee Academy how to manage multiple activities and handle the stress of their new life in school. Many students will find that they are trying to handle too many things at once.
- Parents should emphasize that school work should be top priority. Instructors should review the following concepts related to completing schoolwork that may be unfamiliar to refugee parents:
 - **Time Management** - Students will discuss time management in the Refugee Academy. Parents can help students set up a schedule that is realistic and allows for school work to be completed on time. Stress the importance of punctuality and meeting deadlines.
 - **Tutors** - Parents may be unaware that tutoring is available. Explain how tutors can be contacted and if the school district will cover the expense.

- **Public Library** - Parents may not realize that the library is free to the public and that in addition to books and DVDs, most libraries have computers that can be used by the students and their family members. Explain how families can get library cards.

- **Internet Research** - Demonstrate to parents how students can do research for school projects on the internet. Show websites that have pictures of topics that the students are studying, so that parents who cannot speak English can see what is available on the internet. Explain that computer security is discussed in the Refugee Academy, and encourage parents to monitor computer use. They do not have to be able to speak English to see what is on a computer screen.



- **Parent-Teacher Conferences** - Refugee parents may not realize that they can meet with teachers any time they have questions or concerns. They may not know that the school has scheduled parent-teacher conferences in the elementary grades and that parents can call the school and make an appointment to meet with a teacher at any time during the school year. Explain to the parents how they can make an appointment with the teacher. Reassure them that teachers are often pleased that parents initiate parent-teacher conferences.



- **Open House** - Most schools have an Open House at the beginning of the school year, when parents can meet the teachers. Encourage parents to attend, even if they do not speak English. They will get a sense of the classroom and school environment, the subjects that are covered, and the challenges that are presented to their children. They will also get to know who the teachers are so that they are more comfortable if they have to meet with them.
- **Guidance Counselors** - Although the students will have their assigned Academic Coaches, the school guidance counselors are available for helping students with academic planning, problems with school work, and personal issues. Encourage parents to contact the guidance counselor if they are concerned about their child's mental health, stress levels, difficulties with relationships, or any other behaviors that need attention. Guidance counselors are trained to assist families and will find the necessary resources to help the students. They appreciate it when parents call.

- **Coaches, Club Leaders, Community Activity Instructors** - Any adult leading a group of students welcomes input from parents. Encourage parents to introduce themselves to coaches or any other activity instructor. Parents can explain what the student is interested in, any past experience with the activity, and concerns that the parents or students may have. It may be necessary to include a translator in the discussion.

- **Talk to the parents about homework.** Most of the parents will have already encountered homework and may be struggling with assisting their children with their schoolwork. The parents may not speak English and do not understand the assignments. They may not be sure what has been assigned, or they are unclear about what the students are expected to do. Of course, they may also be struggling with a typical comment of any student enrolled in an American school:



I don't have any homework. For some families, bringing up the topic of homework results in whining and tears. Students are frustrated, and so are their parents.

Listen to the parents talk about their experiences with homework. Reassure them that if they are having difficulty finding out what the assignments are, getting their children to do the homework, or helping their children, then they are not alone. Discuss the following:

- Teachers usually post homework assignments on a blackboard or distribute a syllabus with assignments. Some teachers announce the homework at the end of class. **All students should carry an assignment notebook and should be expected to write down every assignment.** This process is discussed in the Refugee Academy, and students are encouraged to purchase a small notebook and keep it with them at all times. They can record their assignments and then refer to it when it is time to work on homework. Parents should check the assignment notebook every night. If nothing is written it, they should call the classroom teacher(s) or the Academic Coach.
- **Share the key points in the attached article** from the United States Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement on *Helping Your Child With Homework*. **Do not copy and distribute the attached article. Highlight the ideas** for helping students and discuss how parents can realistically implement the suggestions. For example, the article suggests picking a specific place for the students to do their homework every night. Many students live in cramped quarters with little privacy. Discuss with the parents the options for a quiet study place. Can they work at the kitchen table and get assistance from parents at the same time? Can they take advantage of a local library? Can the family institute “homework time” when the television is off and the family focuses on getting school work finished? Be practical, while stressing the importance of completing homework.

United States Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
HELPING YOUR CHILD WITH HOMEWORK
(Instructors should share the highlights of this article with parents.)

*How To Help: Show You Think
Education and Homework Are Important*

Children need to know that their parents and adults close to them think homework is important. If they know their parents care, children have a good reason to complete assignments and turn them in on time. There is a lot that you can do to show that you value education and homework.

Set a Regular Time

Finding a regular time for homework helps children finish assignments. The best schedule is one that works for your child and your family. What works well in one household may not work in another. Of course, a good schedule depends in part on your child's age, as well as individual needs. For instance, one youngster may work best in the afternoon after an hour of play, and another may be more efficient after dinner (although late at night, when children are tired, is seldom a good time).

Outside activities, such as sports or music lessons, may mean that you need a flexible schedule. Your child may study after school on some days and in the evening on others. If there isn't enough time to finish homework, your child may need to drop some outside activity. Homework must be a high priority.

You'll need to work with your elementary school child to develop a

schedule. An older student can probably make up a schedule independently, although you'll want to make sure it's a good one.

It may help to write out the schedule and put it in a place where you'll see it often, such as the refrigerator door.

Some families have a required amount of time that children must devote to homework or some other learning activity each school night (the length of time can vary depending upon the child's age). For instance, if your seventh-grader knows she's expected to spend an hour doing homework, reading, or visiting the library, she may be less likely to rush through assignments so that she can watch television. A required amount of time may also discourage her from "forgetting" to bring home assignments and help her adjust to a routine.

Pick a Place

A study area should have lots of light, supplies close by, and be fairly quiet.

A study area doesn't have to be fancy. A desk in the bedroom is nice, but for many youngsters the kitchen table or a corner of the living room works just fine.

Your child may enjoy decorating a special study corner. A plant, a brightly colored container to hold pencils, and some favorite artwork taped to the walls can make study time more pleasant.

Remove Distractions

Turn off the television and discourage social telephone calls during homework time. (A call to a classmate about an assignment may, however, be helpful.)

Some youngsters work well with quiet background music, but loud noise from the stereo or radio is not OK. One Virginia junior high school history teacher laments, "I've actually had a kid turn in an assignment that had written in the middle, 'And George Washington said, "Ohhhhh, I love you.'" The kid was so plugged into the music that he wasn't concentrating."

If you live in a small or noisy household, try having all family members take part in a quiet activity during homework time. You may need to take a noisy toddler outside or into another room to play. If distractions can't be avoided, your child may want to complete assignments in a nearby library.

Provide Supplies and Identify Resources

For starters, collect pencils, pens, erasers, writing paper, an assignment book, and a dictionary. Other things that might be helpful include glue, a stapler, paper clips, maps, a calculator, a pencil sharpener, tape, scissors, a ruler, index cards, a thesaurus, and an almanac. Keep these items together in one place if possible. If you can't provide your child with needed supplies, check with the teacher, school guidance counselor, or principal about possible sources of assistance.

For books and other information resources, check with the school library or local public library. Some libraries have homework centers designed especially to assist children with school assignments (there may even be tutors and other kinds of individual assistance).

These days many schools have computers in classrooms, and many households have personal computers. However, you don't have to have a computer in your home in order for your child to complete homework assignments successfully.

You may want to ask the teacher to explain school policy about the use of computers for homework. Certainly, computers can be a great learning tool and helpful for some assignments. They can be used for word processing and on-line reference resources, as well as educational programs and games to sharpen skills. Some schools may offer after-school programs where your child can use the school computers. And many public libraries make computers available to children.

Set a Good Example

Children are more likely to study if they see you reading, writing, and doing things that require thought and effort on your part. Talk with your child about what you're reading and writing even if it's something as simple as making the grocery list. Tell them about what you do at work. Encourage activities that support learning--for example, educational games, library visits, walks in the neighborhood, trips to the zoo or museums, and chores that teach a sense of responsibility.

Show an Interest

Make time to take your child to the library to check out materials needed for homework (and for fun too), and read with your child as often as you can. Talk about school and learning activities in family conversations. Ask your child what was discussed in class that day. If he doesn't have much to say, try another approach. For example, ask your child to read aloud a story he wrote or discuss the results of a science experiment.

Another good way to show your interest is to attend school activities, such as parent-teacher meetings, shows, and sports events. If you can, volunteer to help in the classroom or at special events. Getting to know some classmates and other parents not only shows you're interested but helps build a network of support for you and your child.

How To Help: Monitor Assignments

Children are more likely to complete assignments successfully when parents monitor homework. How closely you need to monitor depends upon the age of your child, how independent she is, and how well she does in school. Whatever the age of your child, if assignments are not getting done satisfactorily, more supervision is needed.

Here are some good ways to monitor assignments:

Ask About the School's Homework Policy.

At the start of the school year, ask the teacher:

- What kinds of assignments will be given?
- How long are children expected to take to complete them?
- How does the teacher want you to be involved?

Teachers' expectations vary. Ask your child's teacher what you should do. Should you just check to make sure the assignment is done, or should you do something more? Some teachers want parents to go over the homework and point out errors, while others ask parents to simply check to make sure the assignment is completed.

It's also a good idea to ask the teacher to call you if any problems with homework come up.

Be Available.

Elementary school students often like to have someone in the same room when working on assignments in case they have questions. If your child will be cared for by someone else, talk to that person about what you expect regarding homework. For an older child, if no one will be around, let him know you want him to begin work before you get home and call to remind him if necessary.

Look Over Completed Assignments.

It's usually a good idea to check to see that your elementary school child has finished her assignments. If your junior high school student is having trouble finishing assignments, check his

too. If you're not there when an assignment is finished, look it over when you get home. After the teacher returns completed homework, read the comments to see if your child has done the assignments satisfactorily.

Monitor Television Viewing.

American children on average spend far more time watching television than they do completing homework. In many homes, more homework gets done when television time is limited. Once you and your child have worked out a homework schedule, take time to discuss how much television and what programs she can watch. It's worth noting that television can be a learning tool. Look for programs that relate to what your child is studying in school, such as programs on history or science or dramatizations of children's literature. When you can, watch shows with your child, discuss them, and encourage follow-up activities such as reading or a trip to the museum.

How To Help: Provide Guidance

The basic rule is, "Don't do the assignments yourself." It's not your homework--it's your child's. "I've had kids hand in homework that's in their parents' handwriting," one Washington, DC-area eighth-grade teacher complains. Doing assignments for your child won't help him understand and use information. And it won't help him become confident in his own abilities.

It can be hard for parents to let children work through problems alone and learn from their mistakes. It's also hard to know where to draw the line between supporting and doing.

Different teachers have different ideas about the best way for parents to provide guidance. Here are a few suggestions with which most teachers agree:

Figure Out How Your Child Learns Best.

If you understand something about the style of learning that suits your child, it will be easier for you to help her.

If you've never thought about this style, observe your child. See if he works better alone or with someone else. If your child gets more done when working with someone else, he may want to complete some assignments with a brother or sister or a classmate. (Some homework, however, is meant to be done alone. Check with the teacher if you aren't sure.)

Other things to consider about learning style:

Does your child learn things best when she can see them? If so, drawing a picture or a chart may help with some assignments. For example, after reading her science book, she may not remember the difference between the tibia and the fibula. But by drawing a picture of the leg and labeling the bones, she can remember easily.

Does your child learn things best when he can hear them? He may need to listen to a story or have directions read to him. Too much written material or too many pictures or charts may confuse him.

Does your child understand some things best when she can handle or move them? An apple cut four or six or eight ways can help children learn fractions.

Help Your Child Get Organized.

As mentioned earlier, it's a good idea to set a regular time for children to do homework. Put up a calendar in a place where you'll see it often and record assignments on it. If your child's not able to write yet, then do it for him until he can do it himself. Writing out assignments will get him used to the idea of keeping track of what's due and when. You may want to use an assignment book instead of a calendar.

A bag for books will make it easier to carry homework to and from school. Homework folders in which youngsters can tuck their assignments for safekeeping help many students stay organized.

Encourage Good Study Habits.

Teachers generally give students tips on how to study. But it takes time and practice to develop good habits. You can reinforce these habits at home. For example:

Help your child structure time in order to complete assignments. For example, if your eighth-

grader has a biology report due in 3 weeks, discuss all the steps she needs to take to complete it on time, including:

- selecting a topic;
- doing the research by looking up books and other materials on the topic and taking notes;
- figuring out what questions to discuss;
- drafting an outline;
- writing a rough draft; and
- revising and completing the final draft.

Encourage your child to write down how much time she expects to spend on each step.

Help your child get started when he has to do research reports or other big assignments. Encourage him to use the library. If he isn't sure where to begin, have him ask the librarian for suggestions. If he's using a computer for on-line reference resources--whether the computer's at home, school, or the library--make sure he's getting whatever help he needs to use it properly. As mentioned earlier, many public libraries have homework centers where there are tutors or other kinds of one-on-one assistance. After your child has done the research, listen while he tells you the points he wants to make in the report.

Give practice tests. Help your third-grader prepare for a spelling test by saying the words while she writes them down. Then have her correct her own test.

Help your child avoid last-minute cramming. Review with your fifth-grader how to study for his social

studies test well before it's to be given. You can have him work out a schedule of what he needs to do to, make up a practice test, and write down answers to the questions he's made up.

Talk with your child about how to take a test. Be sure she understands how important it is to read the instructions carefully and to keep track of the time and avoid spending too much time on any one question.

Several books and pamphlets listed in the Resources section of this book give more tips on how your child can get organized and develop good study habits.

Talk About the Assignments.

Ask your child questions. Talking can help him think through an assignment and break it down into small, workable parts. Here are some sample questions:

Do you understand what you're supposed to do? After your child has read the instructions, ask her to tell you in her own words what the assignment is about. (If your child can't read yet, the teacher may have sent home instructions that you can read to her.) Some schools have homework hotlines you can call for assignments in case your child misplaced a paper or was absent that day. If your child doesn't understand the instructions, read them with her and talk about the assignment. Are there words she doesn't understand? How can she find out what they mean? If neither you nor your child understands an assignment, call a classmate or contact the teacher.

What do you need to do to finish the assignment? Your child may want to talk through the steps with you (or make a written list of them, if he's able to), as described in the section above on good study habits.

Do you need help in understanding how to do your work? See if your child needs to learn more, for example, about subtracting fractions before she can do her assignment. Or find out if the teacher needs to explain to her again when to use capital and lowercase letters. If you understand the subject yourself, you may want to work through some examples with your child. But let her do the assignment herself.

Have you ever done any problems like the ones you're supposed to do right now? See if your child has already done similar problems that can guide him in completing these particular ones.

Do you have everything you need to do the assignment? Sometimes your child needs special supplies, such as colored pencils, metric rulers, maps, or reference books. As mentioned before, check with the teacher, school guidance counselor, or principal for possible sources of assistance if you can't provide needed supplies; and check with the local public library or school library for books and other information resources.

Does your answer make sense to you? Sometimes the response to a math problem doesn't seem logical, or the meaning of a paragraph your child has written is unclear. If that's the case, your child may need to check over the math problem or revise the paragraph.

If your child is still confused, ask:

- How far have you gotten on the assignment? Let's try to figure out where you're having a problem.
- Do you need to review your notes (or reread a chapter in your textbook) before you do the assignment?
- Are you still having problems? Maybe it would help to take a break or have a snack.

Give Praise.

People of all ages respond to praise. And children need encouragement from the people whose opinions they value most--their parents. "Good first draft of your book report!" or "You've done a great job" can go a long way toward motivating your child to complete assignments.

Children also need to know when they haven't done their best work. Make criticism constructive. Instead of telling a third-grader, "You aren't going to hand in that mess, are you?" try, "The teacher will understand your ideas better if you use your best handwriting." Then give praise when a neat version is completed.

How To Help: Talk With Someone at School To Resolve Problems

Homework hassles can often be avoided when parents and caregivers value, monitor, and guide their children's work on assignments. But, sometimes helping in these ways is not enough. Problems can still come up. If they do, the schools, teachers, parents, and students may

need to work together to resolve them.

Share Concerns With the Teacher.

You may want to contact the teacher if:

- your child refuses to do her assignments, even though you've tried hard to get her to do them;
- instructions are unclear;
- you can't seem to help your child get organized to finish the assignments;
- you can't provide needed supplies or materials;
- neither you nor your child can understand the purpose of assignments;
- the assignments are often too hard or too easy;
- the homework is assigned in uneven amounts--for instance, no homework is given on Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday, but on Thursday four of your child's teachers all make big assignments that are due the next day; or
- your child has missed school and needs to make up assignments.

In some cases, the school guidance counselor may be helpful in resolving such problems.

Work With the School.

Communication between teachers and parents is very important in solving homework problems. Here are some important things to remember:

Talk with teachers early in the school year. Get acquainted before problems arise, and let teachers

know that you want to be kept informed. Most elementary schools and many secondary schools invite parents to come to parent-teacher conferences or open houses. If your child's school doesn't provide such opportunities, call the teacher to set up a meeting.

Contact the teacher as soon as you suspect your child has a homework problem (as well as when you think he's having any major problems with his schoolwork). Schools have a responsibility to keep parents informed, and you have a right to be upset if you don't find out until report-card time that your child is having difficulties. On the other hand, sometimes parents figure out that a problem exists before the teacher does. By alerting the teacher, you can work together to solve a problem in its early stages.

Request a meeting with the teacher to discuss homework problems. Tell him briefly why you want to meet. You might say, "Rachel is having trouble with her math homework. I'm worried about why she can't finish the problems and what we might do to help her." Parents for whom English is a second language may need to make special arrangements, such as including another person who is bilingual.

Don't go straight to the principal without giving the teacher a chance to work out the problem with you and your child.

Approach the teacher with a cooperative spirit. Believe that the teacher wants to help you and your child, even if you disagree about something. It's hard to solve problems if teachers and parents view each other as enemies.

If you have a complaint, try not to put the teacher on the defensive. For example, avoid saying that you think the assignments are terrible even if you think so. You might say, "I'm glad Calvin is learning to add and subtract in the first grade, but he doesn't want to do his math work sheets. Can we find another way for him to learn the same material?" This might encourage the teacher to let Calvin (and the rest of his classmates) try another approach. Perhaps he can learn addition and subtraction by moving around buttons, sticks, or shells.

Let the teacher know if your child is bored with assignments or finds them too hard or too easy. (Teachers also like to know when children are particularly excited about an assignment.) Of course, not all homework assignments can be expected to interest your child and be perfectly suited to her. Teachers just don't have time to tailor homework to the individual needs of each student night after night. However, most teachers want to assign homework that children enjoy and can complete successfully, and they welcome feedback from parents.

Many times homework can be structured so that a wide range of children will find assignments interesting. For example:

- Different approaches to the same topic or lesson can be offered to students;
- Extra assignments can be given to students who want more challenge; and

- Specialized assignments can be given to students having trouble in a particular area.

While meeting with the teacher, explain what you think is going on. Also tell the teacher if you don't know what the problem is. Sometimes a child's version of what's going on isn't the same as the teacher's version. For example, your child may tell you that the teacher never explains assignments so he can understand them. But the teacher may tell you that your child isn't paying attention when assignments are given.

Work out a way to solve or lessen the problem. The strategy will depend on what the problem is, how severe it is, and the needs of your child. For instance:

- Is the homework often too hard? Maybe your child has fallen behind and will need extra help from a teacher, parent, or tutor to catch up.
- Does your child need to make up a lot of work because of absences? The first step might be working out a schedule with the teacher.
- Has your child been diagnosed with a learning disability or is one suspected? If so, you'll need to make sure your child gets extra help, and the teacher may need to adjust some assignments. (See Federal Sources of Assistance in the Resources Section of this book.)

Does your child need extra support, beyond what home and school can give? Ask the teacher, school

guidance counselor, or principal if there are mentor programs in your community. Mentor programs pair a child with an adult volunteer who assists with the youngster's special needs, such as tutoring or career advice.

There are many good mentor programs operating in schools, universities, community organizations, churches, and businesses.

Make sure communication is clear. Listen to the teacher and don't leave until you're sure you understand what's being said. Make sure, too, that the teacher understands what you have to say. If, after the meeting, you realize you don't understand something, call the teacher to double check.

It may help to summarize what you've agreed to do at the end of the meeting:

OK, so to keep track of Kim's assignments, I'll check her assignment book each night and write my initials by new assignments. Each day you'll check to make sure she's written down all new assignments in her book. That way we'll be certain that I know what her assignments are.

Follow up to make sure that the approach you agreed to is working. If the teacher told you, for example, that your child needs to spend more time practicing long division, check back in a month to talk about your child's progress.

Homework can bring together children, parents, and teachers in a common effort to improve student learning. The younger your child is

when you start to do the kinds of activities suggested in this guide, the better.

Helping your child with homework is an opportunity to improve your child's chances of doing well in school and life. By helping your child with homework, you can help him learn important lessons about discipline and responsibility. You can open up lines of communication-- between you and your child, and you and the school. You are in a unique position to help your child make connections between school work and the "real world," and thereby bring meaning (and some fun) to your child's homework experience.

Whether you succeed in doing all of the activities suggested in this guide is not what's most important. What's most important is that you are willing to take the time and make the effort to be involved in your child's education.



Welcome to Our Schools

Parent Program 4: Lead Poisoning

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Parent Program 4: Lead Poisoning is to raise the awareness of parents and family members about the dangers of lead poisoning so that they can implement prevention and intervention strategies.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of Parent Program 4 are to inform parents about:

- Sources of lead poisoning
- Impact of lead poisoning on physical health
- Impact of lead poisoning on mental and behavioral health
- Symptoms of lead poisoning
- Assessing for potential sources of lead
- Preventing lead poisoning
- How to inform children and family members about lead poisoning prevention
- Resources to assist in preventing and eliminating lead poisoning



FORMAT

The information on lead poisoning can be presented either as a full Parent Program dedicated to lead poisoning, or as a component of a general Parent Program about refugee students and American schools.

Instructors of the Parent Program are not expected to be experts on lead poisoning. If they do not know the answers to questions or are approached by parents who need assistance, then the instructors should refer the parents to the Academic Coaches, the school nurse, or the Refugee Resettlement Case Manager. (Academic Coaches should follow up on parent concerns with the Refugee Resettlement Case Manager.)

If further information is required, the Academic Coaches should either follow up on parent concerns by contacting the appropriate experts or by referring the parents to local resources.

Instructors can also co-present with health teachers, physicians or school nurses, county and local health care providers and clinic representatives, or lead poisoning specialists.

The degree of detail provided in the program will be dependent on the severity of the problem in the community, and the amount of time available with parent groups. The activities selected can be implemented in any order, and should be selected on the basis of:

- The comfort level of the parents and their familiarity with the Refugee Academy staff and other presenters
- The needs and concerns of the parents
- The awareness of Refugee Academy students about lead poisoning and their ability to discuss the information with their parents and family members
- The number of languages that need to be translated during the Parent Program
- The number of parents attending the Parent Program, and their connections with each other
- Past history of the refugee parents and their trust of health care workers, teachers and school administrators, and government employees

The presenters should keep in mind that the background of the participants may range from considerable experience with formal education programs to no experience at all.

The instructor can determine the pace of the Parent Program, recognizing that modification of the agenda may have to be made as the program progresses. They should allow significant time for questions.

It is important to recognize that the information provided in the Parent Program on lead poisoning can be overwhelming and confusing to parents, especially if they are trying to learn new terminology, listen to the translator, and understand what the instructors are explaining. Teachers of English as a Second Language and translators will be critical participants in the presentations.

Parents should know that the Academic Coaches will review information about lead poisoning with the students in the Refugee Academy.

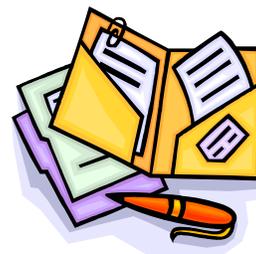
Instructors should repeatedly reassure parents that if they have any questions or concerns, they can talk to an Academic Coach who will contact the Refugee Resettlement Case Manager.

Parent Program 4: Lead Poisoning



Supplies (Parent Program 4)

- 1) Lead Poisoning Information Photo Series located in HANDOUTS - MODULE 6
- 2) Examples of lead-free products (dishes, cosmetics, toys, jewelry, paint)
- 3) Local referral information for lead testing and environmental cleanup, provided by Academic Coaches, as needed
- 4) For information on toys:
U.S. Safety Product Commission
<http://www.cpsc.gov>



New York State Department of Health
<http://www.nyhealth.gov/environmental/lead/recalls/>

- 5) Handouts

Handouts (in this order)	
Number & Grade Level of Handout	Name of Handout
1 (parents)	Six Simple Ways to Protect your Child From Lead Poisoning
6-1 (grades K-5)	Stay Healthy
6-2 (grades 6-8, 9-12)	Stay Healthy
6-4 (grades K-12)	Good Nutrition
6-5 (grades K-12)	Fruit to Color
6-6 (grades K-12)	Vegetables to Color
See also: SECTION C - HANDOUTS FOR MODULE 6 - LEAD POISONING PHOTOS	



Key Points – Lead Poisoning



- 1. The health effects of lead poisoning on children can be devastating, especially because the impact of lead may be invisible.**

Lead poisoning is one of the most common and preventable childhood health problems in the United States. Lead is a heavy metal that does not break down and decompose, so it has been used in many products such as water pipes, pewter dishes, paint, and other commercial products. Once it was confirmed in the early 1960s that lead could also be a poison, including the dust of lead paint, actions were taken to eliminate the use of lead and to implement screening for lead in infants and children.

Lead is a poison that affects almost every system in the body. Shortly after lead enters the body through ingestion, hands in the mouth, or inhalation of dust, the lead travels in the blood to the soft tissues such as the liver, kidneys, and brain. The body gradually moves lead from the blood and organs to the bones and teeth, where it can be stored for decades. Any amount of lead in the body is considered toxic.

Children under the age of 6 are at the greatest risk of health effects associated with exposure to lead. They are particularly vulnerable because their brain and central nervous system are still forming. Lead interferes with the development of these systems as well as the kidney and blood-forming organs. In addition, lead can cross the placenta and adversely affect a developing fetus.

Lead poisoning is not always visible, and the vast majority of children exposed to lead go undiagnosed and untreated. The effects of lead may occur with no overt outward symptoms, and cognitive damage is not apparent until children reach age 4 or later. The behavioral effects of lead are irreversible and may not be noticed until the child enters school.

Health effects vary from child to child, but examples of the toxic nature of lead are:

- Decrease in IQ points from even very small exposure to lead
- Learning disabilities
- Behavioral problems
- Hyperactivity
- Lethargy
- Stunted or slowed growth
- Impaired hearing
- Difficulty concentrating / attention deficits
- Wrist or foot drop

- Seizures
- Abdominal pain, vomiting, diarrhea
- Encephalopathy (brain dysfunction)
- Nausea, constipation, colic, dyspepsia
- Reproductive damage
- Hypertension
- Deficits in visual-spatial skills, fine motor coordination, balance
- Coma

These effects can get worse if nothing is done to eliminate the lead exposure problem. At increasingly higher levels of exposure, the health effects can be kidney damage, significant IQ deficits, and developmental disabilities such as mental retardation. Children and adults can fall into a coma or die from lead poisoning.

The symptoms of lead poisoning can be subtle and they are often confused with other problems in learning, behavior, or health issues. For example, a child may have a stomachache or headache, loss of appetite, irritability, or hyperactivity. The child may be inattentive or confused, or demonstrate lack of initiative or enthusiasm for school activities.

All of these behaviors can be misinterpreted as discomfort with school, adjusting to a new school environment, language difficulties, and other factors that would naturally occur when a refugee child is adapting to an American school.

But since the symptoms of lead poisoning are not always visible as health issues, parents may not understand how lead poisoning can affect the *behavior* of children.

Parents may be comfortable with the behavior of their children because their child has always behaved that way, or because the parents are unfamiliar with behavior that is expected in an American classroom.

For example, if a child is particularly lethargic or unable to pay attention in class, the parents may attribute the behavior to adjusting to a new school (or adjusting to formal education) and the demands of life in the new country. Parents may also indicate that the child has always behaved that way.

The instructor should explain that lead poisoning may be a possible explanation for behaviors in school that affect academic progress and social interactions. The instructor should consistently emphasize the importance of testing so that actions can be taken to assist the child in improving health and behavior.

Instructors should keep in mind that some parents may be sensitive (or defensive) when it becomes clear that their children are not able to keep up in school because they have been exposed to lead. Instructors should stress that Academic Coaches can provide information and support should the parents have any concerns.



2. Lead is a natural element that had thousands of uses, but it is also a powerful neurotoxin that interferes with the development of the brain and nervous system.

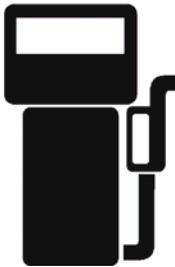
Lead poisoning is not limited to the United States, although industrialization was a major contributor to the use of lead in public facilities, manufacturing plants, and homes. Lead poisoning is a worldwide problem, particularly in countries where there are no regulations about the use of lead.

It is a myth that the problem of lead poisoning is limited to Africa. This myth generated from the death of a Sudanese refugee child in the year 2000. Lead poisoning can be found in both developing countries and in highly industrialized countries anywhere in the world.

Refugee children are twice as likely as U.S. children to have elevated lead levels in their blood. Some are exposed to lead prior to arriving in the United States, while others are exposed once they are resettled. In developing countries, several factors increase the potential for lead exposure:

- environmental pollution
- absent or lax environmental regulations
- hot climates that allow for outdoor living and activities (on ground that may contain lead)
- open housing construction, often with lead-painted materials
- concentration of populations around heavy traffic areas.

Refugee children may have a compromised immune or nutritional status that can cause an increase in vulnerability to lead poisoning. Malnutrition and anemia can enhance lead absorption. Children who mouth or eat non-food items, especially soil, can become exposed to lead.



Leaded gas, leaded solder, and lead paint have been banned in the United States, but the remnants still remain across the country. Smelters, chemical and battery plants, burning of fossil fuels and solid waste, ammunition manufacturing and use, and traditional use of home remedies that contain lead have all contributed to lead in the environment.

There are at least 38 million homes and buildings in the United States that contain lead paint, some of it peeling and covering the area with dust. Leaded gasoline is still in the soil around roads and storage areas. Thousands of lead pipes continue to serve as water service lines in many older United States cities.



The most common risk hazard is living in an older home (built before 1975), especially those homes that were built before 1950 and are in disrepair. Many refugee families are resettled in older housing because of the affordability and availability.

Peeling and chipping paint on the housing exterior and on walls, banisters, windowsills, and radiators often contain lead. The lead paint starts to chip and peel and gets grounded into dust. The tiny pieces of lead can gather in areas that are not often cleaned, such as corners of windows, between floorboards, and under radiators. The lead dust can become part of the dust in the house and in the soil around the house.



Lead hazards have been found in playgrounds, primarily due to the age of paint on the playground equipment. School districts are responsible for determining the age and condition of the paint, and should be alert to deteriorating paint.

Some dishes and ceramic ware contain lead, even though since 1980 the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) has had limits on lead and cadmium in ceramic ware products. However suspect ceramic ware products can enter the United States, especially if they are brought in personal baggage. A glaze or decoration may have high levels of lead that can get into food, wear off on hands, and leave lead dust.

Lead can be found in the following products, depending upon the year and the source of production:

- Drinking water (from lead pipes)
- Hair dyes
- Miniblinds
- Calcium and other vitamin supplements
- Cleaning products
- Playground equipment
- Necklaces
- Toys
- Dishes and lead crystal
- Eye makeup, lipstick, kohl
- Imported wine containers with lead foil wrappers
- Folk remedies such as “pay-loo-ah” - a red and orange powder used for fever (Asian origin)
- Imported soldered cans containing food



Lead exposure can also occur in various occupations and hobbies:

- Hobbies such as glazed pottery making, stained glasswork, home remodeling, lead soldering, preparation of home remedies

- Employment such as auto repair, welding, bridge reconstruction, painting and remodeling, cable splicing, and foundry work may result in lead dust on clothing and car seats if parents wear uniforms home.
- Lead dust from paint can get on household surfaces, floors, toys, blankets and linens, and even pets. Children tend to spend more time on the floor where lead dust may be present.



3. The first step in eliminating lead poisoning is testing for lead.

The first step to determining if there is a problem to address is screening children and adults for lead. The second step is to assess the environment of the refugee families, including their homes, playgrounds, recreational facilities, religious centers, and other gathering places.

- **Lead Screening**
 - Federal standards currently stipulate that a refugee medical screening must take place within 90 days after a refugee's arrival (or status granted) in the United States – for children less than 7 at the time of arrival or status granted.
 - The contents of the screening vary from state to state, and many states do not specify a blood lead level (BLL) screening for refugee children.
 - In New York State, refugee children under 7 should have been tested for lead.
 - The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the American Academy of Pediatrics recommend testing for children who have emigrated from other countries where lead poisoning is present. Recently local and state health organizations have encouraged BLL screening for adults who are refugees, as well as for all refugee families who may have settled in housing in the United States that may contain lead paint or pipes.

When discussing prevention and intervention, instructors of the Refugee Academy and Parent Programs will have to explain the process of testing for lead. Screening children for exposure to lead is done by a *finger-stick* (or capillary) method. Further testing may be necessary.



For many refugees, the process of being examined and giving blood may be embarrassing or even frightening. Instructors can explain to

parents that it is simple, quick test that is vital for determining lead levels in the body.

Parents should also be reassured that there are treatments and medications available for treating elevated lead levels.

In some cases, the damage caused by exposure to lead may be irreversible, especially if lead poisoning has caused brain or neurological damage. It is important that families understand the importance of the testing so that intervention can start immediately, if necessary.

Once lead exposure is suspected, further medical evaluation of health history, environment (past and current), family activities and traditions, mother's habits when pregnant, food and folk medicines, and other factors associated with lead exposure need to be assessed. This should be done by a physician in conjunction with lead poisoning specialists from a local health department.

A repeat blood test should be performed three to six months after refugee children are placed in a residence, to determine if BLLs have been reduced or elevated. Resettlement in housing in the United States may have contributed to higher BLLs that did not exist when the child first arrived. Blood levels can rise quickly, signaling sudden exposure to lead.

If parents are not sure if their children were tested, or if they have concerns about the testing process or results for *any* family members, they should talk to their Academic Coach, who will contact the Refugee Resettlement Case Manager.

- ***Environmental Assessment***

- An environmental assessment should be done by a specialist in lead poisoning, but it may not be possible to assess housing before a family is resettled. Refugee families may want to do their own immediate assessment after participating in the Refugee Academy Parent Program.
- A visual assessment, from floor to ceiling, can be done by walking around the exterior and interior of a building, looking under radiators, on windowsills, in corners, and in other places such as steps, porches, railings, gutters, spouts, doors, roof tiles, or cellar entries, that may not be immediately noticeable.
- The instructor should remind parents to assess all of the places that their children visit, including child care centers or the homes of babysitters; playgrounds; recreation centers; and the homes of friends and relatives.



4. Parents can make immediate changes to prevent lead poisoning and intervene if they are concerned.

Parents can reduce the impact of lead exposure to reduce the amount of lead that might get absorbed or retained by the child.

▪ **Cleaning the environment**

- It is difficult to simply relocate refugee families to lead-free housing, especially because alternative housing may not be available. At the same time, extensive on-site removal of lead paint can raise the concentration of dust in the home. Parents will need advice from the health department, housing agencies, and other experts about how to clean up their home environment

Parents can scrape and repaint, as long as they receive instructions on how to do the repairs without further exposure to lead. Remind parents that lead dust can be created during the paint removal process.



- If the property owner is not able to provide a certificate of compliance that the property is lead safe, then the refugee families need to know who to contact for assistance. The Refugee Resettlement Case Manager can provide information about:
 - Who can inspect the property for lead
 - What is expected of the families before and after a lead inspection
 - How the property owner/landlord will be contacted and what will happen as a result of contacting the property owner
 - What steps the property owner must take to alleviate any problems with lead
 - What will happen to the family if the property is determined to be “high risk” or in need of immediate painting and repair
- Parents should frequently wash all toys, pacifiers, bottles, and other items handled by the children in the family.
- Parents should wet wash floors and other surfaces. Vacuum cleaners can simply spread the dust.
- If a parent or family member works in an environment where there might be lead dust (such as a factory or in a home that is being

remodeled) then they should assess their exposure to lead and take precautions. All work clothing should be removed before entering the home, and clothes should be washed separately.

- Parents can run tap water for a minute before drinking or cooking with it. If the water has been tested high in lead, install an effective filtering device. Although it is expensive, families may need to switch to bottled water.
- Families should not eat canned goods from countries outside of the United States. The ban on lead-soldered cans is not worldwide.
- Parents should discard any dishes and ceramic ware in their homes that are chipped or cracked. This may mean that refugee families have to throw out personal items that are meaningful to them, but they must realize that even handling the item can contribute to lead poisoning.
- They should not store food in any dishes that might contain lead, or store food in any antiques or collectibles. Any highly decorated or metallic-coated tableware, particularly items made in other countries, should never be used for food or liquids.
- Ordinary glassware does not contain lead, but lead is still used to make expensive lead crystal. Families should take the same precautions with crystal. Manufacturers are the best source of information about the contents of eating and cooking utensils.

▪ **Advising children**

- Children should be encouraged to wash their hands and keep their hands out of their mouths for general good health and hygiene.
- Instructors should keep stressing that children should wash their hands often, regardless of whether they have been exposed to lead or not.
- Parents may need to be reminded that infants and children naturally put things in their mouths and should not be punished when they do. Children are curious and reach for things in areas that may not be routinely cleaned, like corners and under windows and radiators. The environment should be safe and clean.



▪ **Promoting good nutrition**

- Instructors can refer to Module 6: *Stay Healthy* for additional information about nutrition and for handouts that can be distributed to parents.
- Good nutrition can reduce the amount of lead absorbed in the body. Nutrients slow absorption.
- Children under age 6 will generally absorb/retain about 50% of the lead that they ingest, but that percentage can be slowed with good nutrition. The consumption of fatty foods should be kept to a minimum (but not eliminated, especially for children under age 2), and children should be receiving adequate levels of calcium, iron, vitamin C, and zinc.
- A daily vitamin should be part of a healthy routine at home.
- The instructors should provide general information about good nutrition. For example, a diet deficient in iron and calcium may enhance the amount of lead absorbed. Some of the healthy staples may not be foods that are found in the homes of refugee families because they are not part of the traditional diet. Milk, yogurt, cheese, and green leafy vegetables (spinach, kale, collard greens) are good sources of calcium.
- An iron-rich diet will help to reduce the amount of lead in red blood cells. Good sources of iron include red meats, fish, and chicken; iron-fortified cereals; and dried fruits such as raisins and prunes.
- Iron is also better absorbed when foods and juices with vitamin C are part of a daily diet. Fruits, vegetables, and juice, particularly oranges, tomatoes, and green peppers, are excellent sources of vitamin C.



5. Parents may be sensitive about the topic of lead poisoning.

There is no safe level of lead in the body, and it is crucial that refugee parents understand the significance of preventing and eliminating lead in their new environment.

However, the subject of lead poisoning can be uncomfortable for parents.

Instructors should be aware that the topic is not just scientific, but very personal, and parents may be sensitive when discussing the topic.

- ***Be sensitive when discussing the safety and cleanliness of home environments***

Even if refugee families strive to keep an immaculate home, they may be living in conditions that are difficult to keep clean. Old paint, fixtures, and appliances may come with an apartment or house. Parents may become defensive about their ability to keep a clean, lead-free home.

At the same time, some refugee families have difficulty adjusting to new standards of cleanliness and sanitation. They may try to replicate a former way of life, which may include eating on the floor, living with animals, and cooking and eating foods in materials that contain lead. They may have difficulty understanding why they should give up their traditions and familiar way of life.

Refugee families may also feel helpless in trying to change the conditions of their homes. Housing may require repairs that are difficult to obtain. Refugees may be afraid to request, let alone demand, repairs such as painting over lead paint, lead pipe replacement, new kitchen counters, and an up-to-date refrigerator and stove.

- ***Be sensitive when discussing parenting skills***

Once information is shared about lead poisoning, parents may feel frightened or guilty that they have allowed their children to be exposed to lead. They may feel that the instructor is implying that they were not parenting properly, and the fault is with the parents.

It is very important to approach the topic as an environmental issue that is being addressed across the country, and that parents are being informed so that they can take action. Instructors should stress that most parents in the United States are just as unfamiliar with the sources and impact of lead poisoning, and every effort is being made to educate the public.

Some refugee children were exposed to lead in their native countries. The ground may have contained the remnants of leaded gasoline, the cooking and eating utensils may have contained lead, and the housing, including housing in refugee camps, may have contained lead paint.

Some refugee parents, struggling to survive conditions in their countries and keep their families together, depended on agencies to monitor their health as best they could. Unsanitary conditions, sick children, and primitive conditions may have been the norm, so the symptoms of lead poisoning were actually considered to be the outcome of unhealthy circumstances.

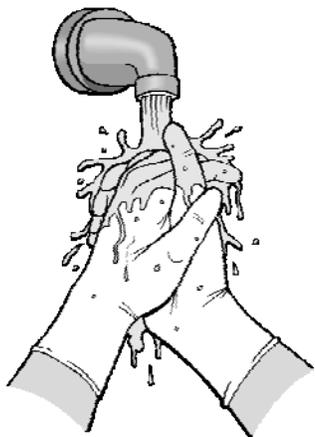
Should parents become defensive or embarrassed (or angry), reassure them that the problem affects many families and the instructor has

immediate strategies that can be implemented. Emphasize that the first strategy is to test children so that parents can know what steps to take next.

- ***Be sensitive when discussing personal habits and hygiene***

When discussing lead poisoning, the instructor will be highlighting personal habits that are unsafe. For example, the instructor will point out the use of cooking utensils, toys, makeup, deodorant, and any other items that contain dangerous amounts of lead.

The instructor will be stressing the importance of a well-balanced diet and sanitary eating habits, and will be discussing hygiene practices like hand-washing and bathing.



All of these subjects will call into question the personal habits of refugee families. For some parents, it may feel as if their traditions are being criticized. Refugee parents may have different perceptions of what is considered “good hygiene” and may be sensitive about their personal choices.

Emphasis should always be on the value of washing to prevent lead poisoning.

It is important that the instructor share information about prevention of lead poisoning after establishing a comfortable relationship with the parents, and after explaining that they are providing information to protect health and safety.

Instructors should provide a number of examples from a variety of cultures, not just refugee groups. Explain that changes in behaviors are difficult and a matter of personal choice, but parents should be aware of the dangers of lead. Most important, instructors should offer examples of safe alternatives.

ACTIVITIES

PARENT PROGRAM 4

In this Parent Program there are 3 activities that should be completed:

- 1. In this activity, parents will receive general information about lead poisoning, with suggestions on how to take immediate action.***

Explain to the parents that they will be given information about a health issue that concerns all parents in the United States, not just refugee parents.

The health issue concerns a product called “lead” that has been used in paint, toys, cooking utensils, and other objects that families are exposed to every day.

Explain that refugee families are being informed about lead because the instructors and Academic Coaches of the Refugee Academy are concerned that refugee children may have been exposed to lead, which is poisonous.

Using the Lead Poisoning Information Photo Series, show the photographs one at a time, reading aloud the script at the end of this Parent Program.

The photos follow the script on page 36 and can be displayed or copied and shared.

Read the information slowly and make sure that all of the parents can see the photos clearly.

Although it is important to complete the photo series so that the parents are fully informed, pause to take questions.



Instructors are not expected to be experts on lead poisoning and should explain that specific questions can be directed to the Refugee Resettlement Case Manager. The instructor and Academic Coaches can also write down the questions and explain that they will take the questions to the Case Manager.

For example, the parents may want to know about specific products. They may be concerned about the toys their children are playing with and will not have the English language skills to be able to look up the toys on the website address provided in the Supplies section of this module.

The instructor should keep reassuring parents that the Refugee Resettlement Case Manager will help them with resources and referrals.

2. **Distribute the following handouts and explain to the parents how they can use the handouts to remind themselves of the next steps to take.** They can also use the handouts to share information with neighbors, family members, and friends.

Student Handouts (in this order)	
Number & Grade Level of Handout	Name of Handout
#1	Six simple ways to Protect your Child From Lead Poisoning
6-1 (grades K-5)	Stay Healthy
6-2 (grades 6-8, 9-12)	Stay Healthy
6-4 (grades K-12)	Good Nutrition
6-5 (grades K-12)	Fruit to Color
6-6 (grades K-12)	Vegetables to Color

Six Simple Ways to Protect Your Child From Lead Poisoning

- 1. Tell your landlord or refugee resettlement case worker about any chipped or peeling paint. It is a law that lead paint must be removed.**



- 2. Remind your doctor to test your child for lead poisoning at ages 1 and 2. Ask your doctor about testing older children.**



3. Wash hands often.



4. Don't use clay pots and dishes, jewelry, or makeup from other countries. They may contain lead.

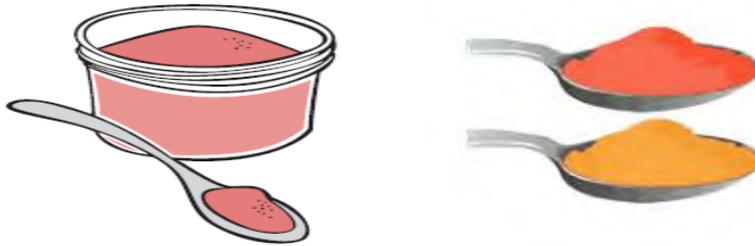
Kohl, Kajal, Surma



5. Don't use medicines made at home.

They may contain lead.

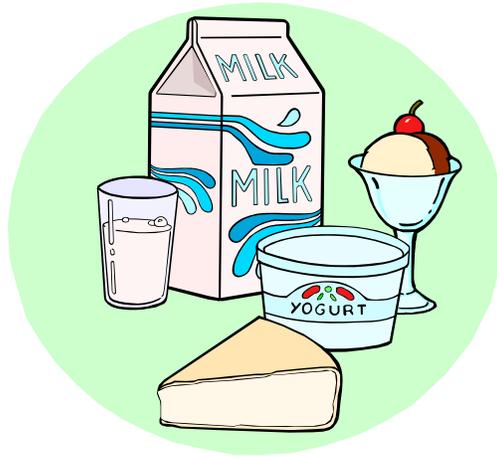
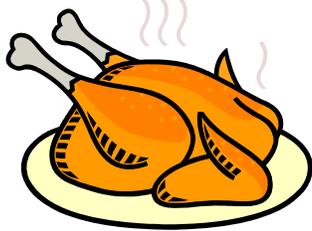
Azarcon, Greta, Rueda



Litargirio



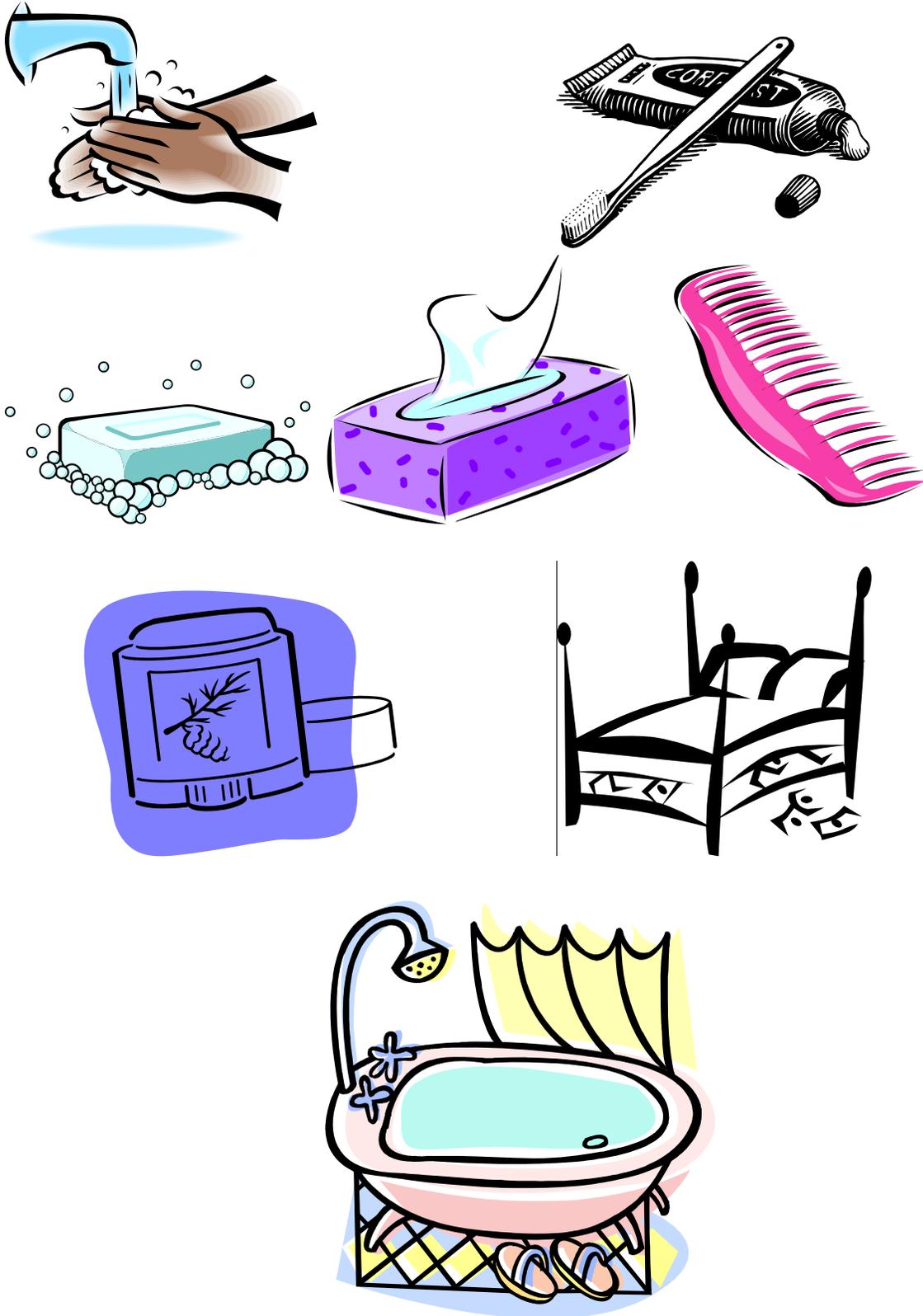
6. Give your children lots of fruits, vegetables, meat, fish, and dairy. If they eat healthy foods there is less damage from lead poisoning.



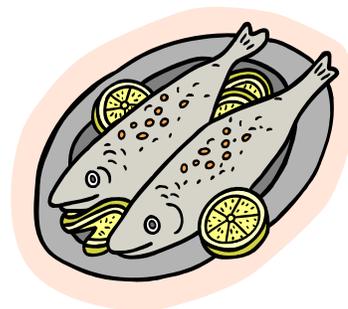
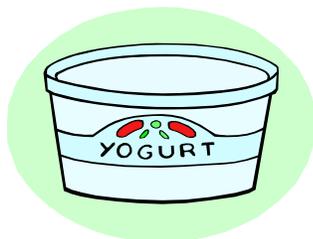
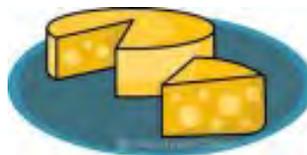
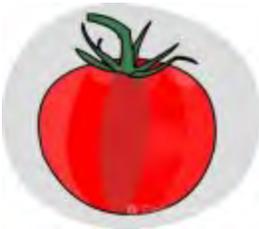
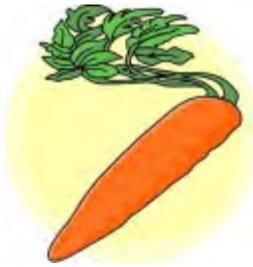
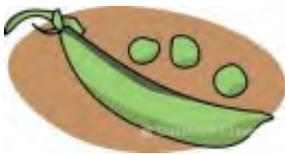
STAY HEALTHY!

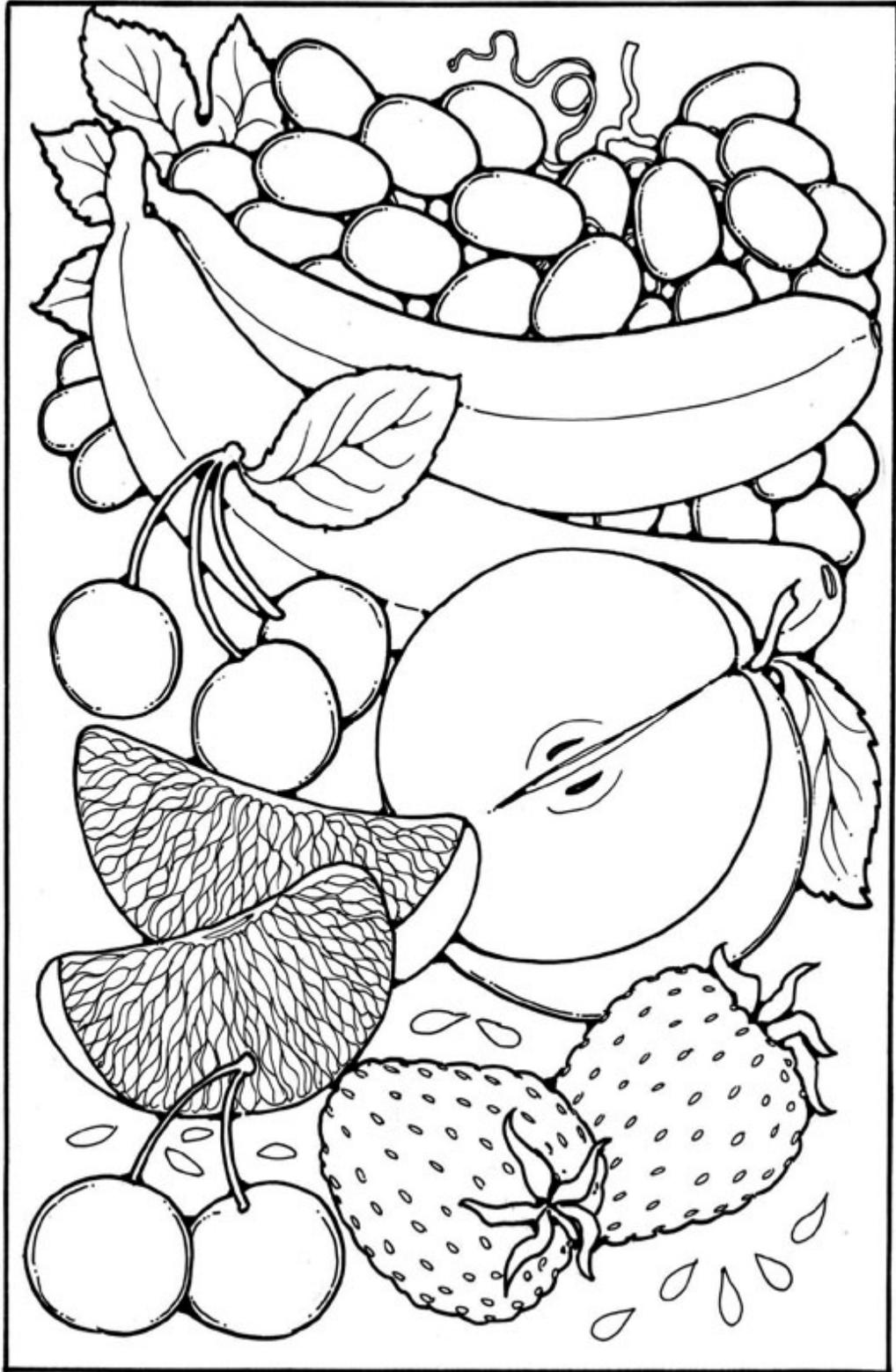


STAY HEALTHY!



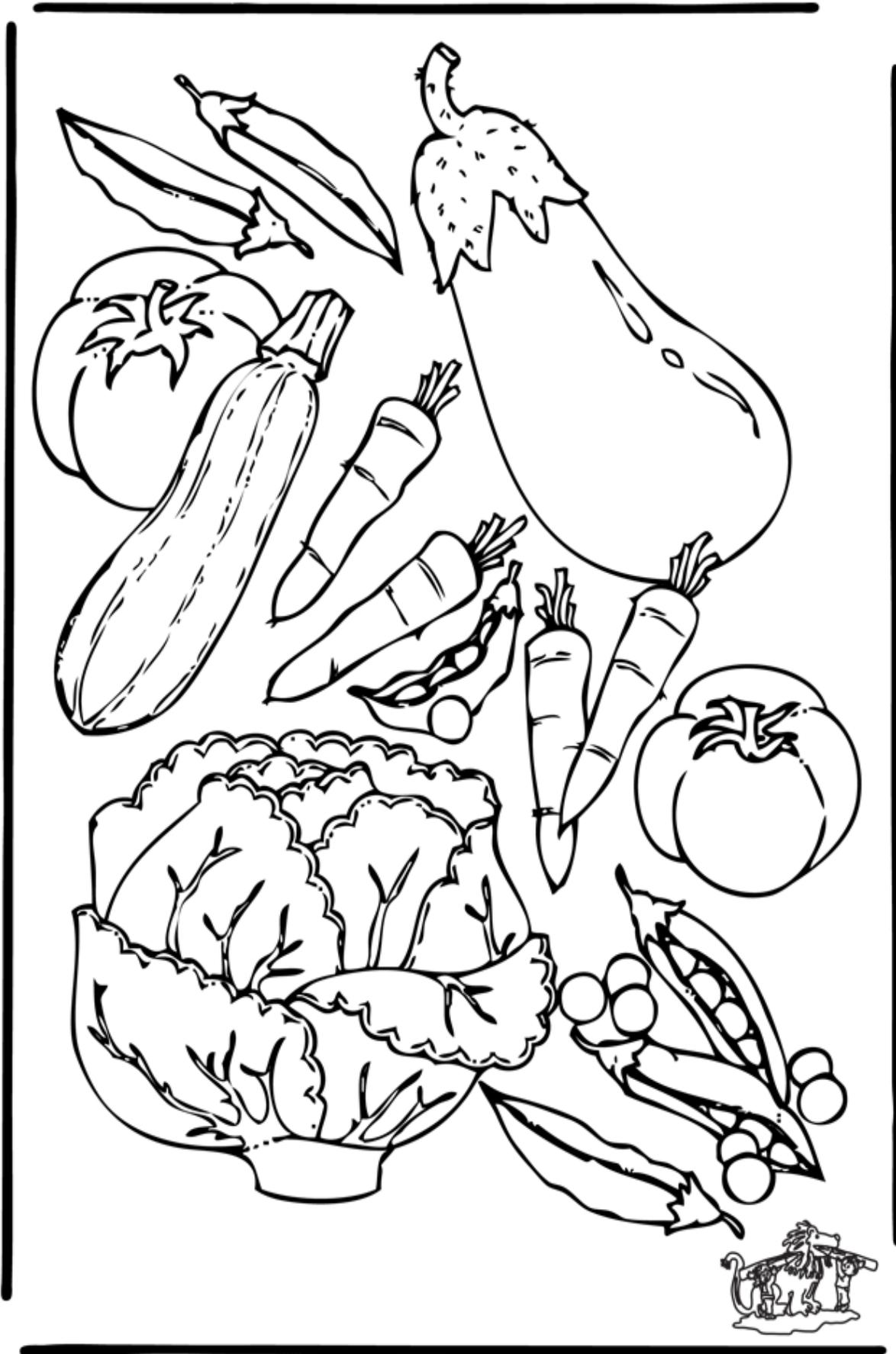
FOODS THAT ARE GOOD FOR YOUR HEALTH





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Handout 6-5 – Fruit to Color



SCRIPT (to be used with Activity #1 - Parent Program 4)

Lead Poisoning Photo Information Series

Parent Program 4: Lead Poisoning

(SEE PAGE 36 FOR PHOTOS.)

The number corresponds to the picture to be displayed.

Instructor:

- I am going to show you some pictures while I tell you about something that is important to know.
- Watch and listen carefully so that you can learn how to take care of your family's health.
- I am going to be talking about something called *lead poisoning*.

PICTURE NUMBER	TEXT TO READ ALOUD
1	Lead is a metal that has been used in many products: Such as paint
2	and pipes that bring water to your home
3	Dishes
4	Toys
5	Some types of makeup
6	And some types of jewelry.
7	It was also used in gasoline and factories around the world.

PICTURE NUMBER	TEXT TO READ ALOUD
<p style="text-align: center;">8</p>	<p>Several years after lead was used in many different products, it was discovered that lead is a poison that can affect all parts of the body.</p> <p>Not everything contains lead, but there are still many products that have lead in them.</p> <p>Laws have been passed to stop the use of lead in products.</p> <p>Doctors and nurses test children and adults to see if they have been exposed to lead and have it in their bodies.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">9</p>	<p>Your children were tested for lead when they came to this country, and will be tested again in a few months.</p> <p>You may remember that the doctor or nurse took a blood sample when you first arrived. It was done with a simple finger prick test.</p> <p>The children are tested because they may have been exposed to lead in your native country (<i>name the countries of the parents</i>) or after they arrived in the United States.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">10</p>	<p>If children have lead in their system, then doctors can tell parents what to do.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">11</p>	<p>There are medications and treatments that can flush the poisonous lead from their bodies.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">12</p>	<p>How can people get exposed to lead? How does it get in their bodies? The most common source of lead is paint.</p>

PICTURE NUMBER	TEXT TO READ ALOUD
13	When paint with lead in it gets old it can chip and peel and crumble into dust.
14	The pieces of paint and paint dust can get on the furniture
15	on the floor where children play -
16	on the dishes and in the food when the dust is in the air
17	and hidden in corners and under heating systems like radiators.
18	Children are often crawling and playing on the floor. They chew on rattles, toys, blankets, and other objects
19	like stuffed animals.
20	They tend to put their hands in their mouths. That is how the lead from the paint chips and dust gets into their bodies. Any amount of lead in the body is too much and can be poisonous. What can happen?
21	Children can get sick. They can get stomach aches and headaches.

PICTURE NUMBER	TEXT TO READ ALOUD
22	They may have trouble with their balance and coordination.
23	Sometimes they have problems in school. They can't pay attention
24	They might be very tired or have trouble concentrating. Children with lead poisoning may have difficulty learning. They may fall way behind in school.
25	School is hard for them. There could be many reasons for this. Your child may need more time to learn new things. Your child could be tired from going to school. There are going to be times when they have a stomach ache and don't feel well enough to go to school. If you are concerned about your child's health Or behavior in school Talk to the Academic Coach. Your Academic Coach can help you figure out how to help your child. One thing your Academic Coach can do is help you to arrange to have your child tested for lead poisoning.

PICTURE NUMBER	TEXT TO READ ALOUD
<p style="text-align: center;">26</p>	<p>You as parents can do things to protect your children from lead poisoning.</p> <p>The first thing you need to do is inspect your home.</p> <p>Take a good look around.</p> <p>Do you see chipped and peeling paint?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">27</p>	<p>You will need to look at both the inside and outside of your home.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">28</p>	<p>Look in attics, cupboards, and in the corners.</p> <p>If you think that you have lead in your home, talk to your Academic Coach or Refugee Resettlement Case Manager.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">29</p>	<p>Your Academic Coach or Case Manager will find out how to get your home cleaned and painted if there is lead in it.</p> <p>If you are not sure if there is lead, your Refugee Resettlement Case Manager can tell you how you can get your home inspected by someone who is an expert in lead poisoning.</p> <p>The expert will be there to help you and give you advise.</p> <p>It is not your fault if you have lead in the paint in your house.</p> <p>It should be fixed so your family is safe and healthy.</p> <p>There are experts who know exactly how to fix it for you.</p>

PICTURE NUMBER	TEXT TO READ ALOUD
<p style="text-align: center;">30</p>	<p>What else can you do to prevent lead poisoning?</p> <p>Remember that lead is not in everything.</p> <p>But it's a good idea to teach children to wash their hands</p> <p>And keep their hands out of your mouth.</p> <p>Little babies and young ones will naturally put things in their mouths.</p> <p>So make sure that they are not chewing on things that have been exposed to lead dust.</p> <p>Make sure that they are not playing on a floor that has lead dust.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">31</p>	<p>Keep floors and surfaces clean</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">32</p>	<p>including the window blinds.</p> <p>Dust can settle on window shades and window wills</p> <p>Use a wet mop for the floor instead of a broom.</p> <p>Ask your children to help.</p> <p>Everyone should help to keep the house clean!</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">33</p>	<p>A very important thing you can do is feed your family a healthy diet.</p> <p>If your children eat good foods there is less damage from lead poisoning.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">34</p>	<p>Feed your family lots of fruits</p>

PICTURE NUMBER	TEXT TO READ ALOUD
35	and vegetables.
36	Serve milk, cheese, yogurt, and eggs.
37	Serve raisins for snacks
38	Or cereal with fruit.
39	Include protein in the diet like fish
40	or beef and chicken
41	<p>What else can you do?</p> <p>Make sure that you do not serve food on cracked or chipped dishes</p>
42	<p>Especially if they have shiny colored paint on them.</p> <p>They may have been made with clay or paint that contains lead.</p>
43	<p>You can also make sure that your children take a vitamin pill every day.</p> <p>Choose a vitamin that is for children.</p> <p>Ask a doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for help in choosing a vitamin.</p> <p>Your Academic Coach can tell you who to talk to about choosing the right vitamins for your children.</p>

PICTURE NUMBER	TEXT TO READ ALOUD
<p style="text-align: center;">44</p>	<p>If you spend time working on cars, you might be exposed to lead.</p> <p>This man should be wearing work gloves if possible.</p> <p>Wash your hands often.</p> <p>After you work on the car, or if you work in a factory or very old building,</p> <p>you may have lead dust on your clothes.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">45</p>	<p>If you do home repair, you may have dust on your clothes.</p> <p>Do not wear clothes into the house that could have lead dust on them.</p> <p>Wash your clothes separately from everyone else's clothes.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">46</p>	<p>You can also make sure that you use products like makeup and deodorant that are sold in a drugstore and not at a discount store.</p> <p>Buy brands that you see everywhere, not brands you do not see very often.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">47</p>	<p>If you get canned foods from outside of the United States, the cans may have lead in them.</p> <p>Check to see if the top of the can is sealed with a thick ring because it may have been sealed with lead.</p> <p>The lead will get into the food that is in the can and you should not eat it.</p> <p>There are more things you can do to protect your family from lead poisoning.</p>

PICTURE NUMBER	TEXT TO READ ALOUD
<p style="text-align: center;">48</p>	<p>Look carefully at the other places that your children go to.</p> <p>Make sure that your child care center or your neighbor's home does not have chipped paint or lead dust.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">49</p>	<p>Look at the playground in the park for chipped paint.</p> <p>The <i>school</i> playground has been tested and is safe.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">50</p>	<p>Your children should not play with toys that are painted or that contain lead.</p> <p>Your Academic Coach can tell you how to check to see if toys have lead.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">51</p>	<p>If you are pregnant, you should not be exposed to lead.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">52</p>	<p>You can always talk to a doctor if you are concerned about lead poisoning.</p> <p>Share this information about lead poisoning with your friends and your relatives so that they can also keep their children safe.</p> <p>And you can always talk to your Academic Coach if you have any questions.</p>

Lead Poisoning Photo Information Series
(Parent Program)

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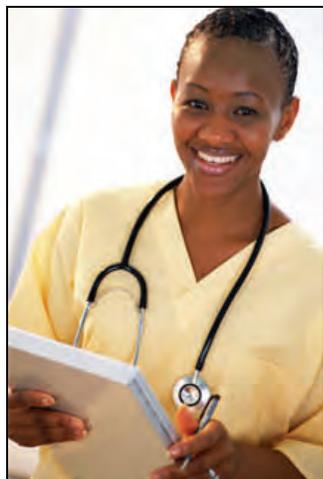
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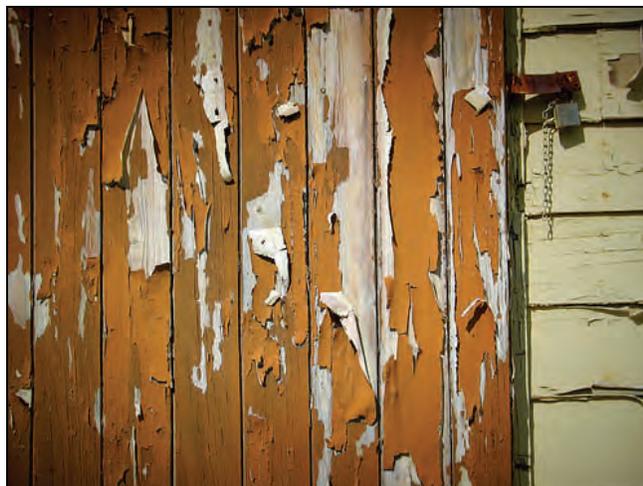
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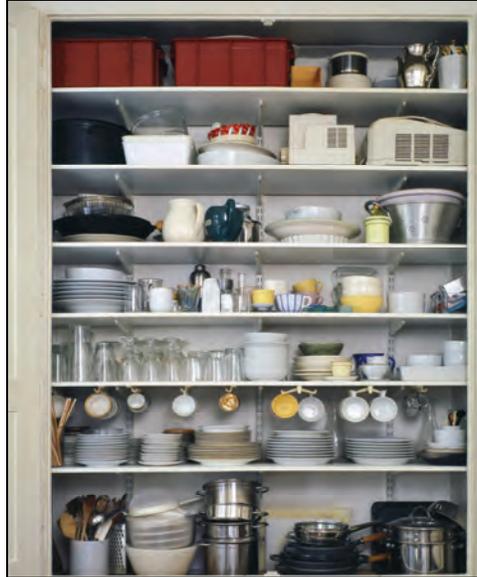
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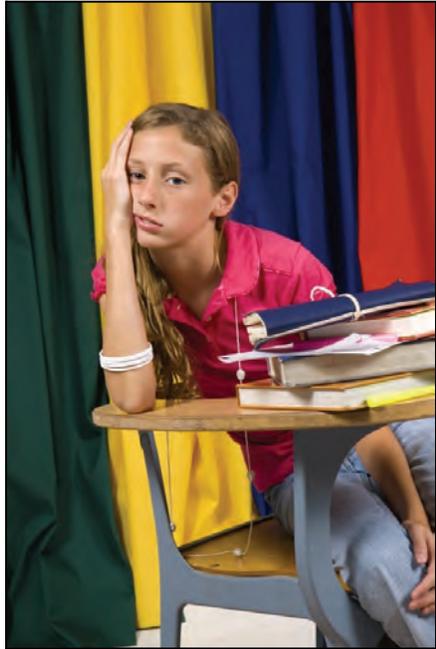
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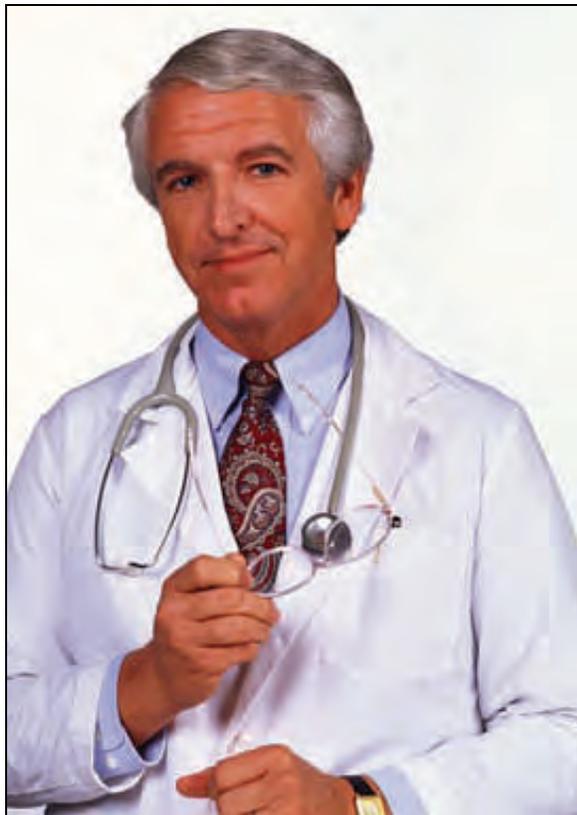
50.



51.



52.





Welcome to Our Schools

Parent Program 5: Learning About Hate Crime

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Parent Programs is to provide information about American schools, reassuring parents that the Academic Coaches will provide guidance and support to refugee students and their parents throughout the school year, beginning with the Refugee Academy.

OBJECTIVES



The objectives of the Parent Programs are to:

- Reassure parents that the Refugee Academy and the Academic Coaches will provide guidance and support to refugee students.
- Inform parents of the goals and activities of the Refugee Academy.
- Inform parents that even if they do not understand what their children are learning in school, they can be involved in education by showing interest, encouragement, and support for hard work and achievement.
- Provide accurate information about the expectations and procedures of American schools, and refute myths and misinformation.
- Build communication between school personnel and parents.
- Build communication among refugee parents.
- Inform parents about school and community resources for students and families.
- Inform parents about school-related paperwork that will facilitate enrollment and preparation for school.
- Inform parents about parental responsibilities in preparing students for school.

FORMAT

The format of the Parent Programs should be a combination of presentations by the Academic Coaches and other school personnel, tours of the school, and discussions related to the details of preparing students for school.



The Academic Coaches should organize the programs, selecting the activities that will be included so that they are connected to the Refugee Academy.

The activities of the Parent Programs can be implemented in any order, depending upon the amount of time available. The activities selected may be determined by:

- the comfort level of the parents and their familiarity with the school and the Refugee Academy
- the number of languages that need to be translated during the program
- the needs and concerns of the parents
- access to school facilities
- the topics and questions that have been raised by the students in the Academy
- the number of parents attending and their connections with each other
- the arrangements that have been made for child care and transportation.

The Academic Coaches and other presenters can determine the pace of Parent Program 5, recognizing that modification of the agenda may have to be made as the programs progress. The background of the parents may range from considerable experience with formal education programs to no experience with schools at all. The presenters should allow significant time for questions.

It is also important to recognize that the information provided in Parent Program 5 can be overwhelming and confusing to parents, especially if they are trying to learn new terminology, listen to the translator, and understand what the Academic Coaches are explaining. Teachers of English as a Second Language and translators will be critical participants in the presentations. The topic is a difficult one to present, and Academic Coaches will have to take the time to approach the topic with sensitivity and compassion.

Provide contact information, and make it clear that parents can call the Academic Coaches at any time.

Note: Academic Coaches may feel more comfortable if local law enforcement or experts on bias-related crimes present information about hate crime. Academic Coaches should keep in mind that some of the parents might distrust the police and might be afraid to report anything to anyone in a uniform.

Discuss this concern ahead of time with the presenters and keep reassuring the parents that the presenters were specifically selected because of their knowledge and support of the refugee community.

Additional representatives of the refugee community, such as religious leaders, may also be invited to attend.

Parent Program 5: Learning About Hate Crime



Supplies (Parent Program 5)

- 1) Public service announcement DVDs ***Don't Hate – Be Kind*** and ***Know Something – Tell Someone***.
- 2) Post signs with pictures and arrows outside of the school and throughout the hallways to direct parents to the Parent Program. Volunteer greeters and translators would be especially helpful in welcoming parents to the Parent Program.
- 3) If possible, provide refreshments.



- 4) Handouts (provided at the end of Parent Program 5)

Student Handouts	
<i>Number & Grade Level of Handout</i>	<i>Name of Handout</i>
16-1 (grades 6-8, 9-12)	What is Hate Crime?
16-2 (grades 6-8, 9 – 12)	Know Something – Say Someone
16-3 (grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12)	Who Am I?
16-4 (grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12)	What Do I Like to Do?
16-5 (grades 9 – 12)	“If No One Will Listen” (lyrics)

- 5) Information on local resources that can assist with reporting hate crime, including contact information.
- 6) Translations of the lyrics to “*If No One Will Listen*” from Handout 16-5 if the song is going to be discussed with parents. (Optional: CD of the song to play for parents)
- 7) Student art work for Handouts 16-3 *Who Am I?* and 16-4 *What Do I Like to Do?*
- 8) Gather pictures of friends from magazines.

ACTIVITIES

PARENT PROGRAM 5

Prior to carrying out Parent Program 5 the Academic Coaches and other presenters should become familiar with the Background Information provided in *Module 16: Hate Crime*.

- **Invite parents to introduce themselves**, even if they attended the first four Parent Programs. The parents who are familiar with the school and the Academic Coaches and have had a chance to meet other parents may be willing to greet other parents. Make the introductions informal, but respect the traditions of different cultures.



Explain to the parents the topics that will be covered in Parent Program 5:

Tonight we are going to talk about how your children are adjusting to school. They have been faced with a lot of new experiences and have done very well. We will talk tonight about how they can build new friendships and handle situations where they might feel afraid or uncomfortable.

It may be necessary to take questions immediately, in case parents have pressing concerns. Do not wait until the end of the program if there is a topic that most of the parents obviously need to discuss. (Maintain confidentiality; do not identify specific students.) Keep reassuring parents that there are a number of adults in the school system responsible for helping the children adjust to their new school.

- **Discuss how refugee students can make friends** in a variety of ways, including in class, on the bus or playground, in local neighborhoods, in extra-curricular activities, and in community organizations. **Share pictures of friends (cut from magazines) so that parents get a visual image of the theme of friendship.**

Point out to parents that younger children tend to make friends more quickly, connecting over similar interests or shared activities. Teachers in the elementary grades often assign “buddies” to assist new students in adjusting to the classroom routine.

Middle school and high school students tend to be more exclusive, and it is difficult for new students to enter into existing groups of friends or friendships that are well established. Friendships in grades 6-12 can also

be fleeting, when a word or a look can quickly change a relationship. Friendships also change as students become adolescents and relationships with the other gender influence communication, interests, attitudes, and priorities.



For many refugee students it is not only difficult to comprehend the nuances of relationships, but they do not know how to relate to their peers. They often do not know how to interpret communication between fellow students and are confused and frustrated. They may feel socially isolated, or may deliberately isolate themselves from others so that they do not have to struggle with the pressure of trying to make new friends.

Some refugee students may decide that friendships are far more interesting than schoolwork. They may connect quickly with a variety of friends, or may be absorbed into a group that welcomes a new friend. These new friends could be well-intentioned, but a distraction.

And then there are the bullies. There will be students who will tease or even physically hurt refugee students. They may be encouraged by their peers, or may lead others in harassing new students. Refugee students may handle this by ignoring them and forming new friendships, or they may feel scared and overwhelmed, perhaps even unwilling to go to school.



Parent Program 5 emphasizes bias-related bullying, which may be illegal. The topic of “hate crime” is necessary to discuss so that parents are:

- ◆ aware of what their children have learned about bias-related or hate crime
 - ◆ aware of the definition of hate crime
 - ◆ familiar with the laws related to hate crime
 - ◆ aware of what to do if they or their children have experienced or witnessed a hate crime.
- **Define and demonstrate *kindness*** as in *Module 16: Hate Crime Activity #1*:
- ◆ One presenter drops a book. Another presenter picks it up, dusts it off and hands it to the person who dropped it.

- ◆ One presenter trips over a backpack. Another presenter helps, asks if they are okay, and then moves the backpack out of the way.
- ◆ One presenter needs a pen. Another presenter provides them with a pen.
- **Explain that the Refugee Academy classes stress kindness**, but the Academic Coaches are aware that some American students in the school will not be kind.

Define “hate” (using *Module 16: Hate Crime Activity #1* as a guide) and explain that a small number of American students may actually show hate toward new students because they look and sound different and have cultural and religious traditions that are unfamiliar.

- Explain that when students bully a refugee student and mention their cultural background, race, religion, sexual preference, or disability then those actions are against the law and are called hate crime. There are laws in the United States that protect victims of a hate crime and punish people who commit hate crime.

The younger students have been taught that if they are treated badly by another student, they are to talk to their teacher or Academic Coach.

The older students have been taught to talk to their teacher or Academic Coach, but have also learned that a crime may have been committed. If they have experienced or witnessed a hate crime, they should talk to their parents or members of their refugee community to get assistance in reporting the crime to local law enforcement

- **Show the public service announcements *Don't Hate – Be Kind* and *Know Something – Tell Something***. Describe what the students have discussed after they viewed the public service announcements.
- **Show the pictures that students have drawn** using Handouts 16-3 *Who Am I?* and 16-4 *What Do I Like to Do?*



Stress that some students will experience questions and teasing about their appearance, language skills, and culture. But most students in American schools will be friendly and supportive of new students.

Explain that students in the Refugee Academy are learning to take pride in their uniqueness and are showing American students that they may be different

from their peers but enjoy the same things as other students.

Once the refugee students become more familiar with their new environment, they will make friends and should become comfortable in their new surroundings.

Explain that, unfortunately, some American students (and some adults in the community) will make it clear that refugees are not welcome. They do this for many reasons, but mostly because they do not understand other cultures. They may have been taught to distrust anyone who is different from them.

The parents will undoubtedly understand this concept because of their past experiences in their native countries.

- **Distribute the Handouts** 16-1 *What is Hate Crime?* and 16-2 *Know Something – Tell Someone* and discuss.

Describe how students have been encouraged to report hate crime even if they are afraid. They are protecting themselves and their refugee community if they tell someone. Parents will need to support them if they decide to report. Academic Coaches, school officials, and Refugee Resettlement Case Managers are available to provide guidance.

- **Discuss local resources** for reporting hate crime, whether a victim or a witness. In some areas of New York State, police departments have separate divisions dedicated to hate crime investigation.

If available, distribute contact information for reporting hate crime.

- **Discuss the emotional impact of hate crime** on victims, witnesses, and the community in general. (See in *Module 16: Hate Crime Key Points #2.*)

- **Some of the older students** in the Refugee Academy may have had the opportunity to discuss the lyrics of the song “*If No One Will Listen.*” Share the song lyrics with the parents and what the students discussed in response to the song. See in *Module 16: Hate Crime Activity #4* and Handout 16-5. (Optional: Play the CD of the song.)

The parents should be aware of the issues that were discussed by the students, and should be encouraged to be a resource for emotional support and guidance. If they find it difficult to talk to their children about the topic (which would not be unusual for any parent), they should ensure that their child makes arrangements to talk to the Academic Coach, school counselor, or Refugee Resettlement Case Manager.

And if they as parents are personally experiencing emotional struggles in coping with bias-related incidents and hate crime, they can also go to their Refugee Resettlement Case Manager for support and information.

What can parents do?



- 1) Parents can discuss the posters and public service announcements with their children and ask them if they understand the importance of the messages *Don't Hate – Be Kind* and *Know Something – Tell Someone*.
- 2) Parents can call the Academic Coach if they are concerned about the possibility of bias-related bullying or hate crime being committed. Sometimes parents know something is wrong but the child is unwilling to talk about it. But if parents suspect that a child is being teased, especially if the teasing is based on a cultural or religious bias, then the parents should talk to the Academic Coach or Refugee Resettlement Case Manager.

Parents may have experienced or witnessed hate crime themselves, or may be aware of children in their community who are victims. It is essential that they alert the Refugee Resettlement Case Manager so that they can have assistance in reporting the incident to local law enforcement. The Case Manager (and police officers trained in bias-related crimes) can help refugees in providing crucial information.

- 3) It is often hard for adults to report incidents, for fear of retaliation or criticism from members of their community. They may be concerned that they will cause more problems if they tell.

It is even harder for children. They often believe that they caused the crime to happen, or may have even deserved to be physically or emotionally hurt. They are already struggling with adjusting to a new school and may feel rejected and alone.

Parents can keep telling their children that the majority of the students in American schools are interested in including and befriending newcomers. But a handful of students may cause new refugee children to be afraid to go to school. It is important for parents to talk to teachers, school administrators, Academic Coaches, or the Refugee Resettlement Case Manager so that children can have a relaxed, comfortable adjustment to their new school.

- 4) Parents should encourage their children to join clubs, sports, and other extracurricular activities where they will feel welcome and part of a supportive group. Club supervisors, coaches, and teachers will all emphasize teamwork, mutual support, and supporting others. Refugee children who are feeling socially isolated or bullied should have a safe, comfortable place to form new friendships.

- 5) Parents should be alert to the possibility of hate crime occurring after school hours. They should be aware of where their children are after school, how they get home from school, and what places students should avoid.

This is not always easy for parents of older students. If the parents explain that they are protecting them from the few people who might want to do them harm, they can work with their children to determine the safest places to be when they are not in school.

For example, some students may need to change their bus route so that they do not walk alone in some neighborhoods. Some parents may want to arrange with other parents for their children to walk supervised or walk with a group. The children may complain at first, but they eventually will see that there is safety in numbers and they may even develop new friendships.

- 6) Parents should encourage students to be proud of their heritage, even if it is different from peers. They should stress the importance of maintaining cultural traditions while adjusting to new ways of living.

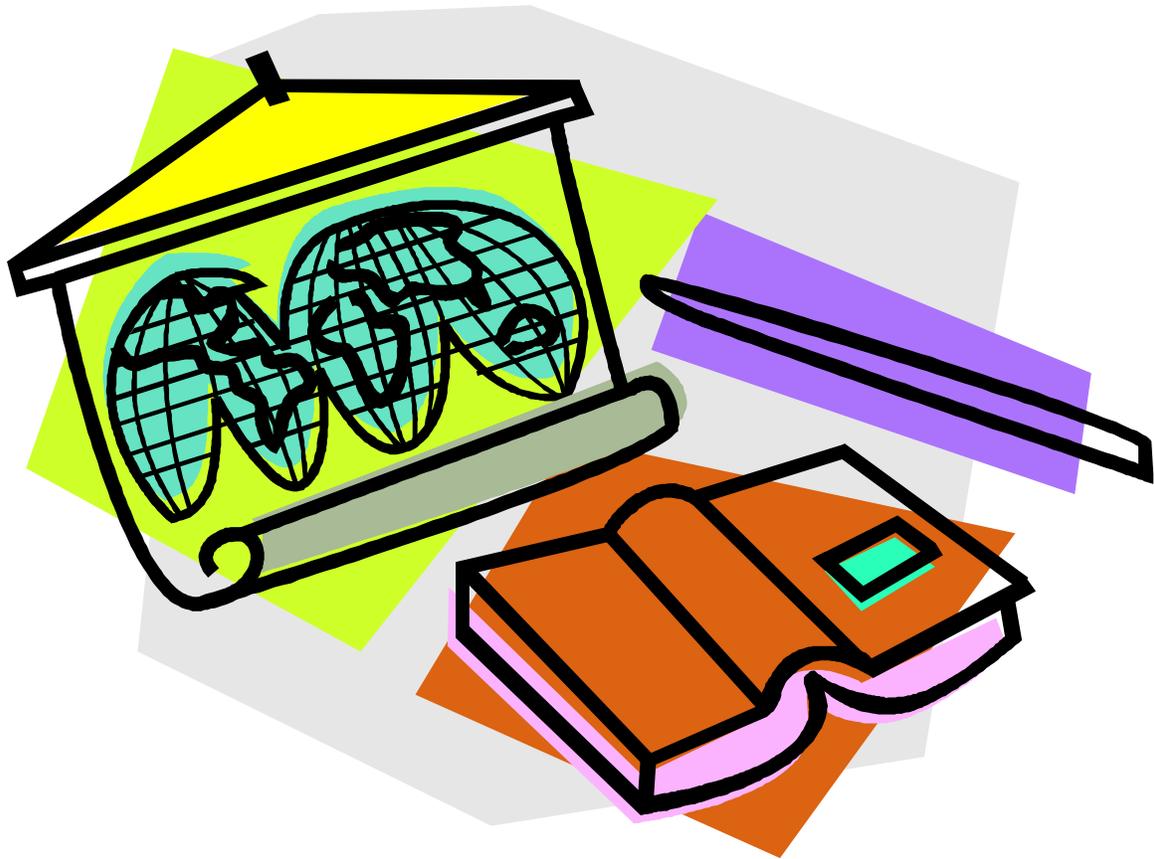


In the Refugee Academy, students are encouraged to teach their peers in their new school about their cultural traditions, since hate crime is often based on stereotypes and misinformation. If they talk about their unique cultural traditions, other students can develop appreciation for differences.

It should not be the responsibility of refugee students to change the minds of children who have been raised to hate other groups. But sometimes sharing information is a significant way of eliminating hate.

- 7) If parents are having difficulty themselves in coping with hate crime, they should not hesitate to talk to their Refugee Resettlement Case Manager. It is important that they address their own feelings so that they can provide support to their children.

WELCOME TO OUR SCHOOLS
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



NEW YORK STATE
BUREAU OF REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT ASSISTANCE (BRIA)
OFFICE OF TEMPORARY AND DISABILITY ASSISTANCE (OTDA)

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Welcome to our Schools

Professional Development



PURPOSE

The purpose of professional development is to inform participants about the components of the OTDA Bureau of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance *Welcome to Our Schools* program for refugee students.

OBJECTIVES

Professional development participants will:

- Become aware of the experiences and concerns of refugee students
- Learn how to play a valuable role in helping refugee students acclimate to their new school environment
- Become knowledgeable about the *Welcome to Our Schools* curriculum, Refugee Academy, Academic Coaches, Parent Programs, Mini-Academies, Brochures for educators and parents, Videos, and school and community-based resources for refugee families

Participants in Professional Development

If possible, all school personnel should have the opportunity to participate in professional development related to welcoming refugee students to the school district.

The following personnel should be invited to attend professional development programs:



- **Faculty**
- **Administration**
 - School District Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents
 - Principals and Assistant Principals
 - Deans
 - Subject Area Supervisors
 - Department Chairs
 - Guidance Counselors
 - School Psychologists
 - School Social Workers
 - School Nurses
- **Paraprofessionals**
- **School District Personnel**
 - Cafeteria Employees
 - Custodians
 - Hall Monitors
 - School-based Law Enforcement
 - School Bus Drivers
 - Playground Aides

School districts have demanding professional development requirements.

In order to raise awareness and provide tips about educating refugees, find at least 20 minutes to conduct professional development with everyone in the school. This can be done at:

- New teacher orientations
- Faculty meetings
- Subject area department meetings
- Administrative meetings, especially district-wide councils and supervisor meetings
- Staff development programs for school district personnel (cafeteria employees, custodians, hall monitors, etc.)
- Counselor meetings (guidance counselors, school psychologists and social workers)
- Curriculum development and interdepartmental meetings
- School safety and security meetings, including school-based law enforcement personnel and NYS Dignity Act Coordinators
- Required in-service programs

Longer programs can be held during Professional Development days and educational conferences, where all school personnel can attend as a general audience.

Instructions for Presenters

Professional development programs should be conducted by individuals who work with refugee families, or who are very familiar with the adjustments that refugee students have to make when they enroll in American schools.



Representatives from local refugee resettlement centers might be available to either lead the professional development program or speak about the services of their agencies. Teachers of English as a Second Language (ESL), English Language Learners (ELL), or English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programs may also be comfortable leading the programs or conducting discussions.

School administrators or members of the faculty who are familiar with the challenges of helping refugee students adjust should be encouraged to assist in conducting the professional development programs.

Those who conduct the professional development programs should recognize that school district personnel may not be familiar with the experiences of refugees. They may not want to reveal that they do not know the culture, languages, and customs of families from other countries. Basic background information should always be provided, including maps, historical and cultural information, and examples of refugee experiences. The information that is provided should be general in nature, but should clearly indicate that there can be a variety of traditions, languages, and cultures in one country.

Every Participant Should Leave the Professional Development Program Knowing:

- The name and contact information of the School Impact Program Director or key personnel who assist refugee students such as ESL/ELL/ESOL teachers.
- The names of the Academic Coaches, mentors, or liaisons to refugee communities.
- Specific information about the local refugee populations, including their educational background, concerns about school, and school enrollment data.
- The name of the English as a Second Language (ESL) Program Supervisor and contact information.

PowerPoints for professional development can be found on the BRIA website:
<http://otda.ny.gov/programs/bria/wtos.asp>

PowerPoint Presenter Notes are on page 25 (Professional Development PowerPoint) and page 58 (Hate Crime PowerPoint).



Key Points of Professional Development

The following Key Points should be included in all of the *Welcome to Our Schools* professional development programs, regardless of the length of the program.



- 1. The New York State Bureau of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance (BRIA) has provided funding for the implementation of a number of programs across the state that are designed to assist refugee students in adjusting to American schools. The funding included the development of the *Welcome to Our Schools* program.**

The Bureau of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance (BRIA) of the New York State Office of Temporary Disability Assistance (OTDA) secured funding from the federal Office of Refugee resettlement for a Refugee School Impact Program. In order to help refugee students and their families who have little knowledge of what school is like in America, BRIA has developed a *Welcome to Our Schools* program. The program is being used by BRIA providers and school districts across the state to assist refugee students and their parents who face significant impediments to becoming fully acclimated to the United States school system.

The *Welcome to Our Schools* program is designed to:

- address educational issues that may face school-aged refugee children
- ease the transition of these refugee children into New York State schools
- empower refugee parents to be effective partners in the education of their children
- support local school systems most heavily impacted by high numbers of refugee students.

To accomplish these goals, the program consistently emphasizes four main themes in the curriculum and learning activities:

- Expose students and their families to all aspects of the American educational program so that they become familiar with how education works in their new country.
- Promote an understanding of the multiple benefits of an American education and encourage refugee students to make the most of their opportunities.
- Help students to develop confidence that they will successfully adjust to their new schools.
- Recognize the contributions that resettled refugees can make to the school district and community.

The *Welcome to Our Schools* program contains a curriculum for a summer Refugee Academy, consisting of 16 learning modules on the following topics:

Module 1:	<i>American Schools</i>
Module 2:	<i>Making Friends</i>
Module 3:	<i>Transportation and Time</i>
Module 4:	<i>School Rules</i>
Module 5:	<i>So Much to Learn!</i>
Module 6:	<i>Stay Healthy</i>
Module 7:	<i>Interests and Talents</i>
Module 8:	<i>Getting Help</i>
Module 9:	<i>Study Skills</i>
Module 10:	<i>Taking Tests</i>
Module 11:	<i>Technology and School</i>
Module 12:	<i>School Safety</i>
Module 13:	<i>Keeping Families Informed</i>
Module 14:	<i>Coping with Stress</i>
Module 15:	<i>Staying Safe</i>
Module 16:	<i>Hate Crime</i>

Also included in the curriculum are:

- Parent Programs
- Videos and Guide to the Videos
- Mini-Academy Curriculum
- Professional Development Program
- Posters
- Primary Level (K-2) Supplementary Activities
- Brochures for Teachers, School Nurses, Counselors, Administrators, Peer Mentors
- Brochure: *Domestic Abuse: Strategies for Building Healthy Relationships*
- Hate Crime Public Service Announcement



2. *Refugee students need assistance and support from all school district personnel.*

Refugee students may enter school at any time during the school year. They have more than likely experienced trauma, including constant hunger, violence, frequent movement to stay safe, and sudden disruption of family life. Many of the refugee students have had little or no schooling, or have experienced educational systems that are very different from the American education system. Some students may have had a high quality education that was interrupted.

The families of refugee students are provided with support from local refugee centers, community-based and faith-based organizations, and federal, state, and local governments. They can receive assistance with housing, food, employment, and social services. The children are quickly enrolled in local schools, but it is the school district's responsibility to determine the most effective learning program for each refugee student.

School districts can arrange for ESL (English as a Second Language) programs, guidance counselors, teachers, and student mentors to help refugee students acclimate to their new schools.

Every adult in the school system who interacts with refugee students can help refugee students adjust comfortably. Faculty members, administrators, counselors, paraprofessionals, and ESL teachers will undoubtedly have the opportunity to provide guidance and reassurance as students learn how to navigate their new school environment. At the same time, school bus drivers, cafeteria workers, hall monitors, school law enforcement officials, custodians, and other school district personnel can have a significant impact on the school experience of refugee students.

All school district personnel should be aware of how bewildered refugee students may be. Refugee students usually do not speak English and are overwhelmed with the activity level of American schools. Most refugee students are unfamiliar with having several teachers who encourage class discussions, small group activities, and creativity. They may not know school or classroom rules, cafeteria and transportation systems, and daily tasks such as using a locker, moving from class to class, or finishing homework.

Many refugee students are unfamiliar with rest rooms, changing clothes for athletic activities, and speaking in front of groups. After-school and other extracurricular activities are new to refugee students, and they need help in figuring out how to participate.

During the professional development programs it is essential to point out that all school district personnel can help refugee students by:

- Explaining basic activities (e.g., paying for lunch, working a locker combination, playing a game in gym class, riding the bus)
- Demonstrating behaviors (e.g., lining up for moving through the school halls, raising hand in class, joining clubs)
- Reassuring students (e.g., praising simple accomplishments, guiding students through fire drills, assisting in organizing school work)
- Observing refugee students to determine if additional health or guidance services are needed.
- Identifying students who demonstrate chronic negative behaviors or fail to advance, and recognizing that the behaviors may stem from emotional/social issues related to resettlement.
- Protecting students from teasing and bullying and teaching them about how to report concerns.
- Teaching students about the rules of acceptable behavior before disciplining them, especially rules related to Zero Tolerance.



The school nurse, physical education teachers, school psychologists, and guidance counselors can monitor the hygiene and physical and mental health of refugee students.

In most cases, the parents/guardian of refugee students are coping with huge adjustments in family life. They may not be familiar with the educational system. As school districts assist refugee students in adjusting, they should also be welcoming parents via ESL/ELL/ESOL programs. Refugee community contacts and school interpreters can assist by communicating with non-English speaking parents.



Professional Development Activities

Professional development programs can consist of one or more of the following activities, depending upon the interests and concerns of the participants, and the amount of time available for the program.

For every professional development session:

- ➔ ➔ **Share the PowerPoint presentation** included in this section and available on the BRIA website:
<http://otda.ny.gov/programs/bria/wtos.asp>
- ➔ ➔ **Include in each presentation** information about local resources and school personnel who can assist refugee students.
- ➔ ➔ **Follow the introduction with** specific information about the local refugee population (without giving names), providing details about their experiences, needs, and former education.

Follow the introduction with one of the following activities:

Activity #1: Large Group Discussion Questions

Activity #2: Never Assume Handout Discussion

Activity #3: Small Group Discussions

Activity #4: Guest Speakers

Activity #5: Video Discussions

ACTIVITY #1: LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

After using the provided PowerPoint to review general background about the *Welcome to Our Schools* program and local refugee students, the following questions can be discussed with a large group. Give the participants a chance to share ideas, raise concerns, and reveal areas where more education is necessary.



Explain that the questions are meant for participants to share knowledge and observations followed by presenter recommendations.

Facilitate the discussion, providing information and correcting misconceptions.

1. On the basis of your observations, what is the most difficult challenge for refugee students who are new to your school?
2. How long does it take for a refugee student to become acclimated to school? (Since it varies depending upon the student, how can school district personnel ease the stress of adjustment?)
3. How can you find out the background of a refugee student and what would you like to know? Why would you like to know it?
4. What do you think embarrasses refugee students the most? What would you do to make sure that refugee students are not embarrassed?
5. How have you communicated with refugee students who are just beginning to learn English?
6. How would you educate other students about the experiences of refugee students without making the refugee students feel uncomfortable?
7. How do refugee students contribute to the educational experience of other students in the school?
8. Who are the school personnel who are responsible for assisting refugee students? How can you contact them?
9. How would you handle communicating with a refugee student in a cafeteria or hallway, when it is a noisy and busy environment?
10. How do you handle situations when other students in the school are rude to refugee students, or tease and harass them?
11. Who can you turn to in this district if you are struggling with communicating with a refugee student?
12. How would you handle lectures and tests when you know that a refugee student in your classroom does not speak English?
13. What will you do tomorrow to help refugee students adjust?
14. How could you use more assistance in addressing the needs of refugee students?

Distribute the handouts from pages 16-24 in this module:

- Handout #2: *Tips for Communicating with Refugee Students*
- Handout #3: *Never Assume*
- Handout #4: *Strategies for Administrators*
- Handout #5: *Strategies for Teachers*
- Handout: *Evaluation Form*

ACTIVITY #2: NEVER ASSUME HANDOUT DISCUSSION

- Distribute Handout #3: *Never Assume* (page 17 in this module) either before the professional development session or at the beginning of the session.
- Either review or read aloud the story about the fourth grade student in Handout #3.
- Review each item on the handout and explain:
 - Why refugee students may not know basic information
 - How refugee students may be embarrassed about their lack of experience, and compensatory behaviors they may use to hide their insecurities
 - How school district personnel can explain basic information and skills without embarrassing refugee students.

Distribute and discuss the handouts on pages 16-24 in this module:



- Handout #2: *Tips for Communicating with Refugee Students*
- Handout #3: *Never Assume*
- Handout #4: *Strategies for Administrators*
- Handout #5: *Strategies for Teachers*
- Handout: *Evaluation Form*

ACTIVITY #3: SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

This activity will require more time for adequate small group discussion and follow-up sharing. The presenter may need to select specific questions from Handout #1: *Small Group Strategy Questions* (page 14 in this module).

- Divide the large group into small groups. The groups can be organized by mixed professions and a range of experience with refugee students, or by specific specializations. For example:

Administrator Questions	1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 12, 14, 17, 24, 25
Counselor /Social Worker Questions	1, 2, 5, 6, 12, 13, 15, 19, 20, 23
Teacher Questions	1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 21, 22, 24
District Personnel Questions	1, 6, 7, 11, 14, 24

- Distribute Handout #1: *Small Group Strategy Questions* (page 14 in this module).
- After small group discussions, all of the groups should share their responses with the entire group, with discussion facilitated by the presenter.
- Each of the groups can also prepare questions for the other groups to discuss, or for the presenter and guests to answer.

Distribute the handouts on pages 16-24 in this module:

- Handout #2: *Tips for Communicating with Refugee Students*
- Handout #3: *Never Assume*
- Handout #4: *Strategies for Administrators*
- Handout #5: *Strategies for Teachers*
- Handout: *Evaluation Form*

ACTIVITY #4: GUEST SPEAKERS

Invite guest speakers to share information about their experiences working with refugee students and the services they provide refugee families. Ask each presenter to talk for 5-10 minutes about the following:

- What have you found to be the most challenging about working with refugee children, and what is the most rewarding?
- What is available in the community to help refugee families?
- On the basis of your experience in working with refugee families, how can school districts help students adjust?
- What can the participants in the professional development program do immediately to assist and support refugee students?

Guest speakers can be:

- Representatives from local refugee resettlement centers
- Representatives from local community-based and faith-based organizations that assist refugee families
- Representatives from state and local government organizations that assist refugee families
- Local health care professionals who assist refugee families
- ESL/ELL/ESOL teachers who are familiar with the students and their families
- Refugee students who have adjusted to American schools.
- Refugee Community leaders

Distribute the handouts on pages 16-24 of this module:

- Handout #2: *Tips for Communicating with Refugee Students*
- Handout #3: *Never Assume*
- Handout #4: *Strategies for Administrators*
- Handout #5: *Strategies for Teachers*
- Handout: *Evaluation Form*

ACTIVITY #5: VIDEO DISCUSSION



There are 2 videos that can be shown at Professional Development programs, depending upon the participants and the amount of time available for the program. Each video runs between 15 and 20 minutes.

The ***Guide to the Videos*** included in the *Welcome to Our Schools* curriculum provides information on what to highlight prior to showing the videos, and questions for discussion.

- The video ***Refugee Student Interviews*** consists of a series of observations from refugee students about their experiences in their new school. They talk about making friends, daily schedules, after-school activities, the cafeteria, and other topics. The video clearly shows that school district personnel and students can help refugee students to adjust.
- The video ***Refugee Parent Interviews*** consists of refugee parents talking about their experiences in enrolling their children in American schools. Although the video is intended for other refugee parents, it provides important insights about the concerns of refugee parents and can be shown for professional development.

Distribute the handouts on pages 16-24 of this module:

- Handout #2: *Tips for Communicating with Refugee Students*
- Handout #3: *Never Assume*
- Handout #4: *Strategies for Administrators*
- Handout #5: *Strategies for Teachers*
- Handout: *Evaluation Form*

HANDOUTS FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CURRICULUM

Handout #1: Small Group Strategy Questions

Handout #2: Tips for Communicating with Refugee Students

Handout #3: Never Assume

Handout #4: Strategies for Administrators

Handout #5: Strategies for Teachers

Handout: Evaluation Form



Small Group Strategy Questions



1. If a student approaches you and clearly does not speak English, how will you communicate to find out what the student needs?
2. If a refugee student appears to be making friends with a student who tends to have problems in school, should you intervene?
3. How can you make the first day of school for a refugee student feel comfortable, even if they are obviously scared and confused?
4. How can you educate colleagues and students about the goals and capabilities of refugee students?
5. What should you do if a refugee student shares information about past experiences that is sensitive, maybe even graphic?
6. What should you do if a refugee student is obviously ostracized, harassed, or bullied?
7. What should you do if you notice that a refugee student is not eating lunch, not participating in extracurricular activities, not prepared for class, or chronically late?
8. How can you communicate with parents so that they know what is going on in school? What if they cannot speak English or believe that approaching teachers is interfering rather than expected?
9. Who would you talk to if you have statewide assessments coming up and you have a refugee student who will clearly struggle in completing the tests?
10. How would you know if a refugee student has unique skills and talents?
How would you know if a refugee student has a learning disability?
11. How would you explain to a refugee student how to buy school lunch?
How would you explain where to sit in the cafeteria?
12. What do you know about the native countries of the refugee students?
13. How would you know if a student is experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder? What could you do about it?



14. If you have to approach a refugee student to find out what they are doing or where they are going, how would you do it?
15. What school club could assist with helping refugee students adjust?
16. How would you respond if a colleague or student made a negative comment about refugee students coming to the United States?
17. How would you explain the term “refugee” to colleagues and students?
18. What are some strategies that you can use right away to help a refugee student join the class in learning?
19. What would you do if a refugee student indicated continuous adjustment problems through conversations, drawings, journals and stories, or class work?
20. How would you reassure a refugee student that teachers (and other school personnel) will not hurt them if the student asks questions or does not know an answer to a question?
21. How would you help a refugee student get organized, including keep track of time?
22. How would you explain to students how refugee students contribute to their education?
23. How would you support resiliency of refugee students?
24. What should you do to educate refugee students before disciplining them?
25. What school rules might have to be modified for refugee students? For how long?

Tips for Communicating with Refugee Students

- Before communicating, ask students about their level of fluency. Some new refugee students may be fluent in English.
- Speak slowly. Repeat the same sentence without changing the words.
- Keep sentences simple and clear.
- Do not use contractions, slang, or jargon.
- Be alert for inappropriate words and phrases that peers may teach refugee students.
- Refugee students can often read English better than hear it, so read directions aloud more than once, giving the student a written copy of directions to follow along.
- Be aware that background noises can interfere with communication. Students may not be able to understand because of the noise of the cafeteria, the school bus, the playground, or the gym class. Try to speak directly to the student or relocate to a quieter area.
- Seat students on the side or front of the room where they have a good sight line to the teacher and can watch the teacher's face.
- Walk students through school activities; do not just explain them verbally. For example, activities such as using money in the cafeteria, practicing the locker combination, and working with paints in the classroom may require personal assistance.
- Do not assume that if a student nods, says "yes," or is silent when responding, that the student actually means "yes." Make sure that the student comprehends what you have told them. Refugee students will often respond with "yes" or "okay" even if they do not understand.
- As a refugee student is learning English, modify tasks so that they are similar to the other students', but are shorter and not as complex.
- Research the cultural traditions of refugee students and how they may influence behavior and communication in school.
- Refrain from asking personal questions, especially about past history, in front of other students, unless the student volunteers the information.
- Whenever possible, partner students with classmates who can provide assistance. This experience is helpful for the refugee students and builds new friendships.

Never Assume

Educators should never assume that refugee students, no matter what their age and background, have basic knowledge about what school is like in America. The following scenario is typical of an American elementary classroom and the perspective of a refugee student:

In a recent fourth grade class, the teacher announced that it was time for recess. The students moved quickly to grab their jackets, hats, and gloves, and put on their boots. Then they lined up, talking excitedly, and headed outside to play.



A new refugee student sat in her seat, afraid to move. She had just come from living in a series of villages, where “school” was the occasional gathering of children with very strict adults who punished them if they spoke. Classes were often disrupted by violence or the urgent need to escape to a refugee camp or hiding place. She often fled with the clothes on her back and no shoes, holding tightly to the hand of her older sister.

She did not know what recess was, and had no idea where the students were going and if they would ever come back. She could not understand why the students were talking so loudly, risking corporal punishment from the teacher. She watched as the children piled on layers of unfamiliar clothing and then willingly went out into the cold. She watched out the window as they ran laughing around the playground and then settled in groups that played with balls and ropes.



The teacher asked her if she would rather color than go outside, and handed her a box of crayons.

She did not know what it meant to “color” and did not know what to do with the “crayons.” It was all so confusing and discouraging when everyone else seemed to know exactly what to do.

For refugee students, deficits in *basic* knowledge and experience can have a profound effect on learning and skill development. Educators should always keep in mind that most of the refugee students, even those who have experienced forms of education in their native countries, are “brand new” at learning in school.

NEVER ASSUME THAT REFUGEE STUDENTS:

- Know what they are supposed to do with a crayon, pencil, scissors, glue, or paintbrush.
- Will be willing to store their backpacks in a locker, out of sight.
- Know that when they get on a bus they will be able to come back home.

- Have seen a picture book.
- Understand that a clean body includes clean clothes.
- Understand that every day the entire body should be clean.
- Desire to “fit in” by abandoning their traditional culture.
- Are convinced that the teacher will be nice and helpful, and not hurt or threaten them.
- Are comfortable wearing shoes, underwear, socks, and other unfamiliar clothing.
- Are living in healthy, sanitary conditions, now that they are no longer in their native countries.



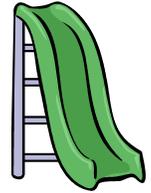
- Are smiling and nodding because they understand teachers, not because they have learned that a smile and a nod pleases teachers.
- Have used restroom facilities, let alone public restrooms with multiple stalls.
- Understand that a gang is not an accepted form of an American family.
- Are healthy, just because they appear to be healthy.
- Understand that a fire drill means that they will be safe.
- Are eating lunch every day.
- Have access to breakfast.
- Have had a chance to discover talents that they didn't even know they had.



- Are living with people they know, even if they are relatives.
- Are able to communicate with their parents about school.
- Have parents who believe that it is acceptable to be involved in their child's education.
- Are developmentally at their chronological age.
- Are being treated well by their peers and not getting teased.
- Know what it means to be “on time.”
- Have difficulty in school because of their backgrounds, when they could have a learning disability or health problem.



- Have experience sitting at a desk all day.
- Are used to large crowds of people.
- Are used to adults talking to them individually.
- Can adapt quickly to the routine of changing clothes for gym class.
- Are permitted by their families to participate in all school activities.
- Trust adults, especially those in uniform.
- Have ever seen playground equipment or participated in a game or sport.
- Have ever watched a video.
- Have established a morning routine that is not stressful.
- Are allowed to interact with the other gender.
- Will automatically connect with peers from their native country.
- Do not harbor ill will against peers from their native country, on the basis of past history of civil wars and violence.
- Interpret nonverbal cues in the same way as their American peers and teachers.
- Have forgotten their past, or “moved on.”
- Do not want to talk about their past.
- Want to talk about their past.
- Welcome their new lives, even if it means leaving friends and relatives behind in their native countries.
- Think that they are safe in school.



AND NEVER ASSUME THAT REFUGEE STUDENTS:

- Are having difficulties in school solely because of language barriers, when they actually may be overwhelmed and exhausted from their new school routines.
- Are participating in school activities because they are comfortable and no longer afraid, when they are actually hiding how they really feel.
- Are so far behind that they will never catch up, when they can actually adjust quickly if they receive reassurance and guidance.

WELCOME TO OUR SCHOOLS

REFUGEE SCHOOL IMPACT PROGRAM

STRATEGIES FOR ADMINISTRATORS

- Constantly reassure refugee students and point out daily progress in adjusting.
- View each child as unique. Do not make assumptions based on cultural background.
- Research the native countries of refugee students. Ask general questions about climate, terrain, foods, and traditions. Avoid personal questions about family and friends in native countries, political issues, and experiences as refugees.
- To engage students in welcoming refugee students, encourage them to mentor new students and to praise progress as students adjust to American schools.
- Stress the advantages of having students from around the world in the classrooms.
- Match refugee students up with buddies who can be good role models and will not be uncomfortable guiding students who do not speak English.
- Encourage refugee students to share information with family members, and stress that family members are welcome to call, e-mail, and attend school events. For many refugee students, parents were not expected to communicate with their child's school. Reach out to parents and invite them personally to participate in school events.
- Introduce refugee students to school district personnel who will be in the hallways, cafeteria, and playground.
- Never assume that refugee students know school rules and procedures, even those that are basic such as walking in the halls, raising hands, arriving at class on time, etc. Teach every rule and review it. Educate before disciplining.
- Refugee students will adjust faster if they have developed friendships. Encourage them to participate in clubs, after-school activities, sports, and school functions, to broaden opportunities for making new friends.
- If refugee students are still learning English but are participating in classes in subject areas, view the classroom experience as social immersion. Focus on helping the students learn school rules and procedures, meet fellow students, and become comfortable with the teachers. Academic work, grades, and tests will follow.



- Discuss the background of refugee students with ESL teachers and tutors, to determine how much the student understands, how the student is adjusting, and how much education the student has had. In some countries, the students have had a rigorous education, but their schooling was interrupted.
- Do not assume that students are monolingual, are not comprehending, or have limited educational background. Find out about the backgrounds of the students to better facilitate learning. They may be understanding English, but are unable to speak it clearly.
- Share information about student backgrounds with key personnel.
- Determine if there is a district policy about placement and grading of refugee students.
 - If not, consult with ESL and classroom teachers to determine school policies. Develop policies based on the cultural context and experiences of the refugee students, recognizing that policies may include a number of different assessment strategies.
- Support alternative instructional strategies for refugee students, including the use of cultural frames of reference, differentiated instruction, and social immersion. Refugee students need to feel comfortable in their new setting before they can seriously start learning in English.
- Keep an eye out for signals that refugee students are floundering, bullied, connecting with students who are often disciplined, or exhibiting negative behaviors. Before quickly disciplining, consult with ESL teachers and guidance counselors to determine whether the student is having difficulty adjusting or does not understand the rules and consequences.
- Establish a school climate that does not tolerate bullying, harassment, or racism. This is difficult, but constant reinforcement of expectations and clear respect for differences will assist refugee students in adjusting to their new environments. Stress the value of diversity.
- Arrange for professional development sessions on cultural competence.
- Train all school personnel in communication strategies when talking to refugee students. Show how phrases such as “Where are you supposed to be?” and “Where is your pass?” may confuse refugee students and cause them to be disciplined. Ensure that cafeteria workers, playground aides, law enforcement personnel, custodians, and any other workers in the school are aware of the enrollment of refugee students in the school.
- Recognize that teachers will be frustrated and occasionally uncomfortable when responsible for teaching refugee students, particularly in academic subjects that require considerable amounts of reading and writing. Facilitate instructional support, English language instruction, tutors, and other arrangements to support faculty.

WELCOME TO OUR SCHOOLS

REFUGEE SCHOOL IMPACT PROGRAM

STRATEGIES FOR TEACHERS

- Constantly reassure refugee students and point out daily progress in adjusting.
- View each child as unique. Do not make assumptions based on cultural background.
- Remember that basic activities are all new to refugee students. Explain basic steps, demonstrate, and reinforce several times. For example, show how a pencil is used, how it can be sharpened, how to write on the lines of notebook paper, and how to erase. (Demonstrate this to students K-12.)
- Research the native countries of refugee students. Ask general questions about climate, terrain, foods, and traditions. Avoid personal questions about family and friends in native countries, political issues, and experiences as refugees.
- To engage students in welcoming refugee students, encourage them to mentor new students and to praise progress as students adjust to American schools.
- Stress the advantages of having students from around the world in the classrooms.
- Teach key words and phrases in English that will help refugee students follow classroom activities, such as *line up*, *take out your paper and pencil*, *homework is on the board*, and *work in a group*. Use online translation programs, if possible.
- Match refugee students up with buddies who can be good role models and will not be uncomfortable guiding students who do not speak English.
- Encourage refugee students to participate in group work, recognizing that many refugee students have never experienced group discussions in school.
- Develop the “whole” child by looking for unique skills or talents, encouraging interests, and exposing refugee children to subjects and activities that they may never have experienced before.
- Encourage refugee students to share information with family members, and stress that family members are welcome to call, e-mail, and attend school events. For many refugee students, parents were not expected to communicate with their child’s school. Reach out to parents and invite them personally to participate in school events.
- Introduce refugee students to school district personnel who will be in the hallways, cafeteria, and playground.



- Never assume that refugee students know school rules and procedures, even those that are basic such as walking in the halls, raising hands, arriving at class on time, etc. Teach every rule and review it. Educate before disciplining.
- Refugee students will adjust faster if they have developed friendships. Encourage them to participate in clubs, after-school activities, sports, and school functions, to broaden opportunities for making new friends.
- Establish a classroom that is safe by encouraging cooperation and respect. Ease the stress of traumatized refugee students by explaining fire drills, partnering the student with helpful students, valuing cultural diversity, and praising refugee students for basic tasks.
- If refugee students are still learning English but are participating in classes in subject areas, view the classroom experience as social immersion. Focus on helping the students learn school rules and procedures, meet fellow students, and become comfortable with the teachers. Academic work, grades, and tests will follow.
- Discuss schoolwork, including grades and tests, with ESL (English as a Second Language) teachers, administrators, and guidance counselors. Determine if there is a school policy about placement and grading of refugee students.
- Discuss the background of refugee students with ESL teachers and tutors, to determine how much the student understands, how the student is adjusting, and how much education the student has had. In some countries, the students have had a rigorous education, but their schooling was interrupted.
- Distribute the same classroom materials to all students, even if the refugee students cannot speak English. Differentiate classroom assignments so that the refugee students can be successful in doing the homework, but can also become familiar with the textbooks and other instructional materials.
- Many refugee students will be overwhelmed with the amount of stimulus in the school. Assist students in concentrating on the task at hand and achieving small steps toward adjustment.
- Do not assume that students are monolingual, are not comprehending, or have limited educational background. Find out about the backgrounds of the students to better facilitate learning. They may be understanding English, but are unable to speak it clearly.
- Keep an eye out for signals that refugee students are floundering, bullied, connecting with students who are often disciplined, or exhibiting negative behaviors. Before quickly disciplining, consult with ESL/ELL/ESOL teachers and guidance counselors to determine whether the student is having difficulty adjusting or does not understand the rules and consequences.



EVALUATION

WELCOME TO OUR SCHOOLS Professional Development Program

Please indicate a rating for each statement.

Additional space is provided for comments.

4 = very good

3 = good

2 = needs improvement

1 = no opinion

Statement	Rating
1. The program was informative. <i>Comment:</i>	
2. The information provided in the program was useful. <i>Comment:</i>	
3. The presentation was clear and organized. <i>Comment:</i>	
4. The presenter answered questions in a manner that was focused and helpful. <i>Comment:</i>	
Suggested additional programs:	

POWERPOINT NOTES FOR PRESENTERS

PowerPoints for professional development can be found on the BRIA website:
<http://otda.ny.gov/programs/bria/wtos.asp>

Using the following *PowerPoint Notes for Presenters*, show the Power Point presentation entitled *Welcome to Our Schools*.

- The PowerPoint can be shown to a general audience or to groups that are organized by specialization (faculty, administration, guidance counselors, etc.).
- The *PowerPoint Notes for Presenters* contains suggestions for additional information that can be shared after showing each slide.
- Representatives from Refugee Centers, community-based organizations, guidance offices, and ESL/ELL/ESOL departments can also provide commentary as the slides are shown. Refugee students who have adjusted to the school district may also be invited to share their observations and experiences during the presentation.

Questions from the participants can be taken during the presentation or afterward. Emphasis in the presentation should be on how important it is that all school district personnel welcome refugee students to the new schools.



Explain the components of the local Refugee School Impact Program.

REFUGEE STUDENTS COME TO OUR SCHOOLS

▶ Afraid

▶ Anxious

▶ Excited

▶ Bewildered

2

Describe the purposes of the presentation:

- To raise awareness about the experiences and needs of refugee students.
- To provide suggestions about what school district personnel can do to help students to adjust and excel.

THEY HAVE FLED THEIR NATIVE COUNTRIES BECAUSE OF

- ▶ War
- ▶ Political Oppression
- ▶ Constant Violence
- ▶ Torture
- ▶ Religious persecution

3

Without giving names, provide examples of experiences of local refugee families and why they sought refuge.

Describe the mixed emotions of students and family members about fleeing to America.

REFUGEE CHILDREN MAY HAVE EXPERIENCED

- ▶ Constant hunger
- ▶ Violence
- ▶ Never-ending fear
- ▶ Frequent movement to stay safe
- ▶ Loss of family members and friends
- ▶ Little or no education/interrupted education
- ▶ Sudden disruption of productive lives

Provide examples of specific refugee camps and conditions.

Without giving names, provide examples of experiences of local refugee children.

REFUGEE CAMPS

Many refugee students have spent most of their lives in refugee camps where everything is scarce, safety is not guaranteed, and schools may not exist.

Explain how experiences in refugee camps can influence the behavior and expectations of local refugee students. Be specific.

THEY HAVE LEFT BEHIND

- ▶ All of their belongings
- ▶ Family members
- ▶ Friends and neighbors
- ▶ Heirlooms, religious artifacts
- ▶ Familiar environment, weather, and lifestyle
- ▶ Family history

6

Provide examples of what families are able to bring with them to the United States.

REFUGEE FAMILIES ARE ASSISTED BY

- ▶ The NYS Bureau of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance (BRIA)
- ▶ Refugee Resettlement Centers
- ▶ Community and religious groups
- ▶ Local social services
- ▶ Local educational organizations

7

Describe the services that are available to local refugee families.

THE AGENCIES ARRANGE FOR

- ▶ Housing
- ▶ Employment
- ▶ Clothing
- ▶ Religious contacts
- ▶ Social services
- ▶ English instruction
- ▶ Educational opportunities

Discuss how basic housing, heat, food, clothing, etc. can influence school experiences of refugee students.

Describe specific services that are offered in the school district, such as free breakfast and lunch, coverage of fees for extra-curricular activities, donated school supplies, ESL/ELL/ESOL, etc.

REFUGEE STUDENTS ARE ENROLLED IN THEIR NEW SCHOOLS

Everything is new.

The experience can be overwhelming.

Describe the enrollment process and the role of parents, administrators, teachers, school bus drivers, and other school district personnel. Stress the supportive role, rather than the rules and paperwork.

Explain how an American school can be overwhelming to any new student, particularly those who do not speak English and may not have attended school.

Explain that some refugee students have had their own education suddenly disrupted and may have a hard time adjusting because they are used to their own systems and may miss their teachers and friends.

IMAGINE...

that you are asked to color a picture and
you have never seen crayons before...

or books, markers, scissors, paint, glue, or
coloring books.



Describe other school activities that may be brand new to refugee students.

Emphasize basic school experiences such as:

Lockers, Backpacks, Recess and sports, Music and the Arts, Classroom supplies
such as books, puzzles, pencils

Share the items listed on Handout #3: *Never Assume*

IMAGINE...

that you came to this country with no belongings – and now you have a backpack filled with books and school supplies.

Would you keep it out of sight in your locker?

11

Ask the participants to answer the question, “Would you keep it out of sight in your locker?”

Explain why some refugee students are reluctant to store their belongings in a locker. (The backpack may be the only personal belongings the refugee student has ever owned.)

IMAGINE...

that it is time for lunch in the cafeteria
and you do not recognize the foods,
understand the language, know any of
the students, and have no idea how to
pay for the food or where to sit.

12

Discuss how difficult it is to navigate the school cafeteria, especially in the middle and high schools.

Describe student confusion about:

- Lunch payment systems
- Vending machines
- Throwing away leftovers
- Who to sit with in the cafeteria

IMAGINE...

that you think, based on your past, that
teachers will hit you if you speak.

13

Describe the educational experiences of refugee students, varying from:

No education

Little education, often interrupted

Temporary schools in refugee camps, homes, etc.

Fully functioning schools that had to be left behind

Teachers who stressed harsh discipline

Teachers who will be remembered and missed

IT IS OFTEN HARD FOR REFUGEE STUDENTS TO UNDERSTAND THE CONSTANT ACTIVITY IN AMERICAN SCHOOLS.

Where is everyone going?

Why are there so many teachers?

What are the teachers talking about?

How do they fit in?

Describe the first day of school from the perspective of a new refugee student (Presenters may wish to follow the PowerPoint with the DVD: *Interviews with Refugee Parents* or *Interviews with Refugee Students*.)

TOP PRIORITY

is to help refugee students learn the English language and the traditions of American schools.

Describe local ESL/ELL/ESOL programs and how they support refugee students.

Describe the local process of assessing educational levels and skills.

Describe the difficulties in determining skills and grade placement.

Without giving names, provide specific examples of how students have learned English and adjusted.

SCHOOL DISTRICTS PROVIDE

- ▶ ESL/ELL/ESOL Programs
- ▶ Guidance from
 - ▶ Counselors
 - ▶ Social Workers
 - ▶ Teachers
 - ▶ Peer Mentors
 - ▶ School Nurse

16

Describe ESL/ELL Programs

Describe the possible social, emotional, and health care needs of refugee students.

Post-traumatic stress disorder

Serious health problems

Grief from loss of family and friends

Struggles to maintain cultural and religious traditions

Describe local support services

Describe school-based advocacy or counseling programs.

REFUGEE SCHOOL IMPACT PROGRAM

- ▶ Funded by the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement
NYS Bureau of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance (BRIA)
- ▶ Helps refugee students adjust to American schools

Describe how the original funding was the impetus for the development of Refugee Academies. Federal funding, administered by BRIA (NYS Bureau of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance)

WELCOME TO OUR SCHOOLS

- ▶ Refugee Academy
- ▶ Videos/Guide to Video Instruction
- ▶ Curriculum: 16 Modules
- ▶ Academic Coach Guidance
- ▶ Mini-Academy Curriculum
- ▶ Parent Programs
- ▶ Professional Development

18

Explain the addition of:

Activities for grades K-2 to supplement the elementary activities in the Modules

Guide for Academic Coaches

WELCOME TO OUR SCHOOLS

- ▶ Brochures:
 - ▶ Teachers
 - ▶ Counselors
 - ▶ Administrators
 - ▶ School Nurses
 - ▶ Healthy Relationships
- ▶ Public Service Announcement: Don't Hate-Be Kind
- ▶ Student Flash Cards
- ▶ Supplemental Primary Level Activities (K-2)

19

Share copies of the brochures for:

Teachers
Administrators
Counselors
Peer Mentors
Nurses

REFUGEE STUDENTS ADAPT MORE QUICKLY IF THEY

- ▶ Learn key words in English
- ▶ Make friends
- ▶ Learn about health and hygiene
- ▶ Learn social skills

20

Discuss the important role of friendships and social skills to facilitate adjustment, even before academics.

Describe how younger students make friends on the playground and in classroom activities. Older students have already formed closer friendships and groups, making it harder for new students to make friends.

Middle and high school students tend to place more emphasis on conformity, especially in the areas of dress, language, attitude, and interests. Describe how it may be difficult for older refugee students to “fit in” and form friendships.

REFUGEE STUDENTS CAN BE

- ▶ Hopeful
- ▶ Quick studies
- ▶ Eager to learn
- ▶ Thrilled to be in an American school

21

Stress how quickly students can adjust, with support and guidance.

Discuss examples of the enthusiasm of some refugee students.

THE SCHOOL IMPACT PROGRAM

addresses the confusion and fears of refugee students.

22

Point out that even if students are excited about attending their new school, they can be scared. The Refugee Academy, Mini-Academies and Academic Coaches address their confusion and fears.

WHAT CAN CONFUSE REFUGEE STUDENTS?

- ▶ Classroom rules
- ▶ Punctuality
- ▶ Moving from class to class
- ▶ Working in groups
- ▶ Organization and study skills
- ▶ Cafeteria routines
- ▶ Sports and clubs

Review each item and provide examples.

WHAT CAN FRIGHTEN REFUGEE STUDENTS?

- ▶ Fire and lockdown drills
- ▶ Health exams
- ▶ Changing clothes for physical education
- ▶ Police officers in schools
- ▶ School buses, subways

24

Review each item and provide examples.

TOPICS ADDRESSED IN THE REFUGEE ACADEMY AND MINI-ACADEMY:

- ▶ American Schools
- ▶ Making Friends
- ▶ Transportation and Time
- ▶ School Rules
- ▶ So Much to Learn (Extra-Curricular)
- ▶ Health and Hygiene/Lead Poisoning
- ▶ Interests and Talents
- ▶ Getting Help

25

If possible, show the Welcome to Our Schools Refugee Academy curriculum.

Describe the key points and activities for the topics listed on the slide.

Share anecdotes about the participation of the refugee students in the Refugee Academy.

TOPICS ADDRESSED IN THE REFUGEE ACADEMY AND MINI-ACADEMY:

- ▶ Study Skills
- ▶ Taking Tests
- ▶ Technology
- ▶ School Safety and Security
- ▶ Keeping Families Informed
- ▶ Managing Stress
- ▶ Staying Safe/Bullying
- ▶ Hate Crime

Explain that the activities are designed to assist refugee students in adjusting to American schools.

Discuss the additional module on Hate Crime, the expanded module on bullying, and the Domestic Abuse: Building Health Relationships brochure.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

- ▶ Connect with ESL teachers and Academic Coaches
- ▶ Research refugee cultures
- ▶ Know referral sources
- ▶ Reach out to parents and Refugee Centers
- ▶ Concentrate on basic needs and friendship first

For each item, provide specific names, office locations, and contact numbers/emails.

TEACH THE BASICS

- ▶ Bus behavior
- ▶ School rules
- ▶ Cafeteria systems
- ▶ Safety procedures
- ▶ Rest rooms

28

Ask the participants to highlight basics for each item. For example:

Bus behavior: Waiting for the bus, Punctuality, Seating, Safety, Entering and exiting the bus, Crossing the street, Bus driver communication

Direct the participants to the New York State Dignity Act on the New York State Education Department (NYSED) website.

A Dignity Act Resource Guide for School Administrators and Faculty was completed in December 2013 and can be found on the NYSED website.

FACILITATE SOCIAL SKILLS

- ▶ Assign mentors, buddies, partners, and small groups
- ▶ Keep instructions clear and simple
- ▶ Inform quietly about school rules, more than once
- ▶ Build confidence
- ▶ Praise and reassure

Ask ESL teachers to discuss strategies for verbal communication with students who do not speak English.

For each item, provide specific demonstrations and examples.

STAY ALERT

- ▶ Identify failure to advance
- ▶ Identify chronic negative behaviors
- ▶ Watch for social/emotional concerns
- ▶ Watch for bullying and racism
- ▶ Educate refugee students before disciplining

30

Provide information on what school district personnel can look for, and who to contact if they are concerned about a refugee student.

CONNECT STUDENTS TO

- ▶ New friends
- ▶ School clubs and sports programs
- ▶ Community organizations
- ▶ Academic help

31

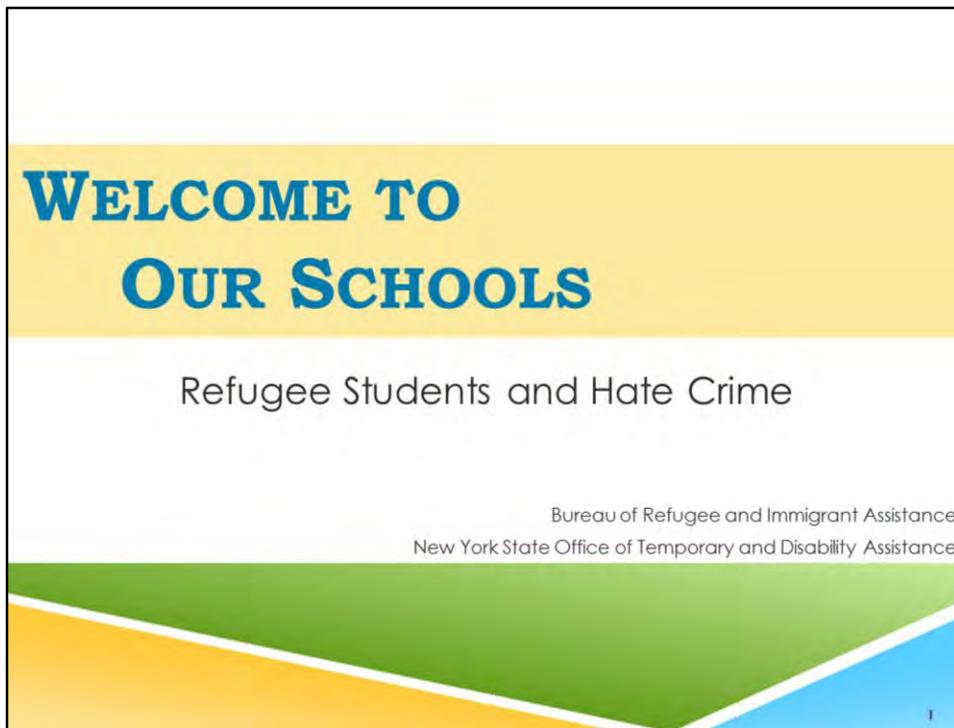
Provide examples of how participants can help.

BE A FRIENDLY FACE THAT SAYS

WELCOME TO OUR SCHOOL.



HATE CRIME POWERPOINT WITH NOTES FOR PRESENTERS



Explain the components of the local Refugee School Impact Program.

REFUGEE STUDENTS COME TO OUR SCHOOLS

▶ Afraid

▶ Anxious

▶ Excited

▶ Bewildered

Describe the purpose of the presentation:

- To provide information about bias-related incidents and hate crimes.
- To raise awareness about the experiences and needs of refugee students, particularly in relation to hate crime.

THEY HAVE FLED THEIR NATIVE COUNTRIES BECAUSE OF

- ▶ War
- ▶ Political Oppression
- ▶ Constant Violence
- ▶ Torture
- ▶ Religious persecution

3

Define “refugee.”

THEY ARE SEEKING REFUGE:

- ▶ Protection from danger
- ▶ Food and shelter
- ▶ Freedom from oppression

Provide examples of specific countries and why families seek refuge and resettle in the United States.

REFUGEE CHILDREN MAY HAVE EXPERIENCED

- ▶ Constant hunger
- ▶ Violence
- ▶ Never-ending fear
- ▶ Frequent movement to stay safe
- ▶ Loss of family members and friends
- ▶ Little or no education/interrupted education
- ▶ Sudden disruption of productive lives

5

Provide examples of experiences of refugee children.

REFUGEE CAMPS

Many refugee students have spent most of their lives in refugee camps where everything is scarce, safety is not guaranteed, and schools may not exist.

Provide examples of conditions of refugee camps.

THEY HAVE LEFT BEHIND

- ▶ All of their belongings
- ▶ Family members
- ▶ Friends and neighbors
- ▶ Heirlooms, religious artifacts
- ▶ Familiar environment, weather, and lifestyle
- ▶ Family history and traditions

7

Explain that most refugee children are remarkably resilient and adjust comfortably to American schools, after initial struggles with language and customs.

MANY REFUGEE STUDENTS EXPERIENCE:

- ▶ Post-traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD)
- ▶ Grief from loss of friends and family
- ▶ Struggles to maintain cultural and religious traditions
- ▶ Health problems

Describe examples of physical and mental health issues, including examples of behaviors related to post-traumatic stress syndrome.

**LOCAL REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT CENTERS,
COMMUNITY GROUPS, AND SCHOOLS:**

help refugees adjust and feel comfortable

and safe

in their new country.

Describe local support services and school-based advocacy or counseling programs.

BUT SOMETIMES REFUGEES EXPERIENCE

violence in this country
in the form of hate crimes.

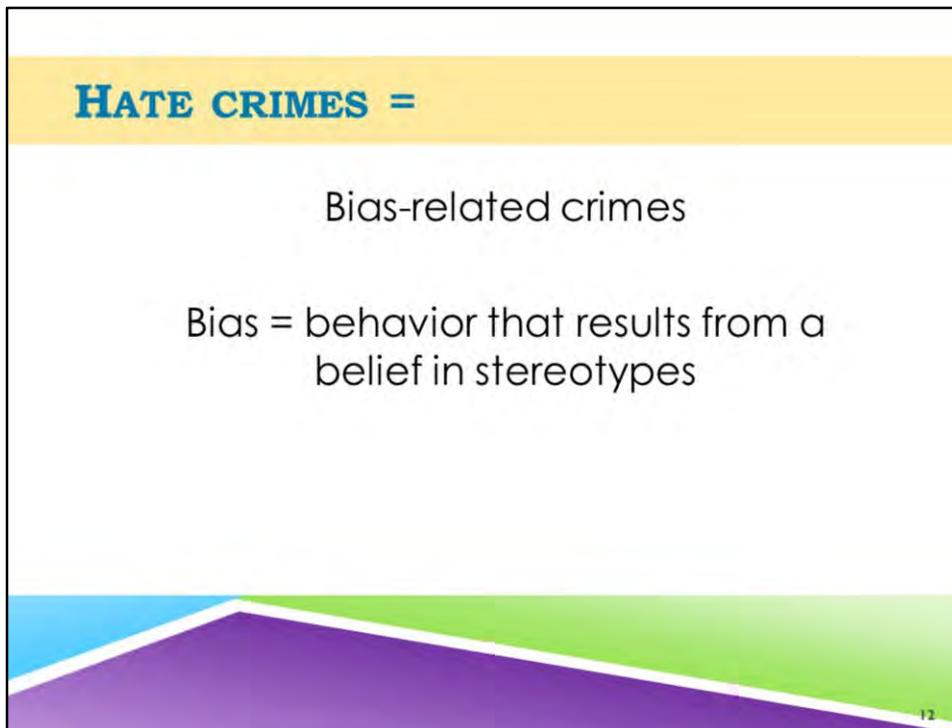
Explain that there is a federal definition (next slide) and States have adopted their own definitions.

A HATE CRIME IS AN UNLAWFUL ACT

designed to frighten or harm an individual
because of his or her:

- ▶ Race
- ▶ Religion
- ▶ Ethnic/national origin
- ▶ Sexual orientation
- ▶ Gender identity
- ▶ Disability

Explain that the key word is “crime” – indicating that it is a criminal offense involving law enforcement and the court system.



Explain that *stereotypes* are when certain behaviors, abilities, interests, or values are attributed to one group of people.

Example of stereotype:
Girls are not very good in math.

Explain that bias is *behavior that results* from a belief in the *stereotypes*.

To continue the example:
Some people discourage girls from pursuing careers in math and science because their underlying belief is that girls are not very good in math. That behavior is *biased*, based on a *stereotype*.

Hate crime is based on stereotypes about groups of people. It is *bias-related* crime.

(NOTE: Do NOT provide any other examples of stereotypes and bias. Go to the next slide.)

THE PERPETRATORS OF HATE CRIMES HAVE

beliefs
or perceptions
about groups of people
based on prejudice.

13

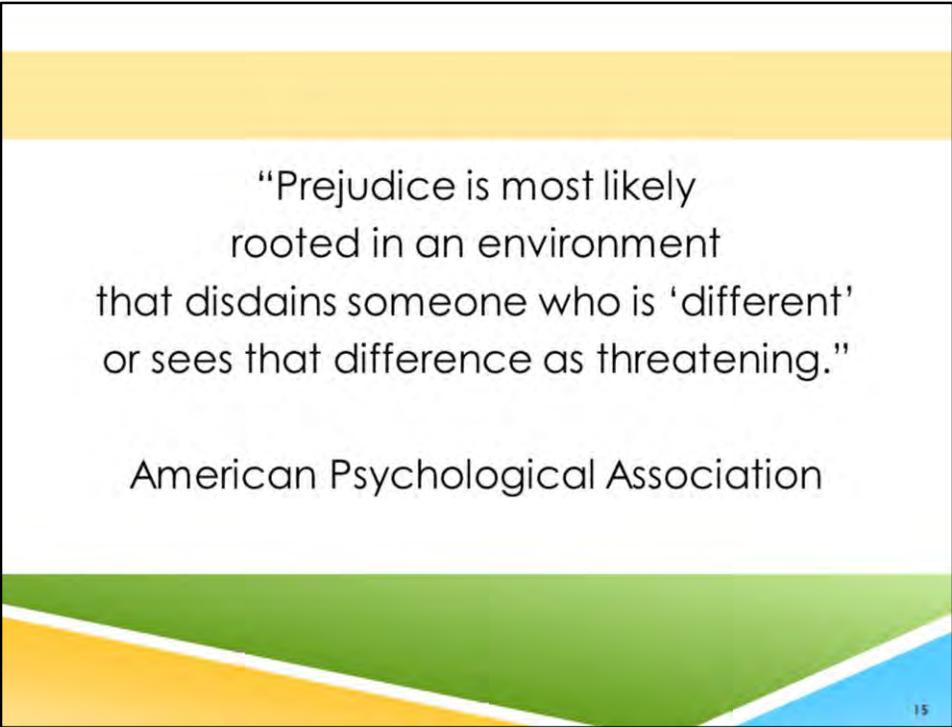
Explain that *prejudice* is another way of explaining beliefs in stereotypes.

PREJUDICE:

attitudes or opinions
about a person or group
simply because they belong
to a specific religion, race,
nationality, or other group

Explain that some people have perceptions about certain groups of people that are not true. Then they make decisions about that entire group of people.

(NOTE: Do NOT provide specific examples of prejudice. Go directly to the next slide.)



“Prejudice is most likely
rooted in an environment
that disdains someone who is ‘different’
or sees that difference as threatening.”

American Psychological Association

15

NOTE: Go immediately to the next slide.

PREJUDICE IS LEARNED.

Children and young adults learn hate
and prejudice from influential adults
and peers.

Explain that there are many causes of prejudice, but the research shows consistently that children learn prejudice from adults – and from their peers.

Explain that the literature also shows that what has been learned can be *unlearned*.

TEENS AND ADULTS CAN LEARN PREJUDICE

from organized groups
that teach members
to hate specific groups of people.

Explain that some organized groups teach young people and adults how to *show their hate* with violence against property and people.

PREJUDICE CAN BE UNLEARNED

from influential adults and peers.

18

Just as prejudice can be taught, children and adults can learn about the origins of stereotypes and bias and *unlearn* prejudice.

But without education and guidance, prejudice can turn to hate and may result in criminal behaviors.

HATE CRIMES CAN INVOLVE:

- ▶ Physical assault
- ▶ Damage to property
- ▶ Bullying
- ▶ Menacing
- ▶ Harassment
- ▶ Intimidation
- ▶ Weapons
- ▶ Arson
- ▶ Explosives

Explain that refugees can be targets of violence and hate speech.

Note that they are “targets,” not “victims.”

HATE SPEECH INVOLVES:

- ▶ Verbal abuse or insults
- ▶ Offensive graffiti
- ▶ Threatening or offensive letters or e-mails

20

Hate speech is harder to determine – but there is often written documentation.

TARGETS OF HATE CRIME

rarely do anything to
provoke an attack.

They are targeted because of
who they are perceived to be.

21

Explain that refugees are often singled out because they are different – different in color, dress, language, customs, social behaviors, even eating habits.

(Note: Do not provide specific examples. Go directly to the next slide.)

IN SCHOOL

children of any age can be involved
in bias-related incidents.

22

Explain that refugees at all levels of education have experienced bias-related incidents.

Explain that Middle School students appear to target refugee students more often than other grade levels, but they are also the age group that is more open to *unlearning* prejudice.

Eliminating prejudice starts with building relationships and friendships --- something that is very important to children at any age.

Explain that schools are now responsible for keeping an eye on bias-related incidents.

ALL NEW YORK STATE SCHOOLS

are required to report
violent or disruptive incidents
on a regular basis to the
New York State Education Department
including bias-related incidents.

School administration should be well-informed about New York State Education Department (NYSED) requirements, and more information is provided on the NYSED website.

NYS EDUCATION DEPARTMENT DEFINITION

Bias-related incidents:
motivated by hate
due to characteristics
or perceived characteristics
of the victim.

24

ASK: What is meant by *characteristics*? (See next slide)

CHARACTERISTICS:

- ▶ Race
- ▶ Gender
- ▶ Religion
- ▶ Color
- ▶ Sexual orientation
- ▶ Ethnicity
- ▶ Ancestry
- ▶ National origin

and...

25

Explain that the New York State Education Department definition is taken directly from the National Center for Education Statistics, which is why it includes so many characteristics.



Explain that in July 2011 the New York State Dignity for All Students Act took effect.

It is a measure to protect students from harassment and discrimination. The bill directs school districts to develop procedures which create discrimination-free and harassment-free schools.

Further information can be found on the New York State Education Department website.

OFFENDERS USUALLY DO NOT UNDERSTAND

the background or lifestyles
of refugees –
or why they settled
in the United States.

27

There is often confusion about the difference between an “immigrant” and a “refugee.” Review the definition of refugee as discussed in the opening slides.

Explain that refugees undergo extensive health and security review before resettling, and the United States is one of many countries that welcomes refugees.

Comment that refugees have already experienced trauma, so the impact of hate crimes can be especially powerful.

THEY DO NOT UNDERSTAND

or may not care
about the impact of hate crimes
on refugees.

28

ASK: What is the impact of hate crimes on refugees?

IMPACT:

- ▶ Physical
- ▶ Educational
- ▶ Financial
- ▶ Social

Physical: Injury, pain, rehabilitation

Educational: Threatening and harassment can cause a child to skip school, lose sleep, drop out of school

Financial: A storefront covered with graffiti can cause a financial impact on a refugee family.

Social: Withdrawal, isolation, distrust

DISTRUST IMPACT:

- ▶ Peers
- ▶ School officials
- ▶ Law enforcement
- ▶ Americans in general

30

They are not sure who to trust.

Explain that refugee children already may fear law enforcement because of incidents in their native countries.

They may start to distrust some of their peers or adults in their new country.

They need reassurance more than ever that they are welcome.

PTSD AND HATE CRIME

- ▶ Anxiety attacks
- ▶ Nightmares
- ▶ Absenteeism
- ▶ Poor grades
- ▶ Repairs to property
- ▶ Loss of family income
- ▶ Injury
- ▶ Death

Explain that PTSD is post-traumatic stress disorder and that some refugees already experience this disorder as a result of events in their native countries.

Hate crime can trigger PTSD.

EMOTIONAL IMPACT OF HATE CRIME

- ▶ Shame
- ▶ Sense of violation
- ▶ Vulnerability
- ▶ Fear
- ▶ Flashbacks

For all hate crime there is an emotional impact.

For some targets, there is a feeling of embarrassment and self-doubt.

For some cultures, the attack is viewed as bringing shame on the family.

The most common response is fear of reprisals, repeated violence, and distrust.

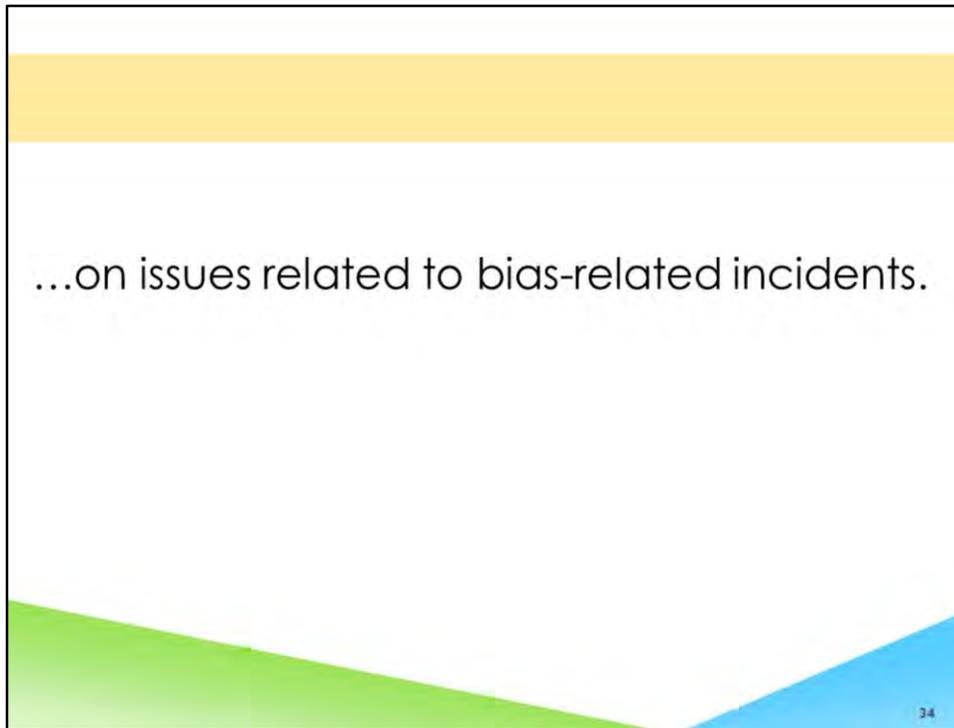
REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT CASE MANAGERS

and Academic Coaches

can work with victims, witnesses,
law enforcement,
and schools...

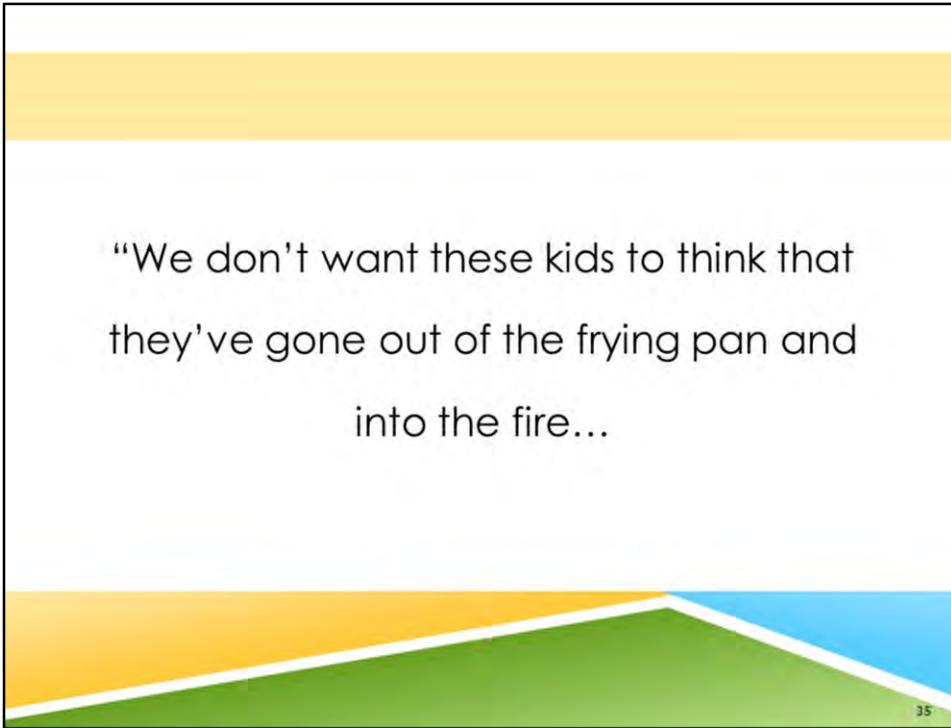
33

Explain the role of Refugee Resettlement Case Managers and Academic Coaches

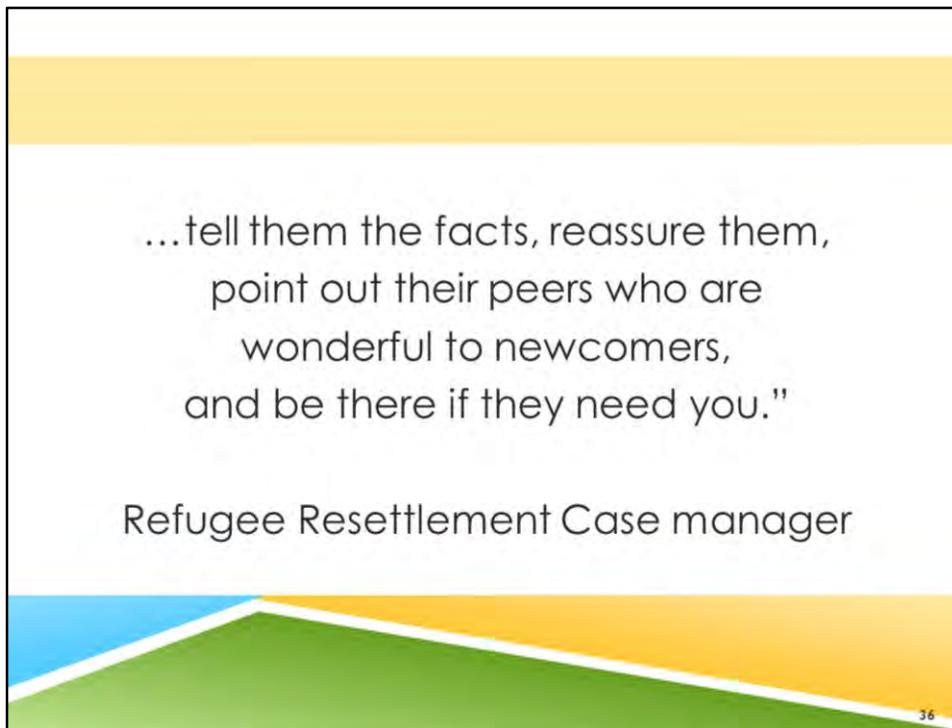


Provide names and contact information for Refugee Resettlement Case Managers, Academic Coaches, Dignity Act Coordinators, school-based law enforcement officials, and other school officials responsible for school safety

Explain that the primary role of those who assist refugees is to help them to feel comfortable in their new country.



Explain that the quote is from a Refugee Resettlement Case Manager



Stress that students and school personnel are overwhelmingly kind and helpful to refugee children, but hate crime does happen enough to warrant guidelines and training.

Explain that some systems need to be put in place so that prejudice cannot thrive.

WHAT CAN SCHOOLS DO?

Develop a code of conduct
that recognizes the reality
of his bias-related incidents
and hate crime.

37

Explain that schools alone cannot solve the problem of prejudice. But schools can provide guidelines and activities that encourage students to be kind.

HATE IS LEARNED

but can be unlearned.

38

Remind that with education and guidance, hate can be unlearned.

INCLUDE PREJUDICE REDUCTION

and cultural education themes in:

- ▶ Curriculum
- ▶ School clubs
- ▶ Assemblies
- ▶ Extra-curricular events
- ▶ Parent programs

Explain that the best way for students to reduce prejudice is for them to get to know each other.

Many schools have International Festivals and other events. Those events are enlightening and develop cultural understanding.

**FACILITATE OPPORTUNITIES
FOR REFUGEE STUDENTS TO:**

develop positive friendships

40

But the key is for students to be able to talk to each other and get to know each other as individual people.

Establish a peer mentor program

Partner young students with “buddies”

Encourage refugee students to join a club or sport – facilitate enrollment. They will be supervised by adults and meet new friends.

CULTIVATE SCHOOL PRIDE

in appreciating all differences
and unique qualities
of every student.

Explain that the tone of the school is immediately evident by signs, posters, artwork, posted rules and expectations, but should be reinforced with clear expectations and activities.

ASSIST REFUGEE STUDENTS

in “fitting in”
so that they are not isolated
or socially ostracized.

42

Describe the activities of the Welcome to Our Schools Program that help to inform refugee students about:

Hygiene

Use of rest rooms

School behaviors and rules

Technology safety (cyberbullying)

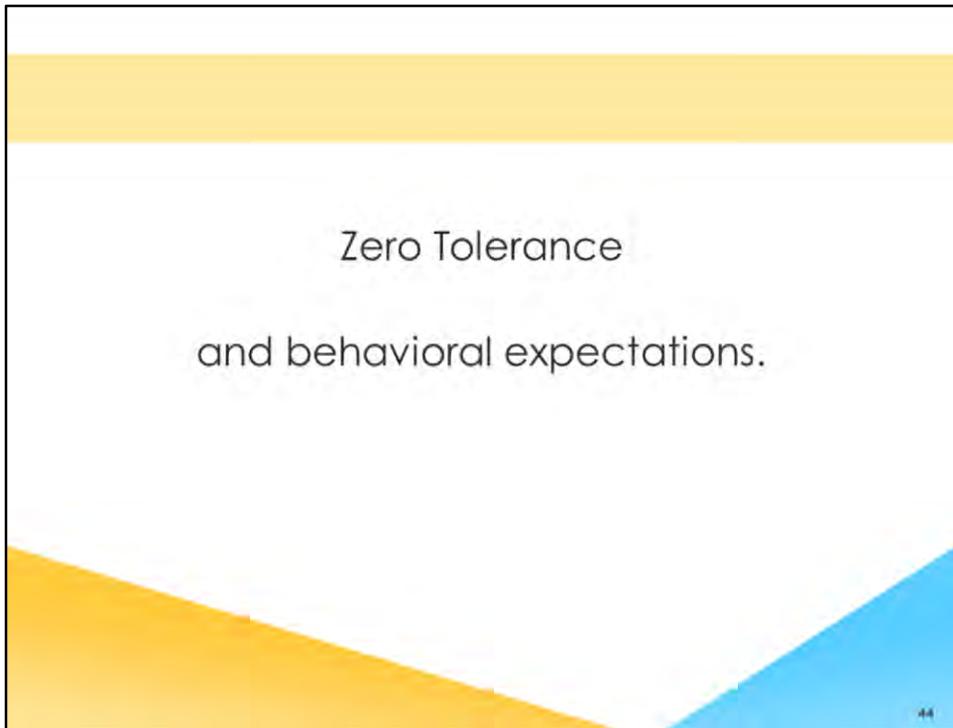
Routines in lunch room, locker room

CONDUCT DISCUSSIONS

about hate
with accuracy
and sensitivity...

Discussions with students should be about the importance of respecting diversity and individuality.

Do not lecture about basic concepts such as respect and tolerance. Establish clear expectations, explaining the reason behind the expectations, including that there are hate crime laws.



Explain that zero tolerance starts with individual classrooms.

Stress that school personnel are not expected to constantly monitor the prejudice level of the students.

But teachers can make it clear that in *their* classrooms they will not tolerate bias-related behaviors or hate speech.

Bus drivers, cafeteria workers, and other personnel can also make it clear that they do not tolerate bias-related behaviors or hate speech.

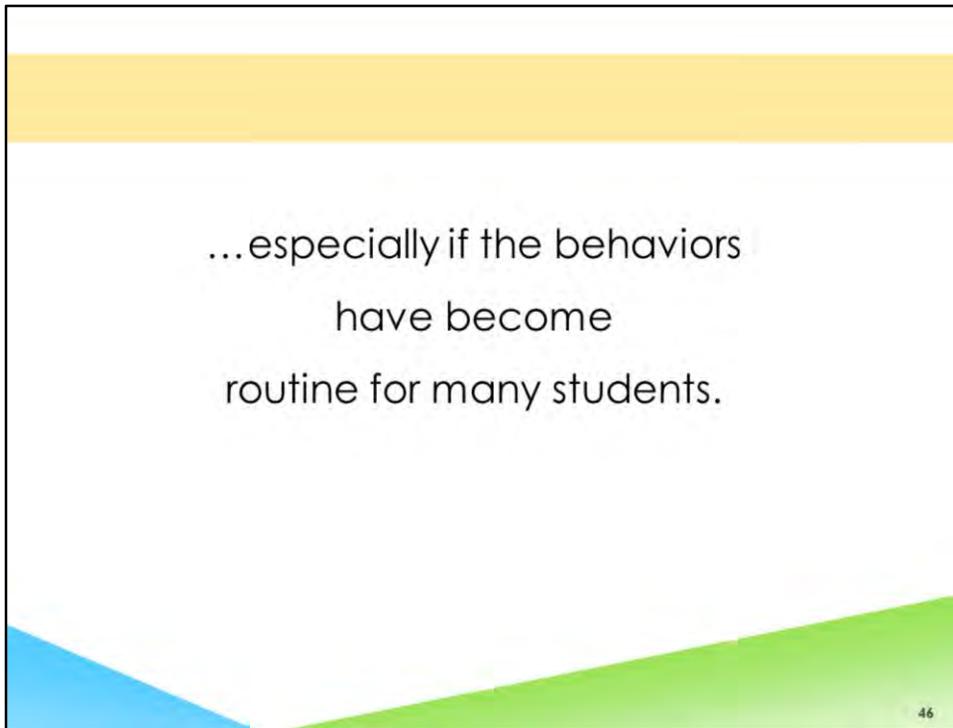
School personnel should know where to report concerns and observations.

CLARIFY PROCEDURES

for teachers
and administrators
to handle bias-related incidents...

45

Recognize that in some schools the students routinely engage in teasing, taunting, and biased language, often in a joking manner. The targets themselves may laugh and return the insults.



Conduct professional development to discuss the reality of disrespectful behavior, teasing, and bullying - and how to address it.

Respectful behavior begins with individual teachers establishing parameters in their classrooms.

Teachers need administrative support if disrespectful behavior continues.

Administrators need guidance on how to balance parent values, student experiences, and school expectations related to respectful behavior.

Begin with being alert to the possibility of hate crime.

BE ALERT TO:

- ▶ Bullying
- ▶ Harassment
- ▶ Menacing
- ▶ Intimidation

no matter how subtle.

47

Explain that it is sometimes difficult to determine if an action is a bias-related incident or hate crime.

Legal experts will determine whether it is a hate crime, but incidents should be reported.

IF ANY ADULT IN THE SCHOOL SEES

a bias-related incident—
they may be witness to a
crime.

48

Explain that district personnel responsible for school safety are responsible for establishing guidelines about identifying hate crime.

(Go directly to the next slide.)

ESTABLISH CLEAR GUIDELINES

for reporting incidents.

Some guidelines are provided by the State – Guidelines can be obtained from the NYS Center for School Safety and other school districts.

TRAINED SCHOOL OR POLICE INVESTIGATORS:

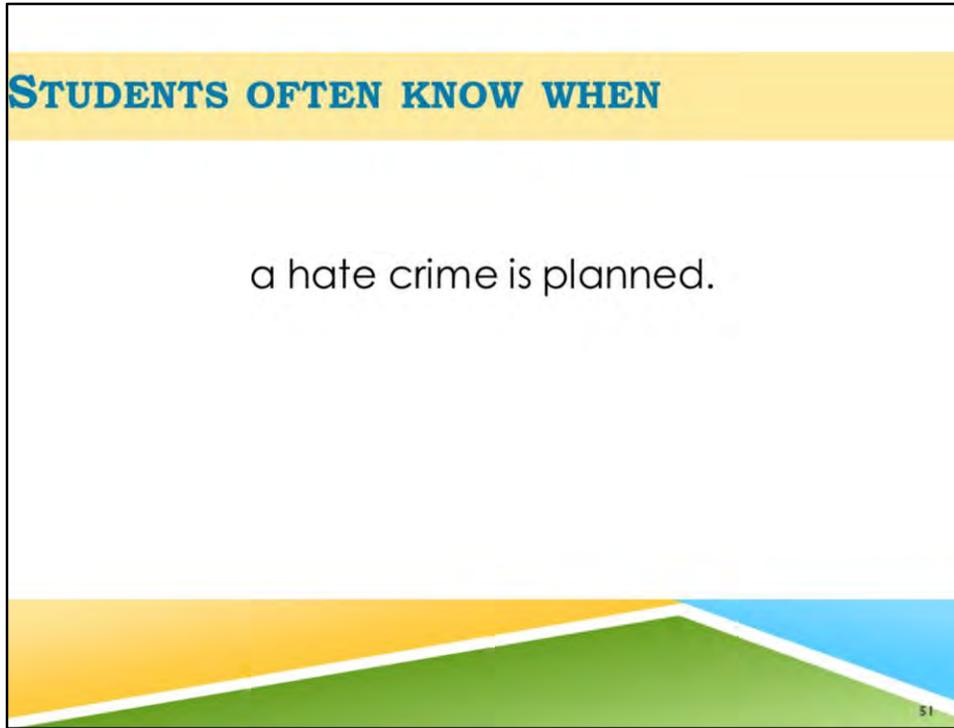
- ▶ Conduct interviews
- ▶ Take photos
- ▶ Collect evidence
- ▶ Contact resources for support

50

(Go directly to the next slide.)

STUDENTS OFTEN KNOW WHEN

a hate crime is planned.



(Go directly to the next slide.)

ESTABLISH A CONFIDENTIAL SYSTEM

of reporting rumors
and concerns.

52

(Go directly to the next slide.)

ESTABLISH EASY, ACCESSIBLE REPORTING

procedures for students
who are victims or witnesses.



53

Explain that many school systems have established systems for reporting any type of concern anonymously.

Some communities rely on local law enforcement systems for reporting incidents.

NEW YORK STATE CENTER FOR SCHOOL SAFETY

Anonymous Reporting Hot Line

1-877-SAVENY

1-877-772-8369

54

The New York Center for School Safety provides assistance to districts as well as a hotline for anyone who wants to report a possible school safety problem.

PROVIDE COUNSELING FOR TARGETS

and witnesses.

Protection may also
have to be arranged.

Consult with law enforcement
and legal advisors

Remember that the action may be a crime and should be handled by the legal system.

NEVER BLAME A TARGET

for a bias-related incident.

56

(Go directly to the next slide.)

REFUGEE STUDENTS HAVE OFTEN EXPERIENCED

- ▶ Danger
- ▶ Fear
- ▶ Violence

before coming to their new country.

57

(Go directly to the next slide.)

THEY COME TO THEIR NEW SCHOOL

excited
and
nervous.

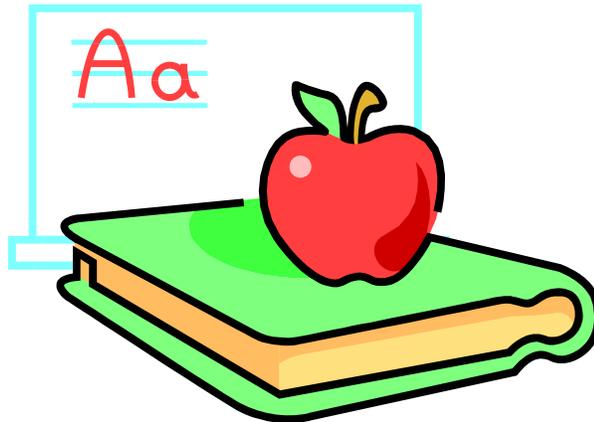
58

(Go directly to the next slide.)

ESTABLISH COMMUNICATION

and reporting systems
to reassure them
that they are safe in school
and will not experience hate.

WELCOME TO OUR SCHOOLS GUIDE TO THE VIDEOS



A Day in Elementary School

A Day in Middle School

A Day in High School

Refugee Student Interviews

Refugee Parent Interviews

NEW YORK STATE
OFFICE OF TEMPORARY AND DISABILITY ASSISTANCE
OFFICE OF REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT ASSISTANCE

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Videos

The instructor will have to determine the best way to show the videos, depending upon the languages spoken by the students, the equipment available, and the number of Academic Coaches and translators.

Each DVD has all five videos:

A Day in Elementary School
A Day in Middle School
A Day in High School
Refugee Student Interviews
Refugee Parent Interviews

Translated Videos: To order a DVD in any of the following languages email bria.contact@otda.ny.gov:
English, Chinese, Burmese, Arabic, Haitian-Creole, Karen,
French, Russian, Maay, Nepali, Spanish, Swahili, Somali, Vietnamese, and Karenni.



WELCOME TO OUR SCHOOLS

GUIDE TO THE VIDEOS

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THE VIDEOS



Five videos have been created to assist refugee students in understanding what a day in American school can be like. The videos show the inside of elementary, middle, and high schools, the interactions of students and their teachers, the supplies that students use, and the resources available in schools. The videos also show interviews with refugee students and parents who have arrived in the United States within the last four years. The students and parents talk about their experiences, observations, and advice to newcomers.

The purpose of the videos is to give refugee students the opportunity to actually see American schools in operation. Many of the students in the Refugee Academy or Mini-Academy will be new to the school system. They may have been given information about school, but unless they have actually had a chance to visit a school and spend the day there, they probably do not know what to envision. Even students who are familiar with their new school may need to see the schools of their siblings, or to see aspects of school that they may not yet have experienced.

OBJECTIVES OF THE VIDEOS

Students will:

- Be able to compare similarities and differences of the schools in the videos and their own school.
- Be prepared to attend school knowing what is routine and expected in American schools.
- Be reassured as they become familiar with the environment and activities of American schools.

Of course the schools that are depicted in the videos are not the actual schools of the refugee students, but there are more similarities than differences.

The **first objective** of the videos is to prompt students and the instructor to talk about what is the same and what is different.



For example, students in the video are playing instruments in the school band, working and talking together in groups, and playing football. Refugee students should have the opportunity to compare notes about the schools in the videos and their own school. Will they be able to do the same things as the students shown in the videos? Perhaps their playground is a parking lot, and recess is not held every day. Perhaps their school has an award-winning theatre program, but does not have a gymnasium. The videos show students wearing many different styles of clothing, but perhaps the students watching the video attend schools where they are expected to wear uniforms. In the videos, the high school has a swimming pool, the students are allowed to wear coats and backpacks in school, and there is a police officer in the school all day long. Does the local school look the same, offer the same programs, and have the same rules?

The instructor can use the videos to discuss the specific characteristics of the schools that the refugees will be attending. The videos should be used as a springboard for discussion.

The **second objective** of the videos is for students to feel prepared.

The videos will help them to determine what they might need for school, what to expect during the school day, and how to behave appropriately. They will have the chance to see students using their lockers to store school supplies, raising their hands to ask questions in class, and taking notes while the teacher lectures or gives directions. For some refugee students, these school behaviors will not be unfamiliar. In fact, they may be reassuring because they will see that many aspects of school are the same around the world. For other refugee students, it is important for them to see what is expected in school so that the refugee students do not get embarrassed or disciplined if they do not understand how to behave.



The **third objective** of the videos is for students to relax and absorb the visual information presented.

The instructor should not use the videos as a means of testing, or as a tool for memorizing school rules. The videos are filled with multiple levels of information, and it will take more than one viewing for students to absorb everything that is shown. During one viewing they may concentrate on the words of the narrator or students who are interviewed, but the second time they



may be studying the background scenes, looking at the classroom activities, or watching the behavior of the students.

The instructor should give the students a chance to sit back and take in whatever interests them. (See Key Point #3 below.) For most students, the videos will help to clarify concerns and answer questions, but for some students the visual imagery and content may be overwhelming. All of the students should be able to watch the video with the understanding that they can ask questions and watch it again. The instructor can use the *Vocabulary* and *Discussion Questions* to facilitate discussion, or just serve up the popcorn and let the students relax and watch the videos.

DESCRIPTION OF THE VIDEOS

All of the videos highlight the experiences of refugee students.

A Day in Elementary School

A routine day of a 4th grade class, from arriving at school to participating in after school activities.

A Day in Middle School

A routine day of students in middle school, from arriving to school, moving from class to class, and participating in after school activities.

A Day in High School

A routine day for students in high school, from arriving to school, moving from class to class (including advanced and elective classes), and participating in after school activities.

Refugee Student Interviews

Refugee Parent Interviews

In both of these videos, refugee students of all ages and their parents and guardians talk openly about their observations and experiences related to entering a new school and adjusting to the school environment. Topics discussed in the videos are:

- meeting friends
- getting ready for school(school bus, hygiene, school supplies, lockers)
- so much to learn (classroom activities, classes)
- in the classroom (schedules, school subjects, learning English, tests, homework)

- stay healthy (gym, sports, cafeteria, lunch menu, recess, nurse)
- interests and talents (sports, drama, choir, computers, clubs, Art, books)
- getting help (teachers, tutoring, after-school programs, friends, counselors, ESL)
- follow school rules and be safe (fire drill, pass, rules, behavior)
- home-school communication (parent meetings, teacher conference, contacting schools)
- no worries! (initial feelings, teachers, stress, doing well in school)

HOW TO USE THE VIDEOS

After selecting the video to be shown, there are a number of instructional strategies that can be used:

- Show the video without discussion prior to the viewing. Respond to student questions afterwards.
- Discuss the Vocabulary included in the *Guide to the Videos*, and then show the video.
- Assign items to look for and discuss afterward, using *Find in the Video* on pages 21, 23, and 25 in this *Guide to the Videos*.
- Use the *Questions for Discussion* on pages 27, 30, 33 in this *Guide to the Videos*, before and after showing the videos.
- Show the students the video that is aimed at their age level, but show them the other grades, too. Many students will have siblings in other schools, or will just be curious about what it is like to be in a school building with other grade levels.
- Stop and start the video, discussing the contents of different interview sections, or different parts of the school day. For example, in the video *A Day in Elementary School*, the instructor can show the scenes that pertain to recess, physical education, and sports, discussing health and hygiene, clothes required for gym class and sports teams, how to try out for teams, etc.
- Show the video *Refugee Parent Interviews* at parent meetings. Parents will also benefit from seeing the video *Refugee Student Interviews*.



Key Points of the Videos



1. American schools have similar rules and systems.

The schools that are shown in the videos are in urban and suburban areas of New York State. Most of the school day that is depicted (or discussed by the students and parents in the interviews) is similar to what happens in schools nationwide.



The instructor should point out, as is explained in the **Refugee Academy Curriculum** Module 4: *School Rules* and Module 5: *So Much to Learn*, that the process of schooling is generally consistent in all schools. Students are expected to sit in their seats in the classroom, respectfully listen to the teacher, talk quietly if allowed, move through the halls quickly to the next class, have supplies handy for school work, and so forth. In most schools, homework is assigned on a regular basis, school work is graded by teachers, students have tests to prepare for, and there are required classes that everyone must take.

As the students view the videos, it is important that the instructor highlight the rules and systems that are the same as in the schools that the students will be attending.

However, new refugee students should be aware that every school has its own unique organization, environment, rules, and activities. The schools in the videos, for example, encourage students to work in small groups and often grade students on their collaboration and teamwork. Some schools that the refugee students will be attending may not allow group work and may be more structured. Or the schools may be even more relaxed, encouraging students to learn independently at their own pace, with less emphasis on grades.

The Instructor can clarify what is different about the schools in the videos. If the refugee students have already been enrolled in the local schools, they can assist in pointing out what is the same and what is different.



2. Refugee students *will* adjust to their new schools.

Showing the video *Refugee Student Interviews* is one of the best ways to reassure students that they will be able to successfully adjust to their new school. The students on the video talk about what it felt like to enter school for the first time, how long it took to learn English, and what the first few weeks were like. They are very open about how nervous and scared they were. Yet they also consistently talk about how they quickly made new friends, how their teachers and guidance counselors helped them to adjust, and how their ESL teachers helped them with learning English and doing school work.

Although the interviews were edited for time, the theme of the lengthy interview process was very clear as students talked with enthusiasm about their experiences adjusting. There were very few negative comments to edit (and students were quite

relaxed and open about their observations.) They talked about some rough spots, especially with the occasional bullies who would tease or imitate refugee students, but with patience and a lot of support from teachers and counselors, the students were able to adjust and enjoy going to school. They talked about how quickly they were able to make new friends and how classmates helped them to learn new skills and complete class assignments. They talked about what their day is like now, using vocabulary related to American schools that some of them learned for the first time that year, such as *locker*, *tutoring*, and *Social Studies*. They are a living example of how adjusting to American schools is possible and, in fact, enjoyable.

The instructor should use the students on the videos as examples of what is possible. They should stress that being afraid and worried about attending an American school is normal, and the Academic Coaches and teachers are to be used as resources. They should acknowledge that not every student or teacher will be receptive and kind, but refugee students can turn to their new friends and their Academic Coaches for support.

The ESL teachers, discussed often by the students in the videos, should meet the refugee students and be available to assist them.



3. The information in the videos may be overwhelming to some students.

The videos are filled with so much information and so many things to look at, that the viewing experience may be interesting but overwhelming to some students. The Instructor should pay close attention to the reactions of the students as they watch the videos.

For some refugee students, the videos will emphasize that schools around the world can be similar. Those students will recognize elements of American schools that they remember from their native countries. They may recall teachers lecturing and writing on the board, classmates sitting in desks and taking notes or listening to stories in their classrooms, and classes going outside to play games with other students. Once they see that the process is similar to what they remember, they may feel better prepared to adjust to their new school.

But for many refugee students, especially those who have never received any formal schooling, the information provided in the videos may be very overwhelming. There is a lot of activity in a school day, many rules to follow, and systems to learn. This can be especially true if a student is entering a middle school or high school, where changing classes can be daunting even for American students who are familiar with the system.

If refugee students seem to be having difficulty absorbing all of the information in the videos, or the content seems to make them anxious, the instructor should refer to the Key Ideas and Activities in the *Refugee Academy Curriculum*, especially *Module 1: American Schools*, *Module 2: Making Friends*, and *Module 3: Getting Help*.

The instructor can discuss one section of the video at a time, using the *Questions for Discussion* found on pages 27, 30, and 33 in this *Guide to the Videos*.



VOCABULARY

A DAY IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The following vocabulary list consists of words and phrases that are school-related and used in the videos. The vocabulary may be new to refugee students.

The primary purpose of the videos is to inform students about what a day can be like in American schools. It may be helpful to review some of the key words and phrases that are used routinely in American education. Some words can be especially confusing, such as *gym*, *PE*, *class*, and *lab*.

The list is in the order of when they are used in the videos.

The vocabulary words can be reviewed in different ways, depending upon the background of the students:

- Define or translate each vocabulary word, recognizing that the students may not be able to fully comprehend the words until they see the videos (e.g., locker, field hockey, orchestra, recess).
- Assign each student a specific word/phrase from the vocabulary list to look for in the video. For example, one student can look for a *backpack*, while another student looks for a *computer*. After the video is shown, discuss the context in which the words were used.
- Show the entire video so that students get a general overview. Then show the video again, stopping periodically to point out specific vocabulary words.
- Review the vocabulary words and show the video. Then discuss the vocabulary words again, asking students to describe what they saw when they spotted the use of the word in the video. For example, if the word is *gymnasium*, ask the students what the gymnasium looked like and how it was used or discussed by the students in the video. Then watch the video again to confirm the impressions of the students.

VOCABULARY - A DAY IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

elementary school	textbooks	research materials
buses	notebooks	schoolwork
bus drivers	crayons	tutor
schedule	scissors	science reports
middle school	glue	animals
high school	English language	bell
subway	translators	fire drill
city bus	ESL	attendance
teacher	academic coaches	public library
classroom	art class	paper
backpacks	rest rooms	binder
storage cupboards (cubbies)	principal's office	chalkboard
homework	bulletin board	outline
peanut butter and jelly sandwich	social studies	quiet
passing out papers	history	raise hands
watering the plants	economy	partner
lunch	governments	permission
healthy snack	world	librarian
seat (desk and chair)	geography	science
writing skills	New York state	computers
worksheets	map	cafeteria
pencils	library books	rice
	computers	rolls
	computer lab	

VOCABULARY - ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (continued)

milk	notebook	sneakers
pudding	eraser	gym clothes
muffins	calculator	homework assignments
chips	compass	writing
lunch card	ruler	clubs
paper bag (for lunch)	supplies	sports
lunch box	school store	tutoring programs
lunch trays	gym class	music lessons
recess	PE (physical education)	school band
playground	music class	instruments
school nurse	principal	line leaders
math	desks	crossing guard
	gymnasium (gym)	



VOCABULARY

A DAY IN MIDDLE SCHOOL

The following vocabulary list consists of words and phrases that are school-related and used in the videos. The vocabulary may be new to refugee students.

The primary purpose of the videos is to inform students about what a day can be like in American schools. It may be helpful to review some of the key words and phrases that are used routinely in American education. Some words can be especially confusing, such as *gym*, *PE*, *class*, and *lab*.

The list is in the order of when they are used in the videos.

The vocabulary words can be reviewed in different ways, depending upon the background of the students:

- Define or translate each vocabulary word, recognizing that the students may not be able to fully comprehend the words until they see the videos (e.g., locker, field hockey, orchestra, recess).
- Assign each student a specific word/phrase from the vocabulary list to look for in the video. For example, one student can look for a *backpack*, while another student looks for a *computer*. After the video is shown, discuss the context in which the words were used.
- Show the entire video so that students get a general overview. Then show the video again, stopping periodically to point out specific vocabulary words.
- Review the vocabulary words and show the video. Then discuss the vocabulary words again, asking students to describe what they saw when they spotted the use of the word in the video. For example, if the word is *gym*, ask the students what the gym (or gymnasium) looked like and how it was used or discussed by the students in the video. Then watch the video again to confirm the impressions of the students.

VOCABULARY - A DAY IN MIDDLE SCHOOL

middle school	peanut butter and jelly sandwich	auditorium
buses	bell	performance
bus drivers	science	music lessons
elementary school	resources	Family and Consumer Science (FACS)
high school	reports	test
schedule	research	notes
subway	supplies	pencils
city bus	paper	ESL
lockers	glue	translators
backpacks	scissors	magazine
textbooks	computers	librarian
notebooks	library	tutor/tutoring
class	computer lab	reading
homeroom	raise hands	chapter books
attendance	teacher	dictionaries
announcements	projects	math class
clubs	homework	calculator
sports teams	music class	lock combination
mathematics	musical instruments	halls
competition	orchestra	rest room
field trip	school band	binder
lunch	choir	

VOCABULARY - MIDDLE SCHOOL (continued)

fire drill	economy	school nurse
chicken nuggets	governments	main office
rice	geography	crossing guard
rolls	continents	sports practice
milk	maps	art club
pudding	cooperation	drama club
muffins	independently	science club
chips	art class	book club
paper bag (for lunch)	portfolio	student council
lunch box	artwork	technology
pizza	gym	after school
social studies	PE (physical education)	guidance counselors
history	kickball	bikes
	gymnasium (gym)	



VOCABULARY

A DAY IN HIGH SCHOOL

The following vocabulary list consists of words and phrases that are school-related and used in the videos. The vocabulary may be new to refugee students.

The primary purpose of the videos is to inform students about what a day can be like in American schools. It may be helpful to review some of the key words and phrases that are used routinely in American education. Some words can be especially confusing, such as *gym*, *PE*, *class*, and *lab*.

The list is in the order of when they are used in the videos.

The vocabulary words can be reviewed in different ways, depending upon the background of the students:

- Define or translate each vocabulary word, recognizing that the students may not be able to fully comprehend the words until they see the videos (e.g., locker, field hockey, orchestra, recess).
- Assign each student a specific word/phrase from the vocabulary list to look for in the video. For example, one student can look for a *backpack*, while another student looks for a *computer*. After the video is shown, discuss the context in which the words were used.
- Show the entire video so that students get a general overview. Then show the video again, stopping periodically to point out specific vocabulary words.
- Review the vocabulary words and show the video. Then discuss the vocabulary words again, asking students to describe what they saw when they spotted the use of the word in the video. For example, if the word is *gymnasium*, ask the students what the gymnasium looked like and how it was used or discussed by the students in the video. Then watch the video again to confirm the impressions of the students.

VOCABULARY - A DAY IN HIGH SCHOOL

buses	ruler	pizza
bus drivers	supplies	vending machines
schedule	rest room	snacks
elementary school	book bag	art class
middle school	ESL	portfolio
subway	translators	yearbook
city bus	library	music class
bikes	projects	musical instruments
lockers	magazine	orchestra
backpacks	newspapers	school band
textbooks	chapter books	choir
notebooks	tutor/tutoring	auditorium
class	academic coach	music lessons
homeroom	college applications	performance
attendance	guidance counselor	police officer
clubs	computers	elective
sports teams	dictionaries	photography
mathematics (math)	lunch	creative writing
competition	cafeteria	philosophy
field trip	cheeseburgers	technology
bell	pudding	building trades
calculator	muffins	fashion class
compass		

VOCABULARY - HIGH SCHOOL (continued)

debate	notes	academic coaches
research	test	main office
chart	raise hands	late bus
lock combination	lab partner	sports practice
physics class	gym	art club
biology	P.E. (physical education)	drama club
chemistry	gym locker	science club
advanced (classes)	swimming pool	book club
earth science	swim team	student council
living environment	school nurse	project adventure
laboratory	economics class	coach
lab	essay	extra credit
science equipment	composition	crossing guard
lectures		



VOCABULARY

SCENES FROM SCHOOL: REFUGEE STUDENT INTERVIEWS

The following vocabulary list consists of words and phrases that are school-related and used in the videos. The vocabulary may be new to refugee students.

The primary purpose of the videos is to inform students about what a day can be like in American schools. It may be helpful to review some of the key words and phrases that are used routinely in American education. Some words can be especially confusing, such as *gym*, *PE*, *class*, and *lab*.

The list is in the order of when they are used in the videos.

The vocabulary words can be reviewed in different ways, depending upon the background of the students:

- Define or translate each vocabulary word, recognizing that the students may not be able to fully comprehend the words until they see the videos (e.g., locker, field hockey, orchestra, recess).
- Assign each student a specific word/phrase from the vocabulary list to look for in the video. For example, one student can look for a *backpack*, while another student looks for a *computer*. After the video is shown, discuss the context in which the words were used.
- Show the entire video so that students get a general overview. Then show the video again, stopping periodically to point out specific vocabulary words.
- Review the vocabulary words and show the video. Then discuss the vocabulary words again, asking students to describe what they saw when they spotted the use of the word in the video. For example, if the word is *gymnasium*, ask the students what the gymnasium looked like and how it was used or discussed by the students in the video. Then watch the video again to confirm the impressions of the students.

VOCABULARY SCENES FROM SCHOOL: REFUGEE STUDENT INTERVIEWS

friends	gym	computer
cafeteria	schedule	art class
classes	bell	spelling
English as a Second Language (ESL)	homeroom	grammar
activities	first period (second period, etc.)	astronomy
sports	library	test
bus	hall monitor	state tests
dress code	pass	translating
bookbag	permission	100% (grade)
supplies	science	homework
pencils	math	worksheets
pens	social studies	review
rulers	music	gym
books	health	exercising
colored pencils	algebra	baseball
crayons	adding (addition)	soccer
looseleaf papers	multiplication	basketball
binder	reading	volleyball
notebook	chapter	track
lunch	keyboarding	swimming
locker		karate

VOCABULARY
SCENES FROM SCHOOL:
REFUGEE STUDENT INTERVIEWS (continued)

weight room	kindergarten	announcements
lunch menu	1 st grade	club
pizza day (for lunch)	recess	library books
card	kickball	teacher
meatballs	tag	writing
spaghetti	swing	study
spicy chicken	hockey	study sheet
chicken tenders	nurse	textbook
beef	stress	tutoring
chicken patty	note	after school programs
milk	cross-country	fire bell
hamburger	JV team	raise hand
salad	indoor track	chewing gum
hotdog	team	folder
sandwich	football games	hallway
apple	drama club	principal
drink	choir	read books
fries	field trip	take notes



VOCABULARY

SCENES FROM SCHOOL: REFUGEE PARENT INTERVIEWS

The *Refugee Parent Interviews* video is to be used during parent programs. The instructor can use the *Guide to Parent Programs* to determine the best ways to use the video. The video can also be shown to older students. Vocabulary words are provided for review by both parents and students.

The following vocabulary list consists of words and phrases that are school-related and used in the videos.

The list is in the order of when they are used in the videos.

The vocabulary words can be reviewed in different ways, depending upon the background of the students:

- Define or translate each vocabulary word, recognizing that the parents may not be able to comprehend the words until they see what they represent on the video. (For parents, the video should not be used as a vocabulary lesson.)
- Show the entire video so that students get a general overview. Then show the video again, stopping periodically to point out specific vocabulary words.

VOCABULARY SCENES FROM SCHOOL: REFUGEE PARENT INTERVIEWS

binder	read	science
free lunch	geography	recess
English as a Second Language (ESL) Second Language Program	astronomy	tests
counselor	math	quizzes
writing skills	algebra	library
practice	art	dictionary
homework	music	assignments
bus station (bus stop)	spelling	
	grammar	



A DAY IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Find in the Video

Before the students watch the videos, the instructor can ask the students to look for the specific items listed on the next page. The students may need guidance about what the items look like and where the items may be seen in the video. For example, a *hula hoop*, a *librarian*, a *notebook* and a *lunch box* are all on the list. (Some of these words may have been reviewed during the discussion of vocabulary.)

For example, if the students are asked to look for a *notebook*, the instructor can show an example of a notebook and suggest that they students look inside the lockers, desks, and backpacks in the video. Where do they see the notebooks? What do they look like and how are they used?



Each student can be assigned a specific item to look for, or the entire list can be shared with the class. The instructor should inform the students that the items may show up more than once in the video. For example, *water bottles* are shown for sale in the school cafeteria, but the video also shows that some students have water bottles on their desks in the classroom.

After viewing the video, the instructor should discuss:

- Where did you see the item?
- What did it look like?
- How was it used?
- Are those items used in our school the same way?
- What else was in the picture with the item?
- Do you have any questions about the item?

This is not a test! The purpose is to assist students in viewing the video with attention to detail, and to help them become familiar with daily items found in American schools.

For many items, the instructor will have to explain what an item is used for, and whether it would be used the same way in their schools.

Since there are so many things to see in the video, and items can be easily missed, the instructor can show the video again, pointing out the items during the viewing. The video can also be stopped periodically so that the teacher can discuss a scene or a particular item.



A DAY IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

LOOK FOR:

school buses	map of New York state
American flag	lunch tray
school desks	potato chips
school supplies	sneakers
apple	running
books	climbing
librarian	football
photographs of students	volleyball
what is on the walls of the hallway	hula hoop
three-ring binders	thermometer
television	watch
chalk	numbers (math, bus #s)
pencils	eraser
computers	soccer balls
notebook paper	drums
lunch box	water bottles
milk cartons	3-ring binder or notebook
eyeglasses	



A DAY IN MIDDLE SCHOOL

Find in the Video

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For example, if the students are asked to look for a *notebook*, the instructor can show an example of a notebook and suggest that they students look inside the lockers, desks, and backpacks in the video. Where do they see the notebooks? What do they look like and how are they used?

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After viewing the video, the instructor should discuss:

- Where did you see the item?
- What did it look like?
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A DAY IN MIDDLE SCHOOL

LOOK FOR:

school buses	locker
signs on the walls	librarian
locks	dictionaries
computers	rest room
school desks	worksheet
school supplies	lunch tray
books	milk cartons
clock	cheeseburger
American flag	vending machine
pencils	paper lunch bag
binder	chopsticks
chalk and chalkboard	globe
science equipment	paintbrushes
instruments	kickball
pens	football
magazines	field hockey sticks
notebook	thermometer



A DAY IN HIGH SCHOOL

Find in the Video

Before the students watch the videos, the instructor can ask the students to look for the specific items listed on the next page. The students may need guidance about what the items look like and where the items may be seen in the video. For example, a *hula hoop*, a *librarian*, a *notebook* and a *lunch box* are all on the list. (Some of these words may have been reviewed during the discussion of vocabulary.)

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After viewing the video, the instructor should discuss:

- Where did you see the item?
- What did it look like?
- How was it used?
- Are those items used in our school the same way?
- What else was in the picture with the item?
- Do you have any questions about the item?

This is not a test! The purpose is to assist students in viewing the video with attention to detail, and to help them become familiar with daily items found in American schools.

For many items, the instructor will have to explain what an item is used for, and whether it would be used the same way in their schools.

Since there are so many things to see in the video, and items can be easily missed, the instructor can show the video again, pointing out the items during the viewing. The video can also be stopped periodically so that the teacher can discuss a scene or a particular item.



A DAY IN HIGH SCHOOL

LOOK FOR:

school buses	dictionaries
lockers/locks	cheeseburger
book bags	milk carton
trophies	vending machine
notebook	chopsticks
pencils	violin
worksheets	quilt
desks	chalk
American flag	football
blackboard	hockey stick
apple	swimming pool
puzzle	tennis racket
rest room	thermometer
books	rest room
newspaper	ropes
librarian	football
eyeglasses	volleyball
computers	soccer ball
flag	drinking fountain



A DAY IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: Questions for Discussion



The purpose of asking questions about the videos is to provide information to the students so that they are prepared for school.

The instructor should not use the questions for testing the students, or for turning the viewing of the video into a lesson. The questions are to open up discussion, call attention to items and scenes for clarification, and to reassure students that school is fun and interesting, once they understand what a day in an American school can be like.

It is always important to point out the similarities and differences between the school shown in the video and the school that the students will be attending.

For the following questions, the instructor can:

- ASK students to see if they need more information.
- ANSWER the questions themselves, to provide information.
- REVIEW the answers to explain and elaborate.

Questions for Discussion

1. What color are the school buses?
2. How do students get to school?
3. What do students carry to school?
4. What do students wear to school?
5. Where do students store their backpacks?
6. What do the teachers do?
7. Where do the students sit?
8. What do the classrooms look like?
9. What is on the walls of the classroom and the hallways?
10. What is inside the desks of the students?
11. When do students have to ask permission from the teacher?

12. What can students do in the school library?
13. Where did you see books?
14. What subjects do the students study?
15. What are the students learning about?
16. What do students learn in ESL?
17. Who is their Academic Coach? What does the Coach do?
18. What are the computers used for? Where are they?
19. Can students move around the classroom?
20. What do students do in a fire drill?
21. Why do students raise their hands?
22. How do students walk down the hall?
23. What's for lunch?
24. How do students pay for lunch?
25. When are students laughing?
26. When are students clapping?
27. What do students play at recess?
28. What does the school nurse do?
29. What is PE or gym?
30. What is the homework?
31. What clubs can students join?
32. Who can your parents and family members talk to?
33. What is in the backpacks?
34. What does the crossing guard do?
35. Where will the school buses take the students at the end of the day?

What surprised you?
What worries you?
What are you curious about?

IS IT THE SAME AT YOUR SCHOOL?

The instructor should describe similarities and differences and can also point out the realities of a day at school that may not be depicted in the video.

For example, are the rest rooms always so spic and span in American schools? Are the playgrounds always on fields of grass? Are musical instruments available for everyone?

The instructor should discuss the following to inform the students about the specifics of their local school:

school transportation

backpacks

classroom setup

classroom rules

lunch food

playground

ESL class

fire drills

after school activities

instruments for music



A DAY IN MIDDLE SCHOOL



Questions for Discussion



The purpose of asking questions about the videos is to provide information to the students so that they are prepared for school.

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It is always important to point out the similarities and differences between the school shown in the video and the school that the students will be attending.

For the following questions, the instructor can:

- ASK students to see if they need more information.
- ANSWER the questions themselves, to provide information.
- REVIEW the answers to explain and elaborate.

Questions for Discussion

1. What do students carry to school?
2. What do students wear to school?
3. What is written on the signs in the hall?
4. What is in the lockers?
5. What is in the backpacks?
6. How do students walk down the hall?
7. What do the teachers do?
8. What are the students studying in Science?
9. Where are the computers in school?
10. What do the students have to do for homework?
11. What's for lunch?
12. How do students choose lunch?

13. What is it like in the cafeteria?
14. Why do students raise their hands?
15. Why is the orchestra practicing?
16. What is FACs?
17. What is on the walls of the classrooms?
18. Why do students take notes?
19. Where are the students going in the halls?
20. What can students do in the library?
21. What is PE?
22. What is ESL?
23. What is a tutor?
24. Who is the Academic Coach? What does the Coach do?
25. How are students graded when they work on reports?
26. What do students do in Art class?
27. What do students do in gym (PE) class?
28. What is the health office (school nurse)?
29. What clubs can students join?
30. What are students learning in technology class?
31. What do students do in a fire drill?
32. Where do students go if they need help with their schoolwork?
33. What is a tutor?
34. Who can your parents and family members talk to at school?
35. What is in the backpacks?
36. What does the crossing guard do?

What surprised you?
What worries you?
What are you curious about?

IS IT THE SAME AT YOUR SCHOOL?

The instructor should describe similarities and differences and can also point out the realities of a day at school that may not be depicted in the video.

For example, are the rest rooms always so spic and span in American schools? Are the playgrounds always on fields of grass? Are musical instruments available for everyone?

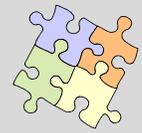
The instructor should discuss the following to inform the students about the specifics of their local school:

Middle School name (vs Junior High or Charter School)	lunch food
school transportation	playground
backpacks	ESL class
classroom setup	fire drills
classroom rules	after school activities
computers	instruments for music



A DAY IN HIGH SCHOOL

Questions for Discussion



The purpose of asking questions about the videos is to provide information to the students so that they are prepared for school.

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It is always important to point out the similarities and differences between the school shown in the video and the school that the students will be attending.

For the following questions, the instructor can:

- ASK students to see if they need more information.
- ANSWER the questions themselves, to provide information.
- REVIEW the answers to explain and elaborate.

Questions for Discussion

1. How do students get to school?
2. What are the students carrying?
3. What are the students wearing?
4. Why does the bell ring?
5. When can students go to their lockers?
6. Can students wear coats or backpacks during the school day?
7. What are the school announcements?
8. What do teachers do?
9. How much time is there to get to class?
10. When can students work together in groups?
11. What is ESL?
12. What do students do in the library?

13. What is a tutor?
14. Who is the Academic Coach? What does the Coach do?
15. What do guidance counselors do?
16. Who will help students with college applications?
17. Who can your parents and family members talk to at school?
18. Where do students go if they need help with school?
19. How do students pay for lunch?
20. What can students eat for lunch?
21. What do students do in Art class?
22. Why is the orchestra practicing?
23. What is an “elective” class?
24. What is a debate?
25. What is in the lockers?
26. What is a lab?
27. Why do students raise their hands?
28. What do lab partners do?
29. What is PE?
30. What do students do during a fire drill?
31. What sports can students play?
32. What is the health office (school nurse)?
33. Why are the backpacks heavy?
34. What clubs can students join?
35. What can students do after school?
36. What does the crossing guard do?

What surprised you?
What worries you?
What are you curious about?

IS IT THE SAME AT YOUR SCHOOL?

The instructor should describe similarities and differences, and point out the realities of a day at school that may not be depicted in the video.

For example, are the rest rooms always so spic and span in American schools? Are the playgrounds always on fields of grass? Are musical instruments available for everyone?

The instructor should discuss the following to inform the students about the specifics of their local school:

school transportation

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classroom setup

classroom rules

lunch food

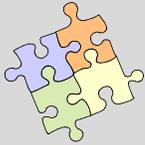
playground

ESL class

fire drills

after school activities

instruments for music



REFUGEE STUDENT INTERVIEWS



Questions for Discussion



For each of the sections of the video *Refugee Student Interviews*, the instructor should discuss what the students say about the following topics. The instructor can refer to the scripts provided in this *Guide to the Videos*.

Questions for Discussion

1. What did the students say about _____ (select topic below) _____?
2. How do you think that the students feel about going to school in America?
3. How do you think that the students felt the first few days of school?
4. What are some of the things that students do during the school day?
5. What do you think that the students enjoy about school?

Meeting Friends

- How to make friends

So Much to Learn

- Schedules
- Moving to class

Ready for School

- Morning routine
- Supplies
- Riding the bus
- Lockers

In the classroom

- School subjects
- Learning English, ESL
- Tests and grades
- Homework

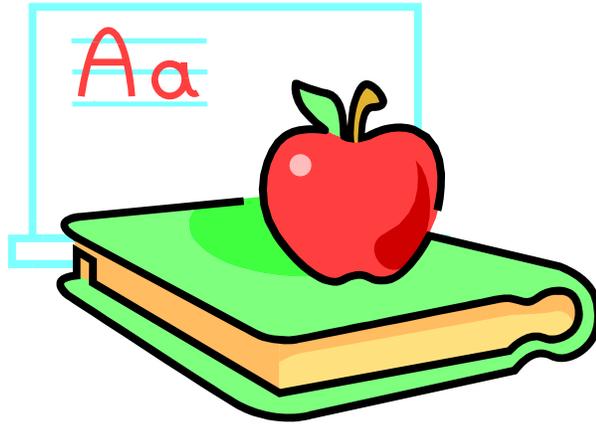
Stay healthy

- Gym and recess
- Cafeteria
- School lunch
- School nurse

Interests and talents

- Sports teams
- Football games
- Clubs
- Computers
- Field trips
- Library

VIDEO SCRIPTS



A Day in Elementary School

A Day in Middle School

A Day in High School

Scenes From School: Refugee Student Interviews

Scenes From School: Refugee Parent Interviews

OFFICE OF REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT SERVICES



WELCOME TO OUR SCHOOLS

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL VIDEO SCRIPT

1. *Welcome to Our Schools*
2. Good morning!
3. The buses are rolling in and it's time for school.
4. The bus drivers have a tight schedule so that everyone can get to school on time.
5. These students waited for their school bus right near their homes and it brought them directly to school.
6. The students live in a town where the buses are provided free by the school district. The buses pick up everyone going to the elementary schools, the middle school and the high school.
7. If the students lived in a big city, they could take a subway or city bus to school.
8. Some students live close enough to their schools so that they can ride their bikes or walk to school with their friends.
9. Teachers greet the students and welcome them to school in the morning.
10. In elementary school, the students go straight to their classroom, hang up their coats, load their backpacks into the storage cupboards (sometimes called "cubbies") and take out the homework that they finished the night before.
11. Some students do classroom jobs like passing out papers and watering the plants in the classroom. The teacher answers questions from some students while others sign up for the school lunch. Do they want a peanut butter and jelly sandwich? Rice or salad? Will they order milk today?
12. In this classroom, if they brought a healthy snack like fruits and vegetables, they get to check off their names on the Carrot Club chart. Once the chart is full, the class will have a party with healthy foods.
13. Then it's time to get to work. Everyone has a seat that the teacher chose for them. Every morning the students practice their writing skills. They all have worksheets to complete while the teacher writes on the board.

14. The students store in their desks the pencils, textbooks, notebooks, crayons, scissors, and glue that they may need during the school day.
15. They are quiet during this writing lesson, but sometimes they work with the students sitting next to them.
16. After writing class, students who are learning how to speak English can go to a special class where the teacher will help them practice speaking and writing the English language.
17. Sometimes translators also join the class.
18. Today these students are learning how to describe things in English. When they started the English as a Second Language class, or ESL, they did not speak any English at all.
19. Now they can play a guessing game with the teacher and write words in English.
20. The ESL teacher will also help them with their homework and will teach them about American schools. Some schools have Academic Coaches who can also help them with their English and answer questions about school.
21. Then it's back to class, walking quietly in the hall, going past the student work from Art class, the rest rooms, the principal's office, and the bulletin board that says Welcome to Our School.
22. Back in the classroom, the students join in a Social Studies class. In Social Studies class in the elementary school, students study about history, the economy, governments around the world, and geography.
23. These students are learning about New York State, and the teacher is showing them maps. Everyone gets their own copy of the map so that they can answer questions about New York State.
24. The students have to research their answers. There are many resources in the room for researching, including maps on the wall, library books, and textbooks. This room also has computers, but in some schools the students use computers in the school library or in a computer lab.
25. The students can move around the room to look at the research materials, to help each other with their questions, and to talk over their ideas with the teacher.
26. Talking is allowed in this Social Studies class. But, of course, the talking is done quietly, and everyone is concentrating on their schoolwork.

27. If the students do not understand English, the other students and the teacher will help them. The students can also get help from the ESL teacher or a school tutor. A tutor is someone who will teach one or two students at a time, helping them with their schoolwork.
28. Once everyone has worked on their research, the teacher asks the students to return to their seats and put away their maps because it is time to work on their Science reports.
29. The class is studying animals of the world.
30. The class is interrupted by a bell. It is a fire drill. Everyone in the school is practicing leaving the school in case there is a fire. They line up outside the school so that the teacher can take attendance.
31. When they are back in their classroom, the teacher asks the students to take a book that is about animals out of their desk. They got the book at the school library, at the public library in the town, or from the classroom library.
32. They also need pencils, and they take paper from their Science binder.
33. The teacher shows them how to organize their reports about animals. She writes on the chalkboard an outline that they can follow.
34. This is quiet class time, so students listen to the teacher and raise their hands if they have a question. Once they have listened quietly to the teacher's directions, they can work with a partner if they want to.
35. Some students get permission from the teacher to go to the school library to do more research for their report, or to choose a book to borrow, or to sit and read quietly.
36. When they have chosen a book that they want to take home, they can check out the book with the school librarian.
37. Some students continue to research their Social Studies map questions or their Science reports, using the computers in the library.
38. The morning has been very busy, and now it's time for lunch!
39. The class walks in a line down the hall to the cafeteria. Some students want to buy a hot or cold lunch. Today the cafeteria is serving chicken nuggets, rice, rolls, milk, and pudding.
40. The students can buy a lunch card that they can use all week to pay for lunch, and they can pay for extra lunch items like apples, chips, oranges, salad, water, muffins, crackers, and orange juice.

41. They do not *have* to buy their lunch. They can bring lunch from home in a paper bag or lunch box. On pizza day it seems as if everyone buys their lunch!
42. In the cafeteria, everyone sits at tables with their classes, and they are all talking and laughing, so it can get pretty noisy!
43. They stay at their tables unless they have to throw away their garbage and return their lunch trays.
44. Some students play a clapping game, but mostly everyone relaxes and talks to their friends during the lunch break.
45. After lunch everyone goes outside for recess. It's time for climbing, running, swinging, and playing games.
46. Not all schools have lots of playground equipment, but there are lots of games that everyone can play during recess. Sometimes the teacher will organize games, or provide basketballs, baseballs, or soccer balls for students to play with.
47. Recess is a time for getting healthy exercise, and it's a good time to play with friends. It's important to include lots of other students in recess games because the playground is a good place to make *new* friends.
48. It is important to play safely. But don't worry, if a student gets hurt or does not feel well, the school nurse can help. At any time students can ask their teacher if they can go to see the nurse.
49. After recess it's time for math. In this class everyone has a math notebook. The teacher shows math problems that all of the students can see, and then the entire class works on the math problems together.
50. Every student needs to have a sharp pencil with an eraser, and they need to keep their notebooks neat and organized.
51. The teacher will tell them if they need math supplies like a calculator, a compass, or a ruler to solve problems. Sometimes the classrooms have the things that students need, and sometimes students have to buy the supplies at a school store or at a local store.
52. Math is quiet listening time because the teacher is explaining how to solve the math problems.
53. Today the class gets to go outside again because they have gym class, sometimes called PE or Physical Education.
54. On the days when they don't have gym, they may have classes in Music, Art, or Library.

55. In gym today they are practicing soccer drills. If it is cold or rainy outside, then they play inside in the school gymnasium, or *gym*. Everyone has to wear sneakers and gym clothes when they are inside, so the teacher gives the students time to change their shoes and clothes before they start class.
56. It's been a very busy day! The class returns to their classroom and copies down the homework assignments that the teacher has written on the chalkboard. Tonight they have to work on reading and math, and they are reminded about what to bring to school the next day. The students can ask their family members and friends to help with their homework.
57. If the parents have questions about the homework or anything else, they can call or e-mail the teacher any time. They can also come in and meet with the teacher and the principal to discuss the school program and their child's school work.
58. It's time to clean off desks, pack up backpacks, and get ready for the bus ride or walk home. The students have to make sure that they have pencils and paper to do their homework, and they may have to bring home textbooks and notebooks. The backpacks can get very heavy!
59. As they walk outside to the school buses, they look at the work that other classes did today. There are projects in art, science, and writing, and the school principal announced the PE Stars of the Month.
60. Some students want to stay after school because there are clubs, sports, and tutoring programs that they can participate in.
61. These students are getting extra help in studying math.
62. This is a club where students play chess.
63. Some students take music lessons and play in the school band. The instruments are donated to the school, or the students rent them. They can sign up for free music lessons that are held during the school day.
64. At the end of the school day the students line up to walk to the buses, looking for the number of their bus. Line Leaders get to hold the signs with the bus numbers, and teachers help to make sure that everyone gets on the right bus. Then the students climb on board.
65. The bus will drop them off right near their homes.
66. For students who walk or ride their bikes to school, a crossing guard will make sure that they cross the street safely.
67. Some parents meet their children at the end of the school day and they all walk home together.
68. See you tomorrow!

OFFICE OF REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT SERVICES



WELCOME TO OUR SCHOOLS

MIDDLE SCHOOL VIDEO SCRIPT

1. *Welcome to Our Schools*
2. Good morning!
3. The buses are rolling in and it's time for school.
4. The bus drivers have a tight schedule so that everyone can get to school on time.
5. These students waited for their school bus right near their homes and it brought them directly to school.
6. They live in a town where the buses are provided free by the school district. They pick up everyone going to the elementary schools, the middle school, and the high school.
7. If they lived in a big city, they could take a subway or city bus to school.
8. Some students live close enough to their schools so that they can walk to school with their friends.
9. The students go straight to their lockers where they can store their coats and backpacks and keep their textbooks and notebooks. Every student has a locker. They may return to their lockers between classes if they need something for a class.
10. Then it's on to homeroom, where the teachers take attendance and the students listen to the school announcements. This is where students can learn about clubs that they can join, sports teams, school events, and visitors to the school.
11. Today's announcements are about a school soccer game, the winners of a mathematics competition, and a field trip to the United Nations in New York City.
12. In homeroom the students also sign up for the school lunch if they want to buy lunch today. Do they want a peanut butter and jelly sandwich? Rice or salad? Will they order milk today?

13. The students go to several different classes during the school day. A bell will ring to signal that it's time to move on to the next class. Let's follow the schedule of a 7th grade middle school student.
14. The first class today is Science, where the students are learning about the trees of New York State. The students are using the resources in the classroom to make reports about trees and leaves.
15. The teacher first gives instructions to the students and has provided lots of science books for the students to use.
16. The students can work in groups to carry out their research and work on their reports, and they can move around the room to look at books and gather supplies such as paper, glue, and scissors.
17. This classroom has computers, but in some schools the students will use computers either in the library or in a Computer Lab.
18. If students have questions, they raise their hand and the teacher will help them. The students can talk quietly in this class, as long as they are concentrating on their school work.
19. The Science teacher explains that the students need to continue working on the projects for homework.
20. When the bell rings in the school, it's time to move on to the next class. After Science class is Music class. The students can play musical instruments in the orchestra or in the school band, or they can sing in a choir.
21. This orchestra is practicing on the stage of the school auditorium because pretty soon they are going to be performing for their parents. The band is also getting ready for the big performance.
22. All of the instruments have been donated to the school, or the students rent them. They can sign up for free music lessons that are held during the school day.
23. After Music it's time to put the instruments away and walk through the busy halls to a class called Family and Consumer Science, or FACS. In FACS the students learn about topics like buying and cooking healthy foods, home safety, and managing money.
24. In class today the teacher is preparing the students for a test about measurements, and the students are quietly taking notes. It is time to pay attention while the teacher reviews what they have studied in class.
25. They will take their notes home tonight to study, so that they are all ready for the test tomorrow.

26. The hands go up when the teacher asks a question. It looks as if these students may be well prepared for their test!
27. In this school the students have 4 minutes to get to their next class after the bell rings. There's no time to stop at the locker this time! That means that students have to be prepared for their next class and bring their notebooks, pencils, and textbooks with them.
28. After FACS, the next class is ESL. What is ESL? It's a special class for students who are learning English.
29. It is called English as a Second Language. In this class the teacher will help students practice reading and writing the English language.
30. Sometimes translators also join the class.
31. Today these students are meeting first in the school library where they can look for books that will help them with school projects like the tree report, or they can choose a book or magazine for quiet reading.
32. When the students have chosen a book that they want to take home, they can check out the book with the school librarian. Some students may want to meet with the ESL teacher or a tutor to practice their English, and others may want to work on the computers in the library.
33. Then the students go to their ESL classroom and work on their reading skills. When these students first came to the school and started the ESL classes, they did not speak any English at all. Now they can read chapter books and discuss them with the class.
34. Sometimes students use translation dictionaries or computer programs to help them learn English.
35. The bell rings again and now it's time to go to Math class. This time there is time to go to the locker and get the math notebook and calculator needed for class.
36. The students open their lockers using a lock combination that keeps the lockers closed and locked. After a few practices they have memorized their lock combination and have learned how to open their lockers.
37. There's not much time to get to the next class, so the students need to keep their lockers organized.
38. The halls can be crowded and noisy, but it's important for students to get to class on time. A stop in the rest room has to be quick!

39. And, of course, at any time during class the students can raise their hands to ask for permission to go to the rest room.
40. In Math class the students work in small groups to solve math problems. If a math problem is hard to understand, the teacher and the other students will figure it out together.
41. There's that bell again! The Math class was 40 minutes long, but it seemed to go very fast! It's time to pack up the school supplies in the binder and now it's time for lunch!
42. But first there is another bell. It's a fire drill. Everyone is practicing leaving the school in case there is a fire. The students line up outside so that the teachers can take attendance.
43. When the students get back in the school it's time to head for the school cafeteria. Not everyone goes to lunch at the same time in the middle school, but the cafeteria is still very crowded.
44. Some students want to buy a hot or cold lunch. Today the cafeteria is serving chicken nuggets, rice, rolls, milk, and pudding.
45. The students can buy a lunch card that they can use all week to pay for lunch, and they can buy extra lunch items like apples, oranges, salad, water, muffins, chips, orange juice, and crackers.
46. They do not have to buy their lunch. They can bring lunch from home in a paper bag or lunch box. On pizza day it seems as if everyone buys their lunch!
47. In the cafeteria, everyone sits at tables with their friends, and they are all talking and laughing, so it can get pretty noisy!
48. It may take awhile to figure out where to sit, and some students move around to sit with different people every day. The cafeteria can get very noisy, but it's a good time to relax and enjoy friends.
49. On this day, lunch is followed by Social Studies class.
50. In Social Studies class in middle school students study history, the economy, governments around the world, and geography. The students in this class are doing projects on the continents and are working on making maps.
51. They can gather in groups in the library and in the classroom to share the work of their projects. The teacher will give them a grade based on their research, final product, and cooperation as a group.
52. The teacher is always available to help, but the students are learning how to work independently and share resources like books and art supplies. They will need these skills when they get to high school!

53. The next class is Art, where students are using lots of different art supplies and techniques to create a portfolio of paintings.
54. The students will display their artwork in a big show at the end of the school year, and their families will be invited to see the show. Students can also submit their drawings to the school magazine and school newspaper.
55. Anyone can take Art class, even if they just want to learn something new.
56. The next class is gym, sometimes called PE or Physical Education. Today the students are playing kickball indoors in the gymnasium (or “gym”) because it is raining outside.
57. There’s a locker room for changing clothes for gym, and everyone has a gym locker with a lock on it. If the weather is nice, they can go outside to practice sports like track, football, or field hockey.
58. In this school, they also have volleyball, soccer, baseball, basketball, and wrestling teams that students can join after school. There are gym teachers and coaches to teach students the skills of the sports.
59. There are plenty of chances to learn a new sport. Some new students learned how to play baseball for the first time this year. The other students help new students learn the rules and have fun.
60. And don’t worry, if anyone gets hurt or doesn’t feel well, the school nurse can help. At any time students can ask the teacher if they can go to see the nurse.
61. It’s been a long day, but it’s not over yet! The buses will take everyone home, but some students may want to stay after school. First they report to the main office to get a pass for the late bus and to check the bus schedule, and then they can go to sports practices, club meetings, or after-school tutoring.
62. Some of the clubs are the Art Club, the Drama Club, Science Club, and the Book Club.
63. Some students stay after school because they have been elected to serve on the Student Council, and they meet to discuss issues about the school.
64. Any student can stay after school to get extra help from teachers, to work on a project in the library, or to just meet with a teacher to learn something new.

65. Some students are working on a technology project for extra credit, and are taking a computer class to learn new skills. They do not *have* to do this. They just find it interesting!
66. While the students are participating in after-school activities, the teachers and the guidance counselors may meet with parents to help them plan student schedules and to answer questions about school.
67. These parents have just enrolled their child in school and are learning about all of the school rules and activities. Parents and family members are always welcome in the schools!
68. The guidance counselors help students plan their school schedules, and they are wonderful listeners if students feel as if they need help with schoolwork, friends, or family life. Some students stay after school to talk to the guidance counselor about what it is like in their new school.
69. Now the school day is over and the buses have arrived to take the last students home. It's time to clear out the locker and load up the backpack with textbooks and homework. The backpacks can be very heavy!
70. Some students who live near the school prefer to ride their bikes or walk home. A crossing guard will make sure that they cross the street safely.
71. It's been another full day at the middle school.
72. See you tomorrow!

OFFICE OF REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT SERVICES



WELCOME TO OUR SCHOOLS

HIGH SCHOOL VIDEO SCRIPT

1. *Welcome to Our Schools*
2. Good morning!
3. The buses are rolling in and it's time for school.
4. The bus drivers have a tight schedule so that everyone can get to school on time.
5. These students waited for their school bus right near their homes and it brought them directly to school.
6. They live in a town where the buses are provided free by the school district, and they pick up everyone going to the elementary schools, middle school, and high school.
7. If they lived in a big city, they could take a subway or city bus to school.
8. Some students live close enough to their schools so that they can ride their bikes or walk to school with their friends.
9. In high school the students greet their friends and then go straight to their lockers where they store their coats and backpacks and keep their textbooks and notebooks. They may return to their lockers between classes if they need something for class.
10. Then it's on to homeroom, where the teachers take attendance and the students listen to the school announcements. This is where students can learn about clubs that they can join, sports teams, school events, and visitors to the school.
11. Today's announcements are about a school football game, the winners of a mathematics competition, a field trip to the United Nations in New York City, and a visitor who is coming to the school to talk about a nearby college.
12. In homeroom the students also sign up for the school lunch if they want to buy lunch today. Do they want a peanut butter and jelly sandwich? Rice or salad? Will they order milk today?

13. The students go to several different classes during the school day. A bell will ring as a signal that it's time to go to the next class. Let's follow the schedule of an 11th grader in high school.
14. The first class is Math. In this class the students sit in groups and solve math problems together. The teacher explains how to solve the problems and then gives the students a worksheet with math problems.
15. The students can talk quietly in this class, as long as they are concentrating on their school work.
16. They may need math supplies such as a calculator, compass, or ruler. They can buy these supplies at a school store or local store, or sometimes the school provides the supplies.
17. When the bell rings, it's time to go to the next class. In this school the students have 4 minutes to go to their locker, stop quickly in the rest room, and get to class on time. The halls are crowded and sometimes there is not enough time to stop at the locker, so books and notebooks have to be carried in a backpack or book bag.
18. Some schools do not allow students to wear their coats or backpacks during the school day, so students really have to plan so that they arrive at class prepared, with pencils, pens, notebooks, and textbooks.
19. In high school the students who are learning English go to ESL as their next class. What is ESL? It's a special class for students who are learning English.
20. It is called English as a Second Language and it is where the teacher will help students practice reading and writing the English language.
21. Sometimes translators also join the class.
22. Today these students are meeting first in the school library where they can look for books that will help them with school projects, or they can choose a book or magazine for quiet reading.
23. The library also has daily newspapers that students can read anytime during the school day.
24. Once the students have selected their books, the ESL teacher discusses the book with the students so that they can practice their English.
25. Some of these students just enrolled in school and they are just beginning to learn English. The other students enrolled two years ago and they are now reading chapter books.

26. When the students have chosen a book that they want to take home, they can check out the book with the school librarian.
27. Some students may want to meet with the ESL teacher or a tutor to practice their English. A tutor is a teacher who helps one or two students at a time with their school work. Some schools also have an Academic Coach who will help the students with their schoolwork, and answer questions about school.
28. This student moved to the United States three years ago and is planning to attend college. She is getting help with her college applications. She will also get help from her school guidance counselor.
29. The guidance counselors help students plan their school schedules, and they are wonderful listeners if students feel as if they need help with school work, friends, or family life. Some students stay after school to talk to the guidance counselor about what it is like in their new school.
30. The teachers and the guidance counselors may also meet with parents to help them plan student schedules and to answer questions about school.
31. Parents and family members are always welcome in the schools!
32. After working in the library, the ESL students either stay to work on the computers in the library, or they go to their ESL classroom and work on their reading skills.
33. Sometimes students use translation dictionaries or computer programs to help them learn English.
34. The bell rings, and it's time for lunch in the school cafeteria.
35. Not everyone goes to lunch at the same time in the high school, but the cafeteria is still very crowded.
36. Some students want to buy a hot or cold lunch. Today the cafeteria is serving cheeseburgers, rice, rolls, milk, and pudding.
37. The students can buy a lunch card that they can use all week to pay for lunch, and they can buy extra lunch items like apples, oranges, salad, water, muffins, chips, orange juice, and crackers. On pizza day it seems as if everyone buys their lunch!
38. They do not *have* to buy their lunch. They can bring lunch from home and can use the vending machines to buy juice, water, and snacks.

39. In the cafeteria, everyone sits at tables with their friends, and they are talking and laughing. The cafeteria can get very noisy, but it's a good time to relax and enjoy friends.
40. After lunch is Art class where the students are using lots of different art supplies and techniques to create a portfolio of paintings. The students will display their artwork in a big show at the end of the school year, and their families will be invited to see the show.
41. Students can also submit their drawings to the school magazine and school newspaper. They can also sign up to write articles and stories for the school publications, or take pictures for the school yearbook.
42. Some students choose to take Music classes. In this school the students can play musical instruments in the orchestra or in the school band, or they can sing in a choir.
43. This orchestra is practicing on the stage of the school auditorium because pretty soon they are going to be performing for their friends and relatives. The band is also getting ready for the big performance.
44. All of the instruments have been donated to the school, or the students rent them. They can sign up for free music lessons that are held during the school day.
45. At the end of Art class another bell rings, but this time it's a fire drill. Everyone is practicing leaving the school in case there is a fire. They line up outside so that the teacher can take attendance. This school also has a police officer to help keep the school safe.
46. When the students get back into class it's time for a class called *Business Law*. This class is called an "elective" class. The students in this class have completed their required courses for high school and can choose additional classes in topics that they would like to study.
47. Electives are different in every school, but this school offers classes in photography, creative writing, philosophy, technology, and building trades.
48. This elective Fashion class is working on a large diversity quilt to show the many different cultures around the world.
49. Back in Business Law the students are planning for a debate. They will practice taking different points of view on a topic. They are expected to do a lot of research about the topic at the school library and for homework.
50. One student has already started making a chart that he will use in the debate.

51. The bell rings again, and it's time to do a quick stop at the locker. The students open their lockers using a lock combination that keeps the lockers closed and locked. After a few practices they have memorized their lock combination and have learned how to open their lockers.
52. There's not much time to get to the next class, so the students need to keep their lockers organized.
53. Then it's on to Physics class. Students who take Physics have probably taken science classes in biology and chemistry, as well as advanced math classes. Other science classes are Earth Science and Living Environment.
54. The Physics classroom is also a laboratory, or *lab*, and it has all of the science equipment that is needed for doing science experiments.
55. Today as the teacher lectures, the students are taking notes for a test that is coming up. If they have questions, they raise their hands and the teacher will call on them. Their notes need to be neat and organized, and they have homework in the textbook almost every night.
56. In this class it is very important to pay close attention to the teacher because there is a lot to learn, and the science experiments have to be carried out safely. Each student has a lab partner and they work together to follow the steps of the experiments.
57. Now it's time for gym class, sometimes called PE or Physical Education. Today the class is playing kickball indoors in the gymnasium (or "gym") because it is raining outside.
58. There's a locker room for changing clothes for gym, and everyone has a gym locker with a lock on it. If the weather is nice, the students can go outside to practice sports like track, football, or field hockey.
59. This school happens to have a swimming pool that is used in gym class for swimming lessons, and after school for the swim team.
60. The school also has volleyball, soccer, baseball, basketball, wrestling, and other teams that boys and girls can join after school. Some of the sports require students to try out for the school teams, but in gym class the teachers and coaches teach students the skills of the sports.
61. There are plenty of chances to learn a new sport. Some new students learned how to play baseball for the first time this year. The other students help new students learn the rules and have fun.
62. And don't worry, if anyone gets hurt or doesn't feel well, the school nurse can help. At any time students can ask the teacher if they can go to see the nurse or leave class to go to the rest room.

63. It's been a busy day, but there's one more class: Economics. The teacher assigns a section of the textbook for the students to read for homework, and then the teacher discusses it in class. Next the students are going to write an essay (or composition) on the topic.
64. If students need help, the teacher will help them, or the other students will help. The ESL teacher can also help. Some schools have Academic Coaches who can help with learning English and schoolwork, and can answer questions about school.
65. That's the last class for today. The buses have arrived to take the students home. It's time to clear out the locker and load up the backpack with textbooks and homework. The backpacks can be very heavy!
66. Some students may want to stay after school. First they report to the main office to get a pass for the late bus and to check the bus schedule, and then they can go to sports practices, club meetings, or after-school tutoring.
67. Some of the clubs are the Art Club, the Drama Club, the Science Club, and the Book Club.
68. Some students stay after school because they have been elected to serve on the Student Council, and they meet to discuss issues about the school.
69. This school also has a club called Project Adventure, where students participate in challenges to build confidence and teamwork. This boy has mastered one of the hardest challenges. He is always supervised by a coach.
70. Any student can stay after school to get extra help from teachers, to work on a project in the library, or just meet with a teacher to learn something new.
71. Some students are working on a technology project for extra credit, and are taking a computer class to learn new skills. They do not *have* to do this, they just find it interesting!
72. There are many sports after school, including football, track, volleyball, and soccer.
73. Now the school day is over and the buses are once again ready to take students home. Some students who live near the school prefer to ride their bikes or walk home. A crossing guard will make sure that they cross the street safely.
74. It's been another full day at the high school.
75. See you tomorrow!

OFFICE OF REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT SERVICES



WELCOME TO OUR SCHOOLS

SCENES FROM SCHOOL: REFUGEE STUDENT INTERVIEWS VIDEO SCRIPT

1. *Welcome to Our Schools*
2. Meeting Friends
3. When you are a new kid usually people make friends with you.
4. The teacher usually gives you a friend – so you are friends with them.
5. I was so quiet
I didn't know anything and they started helping me and we are friends.
6. All you have to do is talk to them
Be nice
If you are a nice person it's easy to make friends
7. Sometimes they just come up to you and say hi
So you say hi back
And then you start becoming friends
8. I talk to them and they talk to me
It's easy
9. It will be kind of easy if you find a friend that you can trust
10. They can tell you where to go and help you with stuff
11. They help me to learn some English
and make myself friends
12. I have some friends from the Refugee Center
She was in my school
and in my classrooms
Now she can help me more with the English

13. Everybody was so nice
Even kids
There were a couple of kids who would help my son
to get to the cafeteria and classes
And he met his first friends in English as a Second Language class
And he still has –
He loves his friends
14. Most of my friends from Bosnia were here
and then those are most of my friends
and then a little bit of my friends I made at school
15. I have good friends
16. Three friends!
17. First I made Bosnian friends, then, Russian, then Puerto Rican, then
Black
18. This year I'm doing a lot of activities and sports and I got a lot of
friends there
19. My friends are Somalian and American
20. They came from all over
and they told me their names.
21. **READY FOR SCHOOL**
22. In the morning when I wake up for school I brush my teeth
and take a bath
and change my clothes
and eat lunch
and wait for the bus coming
so that we can go to school
23. Wash, brush, wash, breakfast
Fix clothes
Backpack
Go to school
24. Sometimes the teachers tell you what to wear
The dress code
25. In Thailand they have the same shoes
The same shoes and the same socks
Every day I had to wear those shoes and socks
It hurt my feet
And here I can wear everything I want

26. My bookbag and my coat
That's all
27. The supplies we need are
Pencils, pens, rulers
28. Books, pencils
29. Colored pencils, crayons
30. Looseleaf papers, binders
31. Notebook, pens, pencils, books
32. I ride on a bus
33. My children love to use the bus, to ride on the bus
And I ask them why
Because sometimes, I told them, I can bring you to school if you
need it
No, no, no, no – we want to use the bus
Why?
It's fun
It's fun
Because they can see every child from different grades even
And they say it's fun
34. I wait for the bus with my friends
We go inside and it's noisy and it's warm
35. You go in the bus and the bus goes to some children
takes those children
and goes straight to your school
36. The one thing that I don't like from the bus in the gas
(The gas?)
It stinks
(laughter)
37. I get off the bus and I go to lunch
38. I go to my locker in the morning
and in the afternoon
39. I put things in the locker
and take just stuff that I need
40. In my locker I keep my jacket and my book bag

41. For class I take stuff I need
I let my friend use it sometimes when I put stuff in it for gym
(the clothes)
And I let them use it
So he can put the stuff inside the locker
So when he needs it he can take it
I give him my number because I trust him

42. **SO MUCH TO LEARN**

43. Well, you get a schedule
and then it tells you what classes to go to

44. Here you have a whole schedule
and you have to find the room

45. When the bell rings you go to homeroom
and then in the homeroom you read books

46. And there's usually morning work which is on the board
It's what we have been reviewing

47. And then after homeroom
you go to first period
and then second, and then third
and then fourth and then so on

48. My first class was ESL and it was in the library
so I didn't know where it was

49. When one class is done and you go back to your locker
and get another binder
and if the other class is done
get the other type of binder

50. I had to ask a teacher that was around
every single time
to help me to open the locker

51. I met this hall monitor when I was wandering around
And she helped me
and she found –
She walked around with me
and showed me my classes that I had to go to

52. And if you get a pass
We may go to the library
A "pass" is permission to go somewhere

53. **IN THE CLASSROOM**

54. I'm taking a lot of classes
I have a really busy schedule
55. I take science, math, social, music, health
56. Math, science, and social studies
57. In Social Studies I learn about the Hudson River
58. Reading, math
59. In science class we are studying about leaves, trees
All about animals
60. In math we learned algebra
61. I love adding and multiplication
And reading is fun
because I get to read a lot of books
and my favorite books are mysteries
62. I like reading
I'm working on it
I'm not really good at it, but I'm working on it
63. We read the chapter about explorers
64. My favorite thing is science
65. Keyboarding
We learn how to type things by using the computer
66. Art, music
67. Spelling, grammar
68. My favorite thing in school is doing spelling
69. I love astronomy
70. And I love hard words that I can actually learn
And how to spell and how to say it

71. Do you know the star
That star that is big
That star that is the sun
But when you see it it's really tiny small
I'm really interested about that
and I want to be an astronomer like that
72. It requires a lot of work
because of the language barrier
the first year and the second year
Then after three years I think it was easier
Because I started to learn English
73. The first few, like two months I didn't speak English
so it was kind of hard for me
to talk back, you know
74. I know basis of English grammar
but mostly I didn't understand anything
and basically I spoke really bad
75. All the people speaking their language
It can be easy to speak it
76. In ESL you learn English
You can understand English
However, the teacher, she can repeat to you three times, two times
but in the other classes, only one time
77. The first two week I had to go to ESL
My ESL teachers taught me how to talk
78. I knew a little bit of English because I was watching some shows
and that's how I learned a little bit of my English
But mostly from school
79. I did not understand
They sometimes had to give me Spanish copies to take the test
because I did not have a clue what the paper said
80. We took big state tests in 4th grade
5th graders did them, too
81. We have tests on Fridays
82. When you take a test
First you have to think about translating it in English
and then try to do your best

83. Sometimes it's easier than I thought
And sometimes it's much harder than I expected
84. The best grade you can get is 100%
85. Sometimes the teacher writes the homework on the board
86. Sometimes you get to copy from what the teacher gives you on the board
And if she writes "test" to tell you what you have to do
for that for homework
Then you write it down
and then you bring it home and do it
87. Homework is a little bit harder
I need to bring my textbooks home for homework
88. We have math worksheets or stuff from our math book
That our teacher would like us to review
89. Sometimes I do my homework on my computer
Sometimes I do it in my room
I read the book and answer the questions
90. **STAY HEALTHY**
91. My favorite thing in school is gym
92. We have gym
At gym we play exercising
We run
and sometimes we play games
like baseball, or soccer, basketball, volleyball
93. Last year we had track and swimming and karate
94. We have in school – we have gym
And we have a weight room so we can work out for free
95. I can go in the gym
I like gym
After gym I can go outside for gym again
96. The cafeteria's really loud
Everybody screams
97. It's very loud

98. I eat in the cafeteria
me and my friends
99. For lunch people have to line up in a long line
100. You put your books or your book bag on the table
And then you get in line and get your lunch
101. When you get to the cafeteria
You can choose
What side you want
The hot food or the cold food
102. We eat what the school has
but some people can bring their lunch
103. We have a lunch menu
and if we don't like it we bring our own lunch.
104. It was so crowded on Friday
because it's pizza day
everyone was crowded
and we get in line
and wait five minutes
105. People give you a card and you get in line
You take the food
106. Usually there are meatballs and spaghetti
107. They serve spicy chicken, chicken tenders
108. Sometimes I eat beef and sometimes I eat chicken patty
109. Milk, hamburger, and salad
110. We eat hamburger and hotdog
111. I usually bring a sandwich, sometimes maybe an apple and a drink
112. Fries, chicken patty, pizza
113. Pizza, hot dog, hamburger, sandwich
114. And then you give the lunch ladies your lunch money
115. And you go sit and you eat your lunch
116. Each class is assigned to a table
but some tables are small
so they have 2 tables

117. My friend told me this is the table where we are sitting.
and I sit every day with them.
118. We have a lot of tables
We have to get in the kindergarten spots
We have right here for 1st grade and right here for kindergarten
119. When you finish you go back to school
120. She told me my favorite subject
is lunch and recess!
121. Recess is where you go outside and play and relax and all that
Get fresh air
122. We can play outside and we can play kickball with our friends
go play tag together with our friends
or you can go to the swing and play
123. Play soccer, hockey, basketball, baseball
124. At school if you don't feel well you can go to the nurse
but you have to let the teacher sign your pass
125. When you don't feel good you go to the nurse's office
126. When you have stress
they tell you to go to a person you can trust
that you can talk to
like a teacher
127. If you are sick one day
the next day you bring a note

128. **INTERESTS AND TALENTS**

129. I'm going cross-country this fall
and I'm on the JV team
and also I'm planning to do indoor track
and outdoor track this year
130. I just go with my friends to play soccer
because my friends play on a team
So I asked my friend if I can play a little bit
He's like "yeah, you can come and play"
And I play
and they asked me to come next year and play for the team.

131. Football games
They are a little wild
Because everyone is cheering and screaming
And sometimes –
Not too hard – they don't push
But everyone is moving
So you might bump into someone
And everyone is screaming, "Let's go Eagles!" and
"**Defense!**" "**Defense!**"
132. I play baseball and soccer
I was on the soccer team
133. They have sports that you can play after school,
and then Drama Club
134. I wanted to play the leopard but I got the warthog
Yes
I auditioned for the leopard but they thought I sounded like a warthog
so they assigned me to that
135. In choir you usually sing there
They tell you different songs
you have to learn them
You bring them home and then you try to learn them
and then when a show comes up
then you sing in front of your parents and all of the other kids
136. I used computers at school but mostly at home
137. I use the computer for math
138. I use the computer for reading, searching,
discovering new things
139. One day we went on a field trip and we saw cows and pigs
They were talking about the cows
How they eat and things like that
140. To join a club
You hear the announcements every morning
They say when they are having the meeting after school
And you can just go there
And go with the teacher
and tell the teacher that you want to join the club
and you join it
141. I love Art
so I went to drawing clubs
and Art Club

142. Any time during the year
you can join a club
143. I got into the regional art show
My work
And then I got lucky
so it got selected for the Congress
for the competition -
I didn't win
but it was hard because it was from all over the country
but then I was really happy that mine got picked

144. We get to borrow library books

145. I go to the Bethlehem Public Library a lot
to borrow books about my projects and stuff
so I can learn more about them

146. I go to the library and just get a book

147. And I read the Harry Potter books
All of them

148. **GETTING HELP**

149. I like the teacher

150. The teacher is fun
I like her

151. My teacher helps me

152. They told me if you need help, tell me, they say

153. The teachers help me how to do something
that I don't know how to do

154. It's better to respect your teacher
because they are there to help you

155. My teacher helps me with writing and math

156. If you have a test tomorrow they tell you how to study
And then sometimes they give you a study sheet
that you can study from
Or you can bring your textbook home
and then you can study from that

157. I usually try and ask the teacher when she's not busy
and she'll help me so that I can understand it
158. When I don't understand something
then I ask my teacher after the class
and he explains everything to me
159. There's after school tutoring
160. They have after school programs
Even if a child wants to stay in school
because a child wants to learn something more
It's always welcome
161. If I need help in school I ask the teacher
or I can stay after school
and stay with the teacher
so the teacher she helps me
162. I usually stay after school for math because I was kind of bad at it
I need help with it
So I asked her if I could stay after school for math
and she told me I can
And in the afternoon I got much better at math
because she helped me
163. I like some of the teachers
because they tell you the right thing to do
All of them
164. And if the teacher isn't there
You might want to try to ask a friend
165. Some of the kids that were here a long time ago
Helped me out
166. My friends help me a lot
Because whenever I had to take down notes
they just read it
And I can't take notes because I hear it
and don't understand it
and they just show me the notes
so I could copy it
167. When I first started school
I didn't know how to speak English
And my friends tell me
and I didn't even know how to say "yes" or "no"

168. My other sister
She took Social Studies last year
And then she helps me sometimes
169. My brother helped me with my homework
170. **FOLLOW SCHOOL RULES AND BE SAFE**
171. We sit at the desk and then when the fire bell rings we get out
and we stand in 2 straight lines and then we get out
172. I just thought it was just a bell for school, like lunch or something
But when everybody got up and tried to get out
I just followed them
173. We go outside and I think it's 100 feet from the school
So we had to make space for the fire truck
The fire truck came
and we had to make space so we can go inside and do our job
174. I asked the teacher "why did the bell ring? The fire drill ring?"
Well, he said "We're just practicing for if there's a real fire drill in the
building so you guys would get out as quickly as possible."
175. When you have something to say you have to raise your hand
and then when the teacher calls on you if you just say what you have
to say
And then no chewing gum
and no having food unless the teacher tells you to
176. If you have to go to your locker
You ask your teacher
if you need to get a folder or something
Your teacher might say "yes" or "no"
177. You have to follow the rules that they gave you
and you have to be listening to the teacher
178. No fighting, no chewing gum
Listen to the teacher
Don't run in the hallway
179. No talking, no running, no screaming, no jumping
180. When you walk in
No CD players, no music –
Go to class on time
and listen to what the teacher says
181. Listen to the teacher
Don't fight

182. If this person is saying bad things
and you say bad things to them, too
you are going to just start a fight
so it's not a good thing
183. If someone's teasing you or hurting you
You should tell your teacher
and you might stay in (for recess) the next time
184. You can just walk away
You don't have to -
This person is telling me that I'm going to fight them back
But I'm not -
That's not a nice thing to do
You are going to get yourself in trouble
Why are you even bothering to talk to them?
Think about like you don't even know them
Just try to walk away
Try to stay away from them
185. You are supposed to respect the teacher and be good

186. **HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION**

187. The first 2 or 3 days before the bus arrived I took them to school
and I met the principal face-to-face
188. I go to school
I see the teacher
because sometimes my children are sometimes bad
and I'm not sure
And I go and ask the teacher about that
and the teacher said, "Your children are not bad"
189. When he first started to go to school
I wasn't working back then
So that gave me more of a chance
to get myself acquainted with the teacher
190. They are good, friendly people
There were no problems meeting them
They really welcomed us as a parent when you go there
191. Sometimes I go to school, their school
I ask the teacher
If you need something to help me, please tell me
I will help my kids

192. We have a daily book for each child
and if something happens in the school
the teacher will write it down
and the teacher will ask my son to show the parents
and the parents have to sign
193. At the teacher's conference
you can come there if you want
Then if your parents don't know English or something
so you can tell them what it means
and help them with English
194. Well, I always encourage him to do his homework
195. My dad helped me study to learn more
196. Sometimes I get confused in my homework
So I ask my mom what I'm supposed to do
197. Lab was so hard but my mom helped me how to do it
Now I know how to do it
It's like a math thing
198. My mom always says that if you are good in school
you can get any job you want
or the things that you want to do once you pass college
And that's pretty much it
199. **NO WORRIES!**
200. It's like say you went to another country and it's like you know
nothing
and they're speaking this bizarre stuff
and you know you have to learn it
and it's hard
201. I feel like when I walk into the school
All the children are like playing, talking
What are they talking about?
Oh my God, I am dreaming?
No, I'm not
I think, "I've come here for real"
202. I didn't know anything because I was a little bit scared
I cried the first day
I did
I cried
I didn't want my parents to leave
But they left

203. The first day when I went to school
I was so nervous
But the other days I knew how the school was going
How you do things
How you listen to the teacher
204. I cried and the teacher said, "It's going to be okay"
You know you're going to make new friends and stuff
And she kind of cheered me up
205. The teacher comes to you
and you say, "I need help"
and she helps you
206. The teachers are good and nice
207. School is fun
208. It's not very hard
It's easy
209. If you study a lot and work hard, you are able to do pretty well
210. I don't have any time for missing my country
Or to be bored
That's why I like it
It's kind of --
Maybe too busy
as my parents think
but I still enjoy it
211. Find some friends that can help you
and that you speak the same language as you
and they can help you more in English
212. In school we work in groups
and we work together and help each other
213. Read books, take notes
and that's how you become a good student
214. To do well in school
You should pay attention to your teacher
Write notes
And do your best you can
Just try to do your best.

OFFICE OF REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT SERVICES



WELCOME TO OUR SCHOOLS

SCENES FROM SCHOOL: REFUGEE PARENT INTERVIEWS VIDEO SCRIPT

1. *Welcome to Our Schools*
2. Don't be afraid to approach the school
If you need it
It's very friendly
Like your family
Definitely like your family
I contacted the school
And I asked them what kind of paper I was supposed
to prepare for my child to be in school
They gave me the full binder
It contains all of the information about what they need
And also they gave me the first day of school information
And they explained that my son would be eligible for free lunch
Because of low income at the time
3. **WHAT IS SCHOOL LIKE?**
4. To be frank, the system in America
Is really helpful to me
Because it's real free education
5. Here in America
Teachers want parents to come to speak with them
Where we come from, Soviet Union
We did not have this in the system
They call – the school calls parents
When children have a problem in school, for example, only -
Otherwise the parents stay home
6. Every time he had a problem
He would just talk to the English as a Second Language teacher
And she would get help
She would go to a math teacher or science teacher
And say, "André has a problem"
And it was a big help

Honestly, I did not have to go to
I thought I was going to be in school every day
No, not at all
It was communication by phone, by e-mail
And I was so happy
And I was crossing my fingers
Oh, my God, what's going to happen?
And as soon as we met the counselor
And I was –
This is so nice
She just said, "You're going to love it!"
She said to my son, "You're going to love it!"

7. When we came to school for the first time
We could meet the counselor
She was so nice to us
And she explained all of the questions
My daughter was so frustrated
Because she couldn't speak
and she couldn't get her message through
And she couldn't make friends
But at this ESL program she could make friends
And she could make progress
In writing skills
and speaking skills
and practice
8. Every day I write everything in my book
What I need to do on certain days
I put all homework there
All the things -
In order to remember them
And not to forget
9. Children who live
More than one mile away from the school
Bus will be provided
10. Your children come to the bus
Pick up the bus
Go to school
And then come back on the bus
My country's not like that
11. We're talking about transportation
The bus comes to the house
And picks up my children
And takes them to school
And brings them back

12. I wait for the bus with my friends
And go inside
And it's noisy and it's warm
13. I believe that this is very good
And it's a huge privilege for parents
Because the bus mostly approaches very close to the house
Very close
And kids can go to the bus station
Or to designated area by themselves
And they can come home by themselves
But mostly - parents
I would recommend that parents be with children
For the first couple of days
To make sure they know the bus information
Number of the bus
And when the bus will pick up the children
And when the bus will bring children back from school.
14. **HOW DO THE CHILDREN LIKE SCHOOL?**
15. They love to read
They love to go to school
They don't want to stay at home
We go to school
We go to school every day
16. They really like school much
Very much
17. And my eldest one
when she comes back from school
She asks about science, about geography, about the world
18. I love astronomy
19. In math we learned algebra
20. Art, Music
21. Spelling, grammar
22. My favorite thing is science
23. He was not comfortable
because he did not understand just a few words
But as soon as I mentioned that he would like to play -
His favorite sport is soccer
and the counselor looked at me and she said,
"Okay – here's the papers. You want to sign?"
That was it
My son – he said, "Yes! Yes!"

24. The best part of school is to learn
and meet a lot of new people
Without school
I would not enjoy America like I would -
Because that's where you learn a lot of culture
and learn language basically
School helped me to become American more
because I'm American
but I wasn't
Because I grew up in a different country
but then it really helped me
To understand the whole cultures
25. One day I asked her
What's your favorite subject?
and she told me
my favorite subject is lunch and recess
26. Our family is good
No problem
We go to school
It's no problem – school
27. Right now he has tons of friends and he's happy
28. **WHAT ABOUT CULTURE AND LANGUAGE?**
29. I want my children to have ideology, logic
How to think about people
How to think about the multicultural world society
I want my children to become very skillful
International diplomat persons
To deal with various different cultures of people
30. I prepare traditional foods
and we talk about the holidays and the traditions
31. Now at this time it's very easy for us to keep it
because I have the same culture
But when my son will get married
It will definitely be difficult for his family to retain my culture
32. In the morning I tell him, "Mosed, wake up and wear this t-shirt,
or wear this shirt"
He will say, "No, dad, I don't like that because my friends will provoke
me"

33. Since I live with my family here
we speak Russian at home all the time
Also we have a lot of Russian books
So I'm trying to keep my Russian by reading books
Also I go on-line every day
and I check Russian websites
And I used to read some news about what's going on in Russia
and also, of course, we keep just our traditions at home
and we celebrate our holidays
34. In the United States
I know about the Second Language Program
In Thailand there is no Second Language Program
And here the Second Language Program is very good
35. A lot of times he corrects me
"Mom" –
And I say, "Here we go"
I knew it was coming
In the beginning I was a big help
Now, he's like, "Mom!"
36. I wish my daughters could be perfect bilinguals
So I think it's come true
37. Even in the very beginning it was a language problem
because we still speak the Russian language at home
It was a little problem when he started to talk to other kids
because they couldn't understand him
They laugh some time
They make jokes
Oh, you know how to talk to us!
But a little later they found a way to have a conversation.
38. I think children are very good at that
39. **WHAT ABOUT THE TEACHERS?**
40. If you see something -
that your child is not good in the school
or he is getting very low grades
or you are not satisfied
Definitely
You can call
You can just go to the school
You can go to the school with your child
And definitely
The teacher will spend a few minutes with you
If this is not enough

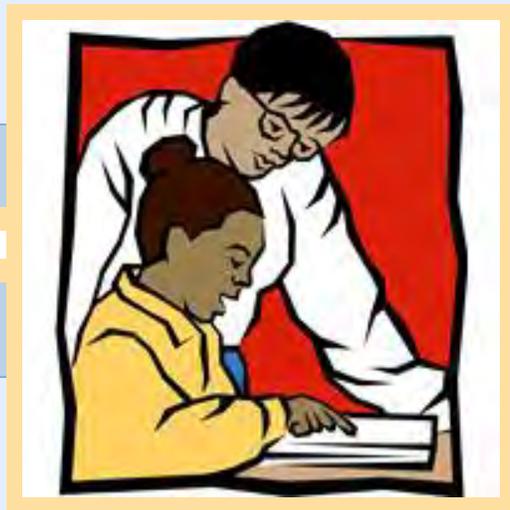
The teacher will tell you we can meet after school
or tomorrow morning
or as soon as possible
maybe even today!

41. When first I came here
I did not know what to do when I came the first time to school
I was very nervous
42. Teachers were very kind
They always welcome to call any time
and ask questions
and they always gave me e-mail addresses
If I have any questions
43. André would come home
My son would come home
and say, "Mom..."
I didn't even see the teacher, but I knew about her so much
Oh, she's a wonderful lady
We could just communicate by e-mail or by phone
It was just very easy, simple
44. If I have problems with my classes
then I stay with my teachers after school
But If I have personal problems
I think maybe mom helps me.
45. They are very open
Very open
46. When I met the English as a Second Language Teacher
and I said, "Perfect. This is his second home."
47. **WHAT ABOUT SCHOOLWORK?**
48. For tests and quizzes
Children do preparation
mostly in school
49. She has to organize by herself
all of the programs
and all of the subjects that she's interested in
50. When I come to the library
if we have homework, we can do it quietly
and if we want to read
pick a book
If you want to take it out
check it

51. When I take a test
I use my dictionary
52. I can easily explain to my children what to learn,
how to learn and how to behave
How to win their goals
So on and so on
I explain this
53. **WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE PARENTS?**
54. Before me come – me scared
it was difficult to understand who can help me
but when me see the people
me happy
55. I'm not worried about my son
I think he has a free choice here in the United States
He can go to any college
as long as he understands what he wants to do
what he's willing to do and what's his favorite thing
I'll be happy and I'll share that with him
and in the United States he can choose
56. No problem school
57. If parents have a concern
I would suggest that they first approach the teacher
and speak with the teacher
If they cannot resolve this problem
or any other concern or any issue
with the teacher
they can approach the principal
and definitely.
There is a way to resolve any issues
any problems
Definitely
58. Well, my first advice would be to monitor the child
Look at the work done in school
and see that he does his assignments correctly
59. I would tell other parents
to continuously encourage the children.
60. Never give up
Never give up
Continue encouraging the children

61. I do not see bad
I see nice
Talk nice, happy, nice
I like that
62. It's wonderful
I was just so happy
because I was worried about the adjustment here for my son
He was a teenager at the time when he came to the United States
so I was wondering what's going to happen
and kids were great
Teachers were great
They were like, "welcome"
You could feel welcome
"You're welcomed here"
63. I'm happy.

GUIDE FOR ACADEMIC COACHES



WELCOME TO OUR SCHOOLS

**BUREAU OF REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT ASSISTANCE
NEW YORK STATE OFFICE
OF TEMPORARY AND DISABILITY ASSISTANCE**

**ANDREW M. CUOMO, GOVERNOR
2012**

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Role of the Academic Coach



The Academic Coach is the liaison between the children, their parents and family members, and school personnel. The Academic Coach focuses on orienting the refugee children to their new school, anticipating needs and services, and addressing ongoing issues.

The actual Refugee School Impact program will vary depending on the needs of the refugee students, but the Academic Coach is expected to fulfill the following responsibilities.

STUDENT NEEDS

- Assist in ensuring appropriate class and grade-level school placements.
- Help prevent crisis situations through early identification of concerns.
- Provide supportive services directly to the students, such as individual orientation, mentoring, guidance, and tutoring in at least one of the languages spoken.
- Help students learn appropriate school behaviors.
- Assist students in understanding time management, study skills, educational requirements, and school procedures.
- Assist instructors in identifying appropriate Refugee Academy curriculum modules that match the needs, concerns, and interests of the refugee students.
- Assist instructors in monitoring student progress as a group and as individual students.
- Introduce students to all pertinent school personnel and show them where their offices are located.
- Facilitate opportunities for refugee students to become leaders so that they can guide other newly arriving refugee students.
- Manage group activities, including after-school clubs, homework and tutoring assistance, and extra curricular activities, so that refugee students can adapt, learn, improve skills, and build relationships.

COMMUNICATION

- ❑ keep school administrators and other school personnel informed about the goals and activities of the Academic Coaches, Refugee Academy, Mini-Academies, and Parent Programs
- ❑ facilitate effective communication between the child, school staff, and parents
- ❑ identify and maintain communication with community-based organizations, service providers, and school-based resources



PARENT CONNECTIONS

- ❑ meet with the parent or guardian of the child within 30 days of the first service provided to the child, to complete an Application for Services consent form for participation in the program, and to discuss a plan for the child's integration into the school
- ❑ assist students in connecting school to home, explaining homework, parent-teacher conferences, open houses, and other school activities that involve families
- ❑ connect with parents and family members to explain information about school requirements and activities, as well as student progress (e.g., attendance, field trips and permissions, report cards, parent-teacher conferences, school resources)
- ❑ provide or facilitate parent counseling to assist parents who need guidance, mediate student-parent conflicts, and clarify school information and expectations
- ❑ conduct Parent Programs as provided in the **Welcome to Our Schools** curriculum.

SCHOOL CONNECTIONS

- ❑ become familiar with school policies and procedures to comply with school requirements and inform students, about:
 - school schedules and bell systems, including use of the public address system
 - evacuation, lockdown, and fire drill procedures
 - safety policies and procedures
 - school resources for emergency assistance
 - school nurse location and healthcare policies

- technology policies, including Internet access
 - classroom policies related to hall passes, restroom breaks, cell phones and laptops, library books, and use of school supplies
 - school procedures for reserving equipment such as computers, DVD players, televisions, and LCD projectors
 - school and classroom disciplinary procedures, including required forms (for familiarizing students with the rules and consequences)
 - access to copying equipment, supplies, computers for teachers, and other resources often located in a faculty room
 - communication systems with school personnel such as mailboxes, inter departmental e-mail, and public address systems
 - school calendar
 - changes in daily schedules such as assessments, conference days, field trips, and special events
- provide information and guidance to school personnel about refugee students by disseminating descriptive literature and conducting professional development and staff meetings, covering topics such as:
- unique needs of refugee students
 - health concerns
 - cultural traditions
 - language adjustment
 - special needs
 - resources for referrals
 - prior educational experiences of students
 - service plans



(Note that Professional Development PowerPoints and handouts are included in the **Welcome to Our School** curriculum.)

- triage information about specific students so that school personnel, parents, and students are able to make informed decisions in the best interests of the student.

Tips from Academic Coaches

The following suggestions come from experienced Academic Coaches.

Create a business card to distribute to classroom teachers, administrators, guidance counselors, parents, and students.

Find the offices of the school leaders and introduce yourself. Ask them what problems they handle. For example, if a student repeatedly misses the bus in the morning, do you talk to the transportation supervisor? guidance counselor? teacher? Every school is different. Find out in advance because it will save you a lot of time.

Some teachers do not understand that when Academic Coaches are interpreting they are representing the student or parent. Coaches may have to engage in a side conversation before explaining to the teacher what needs to be discussed. The Coach may have to ask the teacher a lot of questions before talking to the refugee. Take a few minutes to explain to teachers that an Academic Coach is not only interpreting but helping to solve a problem. (Note: Academic Coaches should clarify with the school district whether they serve as an interpreter and/or advocate for refugee families.)

Get to know the community beyond the school. Talk to the local religious leaders, YMCA, Boys/Girls Club, Art Centers, etc. to find out if they can provide services for refugee students. Community groups may need training on how to communicate with refugee families. They may be excellent guests at professional development meetings.

Make sure that you know how things work in the school that you are assigned to. Get to know the Faculty Handbook, but ask how daily problems are normally handled. If a child misbehaves in class, what happens? If a student is bullied, what is the school's policy? If the student needs to see the school nurse, what is the procedure?

Meet other students, not just refugee students. Ask them what goes on in the school. Eventually you will see for yourself the impact of cell phones, conflicts between student groups, gang recruitment, and other issues that may not be visible to adults. The best way to protect your refugee students is to get to know what goes on behind the scenes.

If you are an interpreter, talk to the teacher about what they would prefer. You may have to sit in the back of the room, write things down for the student, gather handouts to review later, and refrain from translating instantly if the student is working on speaking English in class.

Remember that teen refugees may be behind in schooling, but they are still teenagers and should be treated as older students.

Assisting the Refugee Academy Instructor

ACADEMIC COACH GOALS

- ✿ Assist the instructor in Informing refugee students about daily life in American schools.
- ✿ Support the instructor in creating a climate of comfort for refugee students in the Refugee Academy.
- ✿ Engage refugee students in activities that incorporate new knowledge, socialization, and support.
- ✿ Facilitate support and services for refugee students through positive relationships with school personnel, parents, and community-based organizations.

CURRICULUM

The **Welcome to Our Schools** curriculum contains sixteen instructional modules, five Parent Programs, professional development programs, Mini-Academies, and Supplemental Primary Level (K—2) Activities.

Academic Coaches, in conjunction with instructors and other support personnel, should review the modules and select the materials that would be most relevant to the refugee students in the Refugee Academy. The modules can be used in any order, although it is advisable to introduce the curriculum with *Module 1: American Schools* and *Module 2: Making Friends*.

The modules contain objectives, vocabulary words, classroom activities, journal topics, suggested follow-up activities, videos, and handouts.

Academic Coaches assist instructors in combining the contents of the modules with activities that have been used successfully in the past with refugee students. The instructional materials can be used with planned field trips, school tours, visiting speakers, and other supplemental activities.

For many refugee students, *all* of the information will be new and bewildering. The key is to present the information so that students can observe, interact, and practice.



CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Classroom management usually refers to strategies that instructors use to ensure that students are paying attention and able to get their work done. This does not necessarily mean that there must be complete silence in the classroom—in fact, it can mean noisy, enthusiastic discussions—but with strong classroom management the instructor is able to keep the group focused.



But all it takes is one comment, one event, or one disruptive student to throw off instruction. Sometimes it can take a while before the instructor can regain the attention of the students.

In the Refugee Academy, students who are unfamiliar with the basic rules of classroom behavior may not hesitate to speak loudly, interrupt, and wander in (and sometimes out of) the classroom.

Or the students may be so intimidated by the new classroom environment that they withdraw, hesitating to participate in class activities. The result is that other students command the attention of the instructor and classroom management is inequitable.

Academic Coaches can assist the instructor by reinforcing the instructor's rules and keeping the students focused on the classroom activity. This should be done in an unobtrusive, sensitive manner.

ACADEMY RULES

If students know the basic rules of the Refugee Academy, they not only experience a better learning environment, they have the opportunity to practice how to behave in an American classroom.



- ✿ Arrive on time.
- ✿ Find an available or assigned seat.
- ✿ Listen when an adult is speaking in front of the room.
- ✿ Listen when another student is speaking.
- ✿ Raise your hand to ask or answer a question.



- * Remain in the seat unless instructed to move to another place
- * Keep hands and feet in your own space
- * Take good care of books and supplies
- * Help to keep the classroom neat and organized



Academic Coaches may have to assist refugee students in complying with these rules. It is difficult for *any* student to sit still at their desk and not talk to a neighbor.

Refugee students who have not experienced a school setting, or who have been educated in rigid, formal classrooms, may not be able to resist socializing. Academic Coaches can quietly help students return to the seat and get back to work.

TRANSITIONS

Instructors usually do not begin a new activity until desks are clear and students are quiet. This transition time should eventually take one or two minutes, but will take much longer at first. The best thing the Academic Coaches can do is quietly direct attention toward the instructor.

GROUP TIME

Refugee students may not understand that sometimes students talk in groups and move around the classroom, while other times they are expected to sit quietly. Academic Coaches can follow the instructor's lead and use one or two key words such as "quiet" or "talk" to signal the differences. Some instructors may post pictures to indicate the type of activity that is occurring so that students have visual signals about how to behave.

It has become common practice in American classrooms to instruct via small group discussions and projects. Students form pairs and teams to complete a task or plan a presentation. The instructor circulates, connecting briefly with each group.

This may be an entirely new concept to refugee students who have been in school in their home country. Academic Coaches may have to help them learn how to participate effectively and comfortably in a small group activity.

EXPRESSING OPINIONS

For many refugee students, school was definitely not a place to express an opinion. In some cases students (and perhaps their families) were punished if they did not adhere to the expected opinion.

In American classrooms, beginning at the elementary level, students are encouraged to develop critical thinking skills. They are provided with opportunities to analyze ideas and express their personal points of view. Sometimes discussions can be lively, but instructors generally welcome evidence of creative and thoughtful ideas.

Although the modules in the **Welcome to Our Schools** curriculum focus primarily on facts about American schools, there are occasions for students to share ideas and observations. Academic Coaches can assist refugee students in developing critical thinking skills by asking them to share their thoughts about the topics. It will be confusing for some students if they are used to repeating exactly what they have been told, but gradually the Academic Coaches can encourage and reinforce independent thinking. (Family and cultural traditions should always be respected.)

CULTURAL TENSION

It is important to recognize that some students may be in a Refugee Academy with students from their home country. It cannot be assumed that they will naturally gravitate to each other—in fact, they may be enemies because of past friction related to ethnicity, religion, or other issues connected to life in their home country.

Academic Coaches may not be able to gather specific information about the past experiences of students, but Coaches should be aware of the cultural traditions of the different countries represented in the Academy. If the Academic Coach is aware of country history, ethnic tension, religious traditions, and other factors that may create tension in the classroom, the instructor should be informed. As the Academy progresses, students can be provided opportunities to develop positive relationships, so that they can move forward from old conflicts to new friendships.

HANDLING SENSITIVE TOPICS

As refugee students become more comfortable in the Academy and begin to develop skills in the English language, they may start to share personal information. Some of the topics they mention may be very sensitive, whether the issues relate to past life experiences or experiences in their new lives in America.

Academic Coaches will be in a position to hear comments and stories from refugee children that may be uncomfortable or even alarming. All personal comments, no matter how emotional, should be followed by some sort of acknowledgment by the Instructor or Academic Coach. This is necessary if the comment is shared in front of the entire class, or in confidence.

If a student has revealed something personal in front of the entire group, the instructor or Academic Coach should not just move on to another topic, no matter how uncomfortable the students may be. The Academic Coach should defer to the instructor who can acknowledge, offer support, and then move forward—or stop the class and invite the support of other students.



ALWAYS

- * remember that the students are all refugees, but they are still *individual* children
- * help to set up activities so friendships can bloom
- * praise, praise, praise