

Program ~ What We Do and Whom We Serve

- We are a national network of culturally sensitive foster care programs providing appropriate child welfare services to foreign-born children living in the United States.
- We provide licensed foster care services to
 - Refugee children;
 - Foreign-born child victims of trafficking for sex, labor, or domestic servitude;
 - Cuban and Haitian entrant children;
 - Children with asylum status;
 - Certain children with Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS).

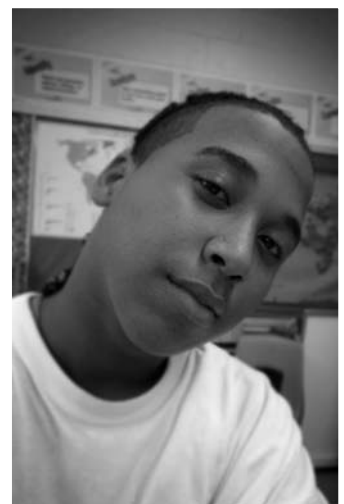


Principles ~ Our Service Model

- To value each child's birth culture
- To help children understand and acclimate to American culture while maintaining their own unique identity
- To nurture children as they integrate multiple cultures into a single identity
- To help foreign-born children develop a sense of community in a new country while learning the skills they will need for independence
- To empower children to navigate complex service systems despite cultural or linguistic barriers
- To passionately pursue educational opportunities for all children

Practices ~ Our Services Typically Include

- *Bilingual, bicultural staff* who build rapport with children and serve as a bridge between their past and their future;
- *Foster families* with cross-cultural experience, interest, and sensitivity;
- Assistance with *immigration legal services* to ensure that eligible children attain legal permanent residency;
- *Intensive case management* by staff familiar with the challenges, traumas, and strengths that come from the migration experience;
- *Collaboration and advocacy* with schools and human service providers about the specific needs of foreign-born youth;
- Culturally sensitive *mental health services*;
- *Mentors* to provide mature guidance and develop lasting relationships;
- *Peer support* through relationships with other foreign-born foster youth; and
- *Access to national and international organizations*, such as the United Nations refugee agency and the International Committee of the Red Cross, to assist with resources regarding culture, migration, health, education, family tracing, and more.



Positive Outcomes for Foreign-Born Children

- Since 1980, more than 13,000 children have been cared for by these foster care programs.
- Between 2000 and 2003, about 500 children and youth from Southern Sudan were served by this network. Among the countless success stories is that of Lopez Lomong, who was a member of the U.S.A. Track and Field team at the 2008 Olympics in Beijing and was selected by his teammates to be the U.S. delegation flag bearer at the Olympic Games opening ceremonies. He completed high school and is now attending college.
- Ava, originally from South Asia, was resettled to the U.S. in 2007 from a refugee camp in Turkey. Upon arriving in the U.S. she was placed with a licensed foster family, where she remains today. She has excelled in school and learned English quickly. She is in her high school's National Honor Society and is a member of Future Business Leaders of America. Ava expects to graduate high school with honors in 2010 and plans to attend university.

Contact ~ For more information, to refer a child, or request technical assistance

Migration & Refugee Services
U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops
3211 4th Street, NE
Washington, DC 20017-1194
(202) 541-5409 / 3449
migratingchildren@usccb.org
<http://www.usccb.org/mrs/cshome.shtml>

Children's Services
Lutheran Immigration & Refugee Service
700 Light Street
Baltimore, MD 21230
(410) 230-2757
childrenservices@lirs.org
<http://www.lirs.org>

Growth in the Midst of Diversity, photo by Ngoc, age 18, from Vietnam



From the Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services (BRYCS)
"Youth Arts & Voices" Web page: http://www.brycs.org/youth_arts.htm

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