



Refugee Minors Arriving in the United States:

Statistics from FY 1997 – FY 2002

More than a third of refugees resettling in the United States are children. According to statistics provided by the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration, over approximately the past five years, 37.01% of refugees resettling in the U.S. have been under the age of 18.

Annual Totals of Refugee Children Resettling in the U.S.						
FY 97	FY 98	FY 99	FY 00	FY 01	FY 02 <i>first 9 months*</i>	FY 97 - FY 02*
22,512	27,795	31,739	27,471	24,685	6,723	140,925

As indicated in the following table, with the exception of FY 2001, there is a recent gradual increase in the percentage of refugees coming to the U.S. who are children.

Refugee Children as a Percentage of All Refugees Resettling in the U.S.						
FY 97	FY 98	FY 99	FY 00	FY 01	FY 02 <i>first 9 months*</i>	FY 97 - FY 02*
32.12%	36.31%	37.34%	37.88%	36.08%	38.52%	36.13%

* Minors numbers for FY 02 are for the period through 7/9/02, whereas figures provided for all refugees in FY 02 are for the period through 6/30/02. Thus, the additional 10 days of data on refugee minor arrivals may contribute to a possible overstatement of FY 02 refugees which were children.

Refugee children arrive in the U.S. under many different circumstances. The majority, approximately 93% over the past six years, arrive in the company of biological or legally adoptive parents. However, others travel to the U.S. to reunite with caregivers, or to join a relative who has been newly designated as their caregiver.

Children who do not resettle with their own parents are often at higher risk than are children who travel and resettle with their own parents. "Separated children" is the internationally-recognized term for such children. See the BRYCS Suitability Assessment Tips document for suggestions on the resettlement of separated children.

The following table demonstrates the range of circumstances under which refugee children resettle in the United States.

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Categories of Refugee Children Resettling in the U.S.

Minors attached to, traveling with, and resettling with biological or legally adoptive parents.

Minors attached to, traveling with, and resettling with blood relatives other than biological or legally adoptive parents.

Minors attached to, traveling with, and resettling with non-relatives; and minors traveling alone to join non-relatives.

Minors destined for foster care, which is also known as the Unaccompanied Refugee Minor (URM) program.

Minors traveling apart from but destined to join biological or legally adoptive parent(s). Includes minors traveling alone to join parent(s) in the U.S., minors traveling with relatives other than parents in order to join parent(s) in the U.S., and minors traveling with non-relatives in order to join parent(s) in the U.S.

Minors traveling apart from the blood relative(s) (other than parents) they are destined to join. Includes minors traveling alone to join a relative (not parent) in the U.S., and minors traveling with non-relatives to join a relative (not parent) in the U.S.

Minors who are married, regardless of their traveling companions or anchor relationships in the U.S.

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