



Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services

## **CULTURAL COMPETENCY IN CHILD WELFARE PRACTICE: A BRIDGE WORTH BUILDING**

### **Resources to Enhance Child Welfare Training Curricula**

**1. Brighter Futures for Migrating Children: An Overview of Current Trends and Promising Practices in Child Welfare.** Bridging Refugee Youth and Children's Services (BRYCS) 38 pages. Baltimore, MD and Washington, DC: Bridging Refugee Youth and Children's Services (BRYCS) 2006. *Availability:* Available in PDF on the BRYCS Web site Publications page at [http://www.brycs.org/brycs\\_resources.htm](http://www.brycs.org/brycs_resources.htm) and in the BRYCS Clearinghouse from the full record of the publication.

Refugee, undocumented, and trafficked children from a broad range of countries represent a growing population in many of our state and county child welfare systems, and many service providers are facing challenges in meeting their unique needs. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), which has specialized in serving migrating children for over 25 years, convened Brighter Futures for Migrating Children: An Overview of Current Trends and Promising Practices in Child Welfare to share key "promising practices", or innovative strategies that have resulted in more effective services to these populations. The discussion took place on February 27, 2006 in Washington, D.C., during the Child Welfare League of America National Conference, "Children 2006: Securing Brighter Futures". Speakers from USCCB and Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services (BRYCS) provided background information on migrating children and their service eligibility. Dr. Ilze Earner, editor of the recent September/October 2005 special issue of *Child Welfare*, "Immigrants and Refugees in Child Welfare," presented immigration trends and successful strategies for improving the responsiveness of service systems to the special needs of migrating children. Audience members shared current challenges, as well as opportunities, and contributed methods and resources from their organizations and experiences in serving these children. This session was part of an on-going series of facilitated discussions (including the National Child Welfare Advisory Board in 2004 and "Enhancing State Child Welfare Services to Migrating Children" in 2005) sponsored by USCCB and their partner organization LIRS, with support from the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement. These events have brought together a broad range of experts in the field to discuss challenges and identify strategies for improving child welfare services and outcomes for these especially vulnerable children. This report draws from the presenters' notes together with the major comments made by presenters and audience members during the discussion that followed.

**2. The Challenge of Permanency Planning in a Multicultural Society.** Anderson, Gary R. (ed.), and Ryan, Angela Shen (ed.), and Leashore, Bogart R. (ed.) 215 pages. Binghamton, NY: Haworth Press, 1997.

*Availability:* This book can be purchased from the publisher, The Haworth Press, Inc. at: <http://www.haworthpress.com>. ISBN: 0789000342. It may also be available for free from your local library or from other sources (free or for a fee).

Recognizing the need for child welfare workers to appreciate the role of culture in a family's life, this

book emphasizes the importance of the need for cultural knowledge, sensitivity, and skill on the part of caseworkers and policy makers for putting permanency and stability into the lives of at-risk children. The articles in the book are: (1) "Introduction: Achieving Permanency for All Children in the Child Welfare System" (Gary R. Anderson); (2) "Personal Reflections on Permanency Planning and Cultural Competency" (Carol W. Williams); (3) "Developing Diversity Competence in Child Welfare and Permanency Planning" (Elaine Pinderhughes); (4) "African American Men, Child Welfare, and Permanency Planning" (Bogart R. Leashore); (5) "Machismo, Fatherhood and the Latino Family: Understanding the Concept" (Yolanda Mayo); (6) "Cultural Diversity and Help-Seeking Behavior: Sources of Help and Obstacles to Support for Parents" (JoDee Keller and Katherine McDade); (7) "Preventing Substance Abuse from Undermining Permanency Planning: Competencies at the Intersection of Culture, Chemical Dependency, and Child Welfare" (Irene R. Bush and Anthony Sainz); (8) "Broadening Our View: Lessons from Kinship Foster Care" (Faith Johnson Bonecutter and James P. Gleeson); (9) "Grandmother Caregivers in Inner-City Latino Families: A Descriptive Profile and Informal Social Supports" (Denise Burnette); (10) "Guide for Effectively Recruiting African American Adoptive Families" (Wilfred Hamm); (11) "Training Child Welfare Workers to Meet the Requirements of the Indian Child Welfare Act" (Raymond L. Bending); (12) "Why the Need for the Indian Child Welfare Act?" (Lila J. George); (13) "Toward a Competent Child Welfare Service Delivery System for Gay and Lesbian Adolescents and Their Families" (Gerald P. Mallon); and (14) "Lessons Learned from Programs for Unaccompanied Refugee Minors" (Angela Shen Ryan). Each chapter contains references. (KB) (ERIC No. ED412012)

**3. Child Abuse and Culture: Working with Diverse Families.** Fontes, Lisa Aronson. 239 pages. New York, NY: Guilford Press, February 2005.

*Availability:* Information about this resource is available on the Web at: [http://www.guilford.com/cgi-bin/cartscript.cgi?page=pr/fontes.htm&dir=pp/ca&cart\\_id=201458.12278](http://www.guilford.com/cgi-bin/cartscript.cgi?page=pr/fontes.htm&dir=pp/ca&cart_id=201458.12278).

This book provides a framework for culturally competent practice in child maltreatment cases. It offers vital knowledge and tools to help professionals from any background play a more positive, effective role in the lives of diverse children and families.

**4. Culturally Competent Practice with Immigrant and Refugee Children and Families.**

Fong, Rowena, editor. 320 pages. New York, NY: The Guilford Press, November 2003.

*Availability:* This resource may be available for free from your local library or from other sources (free or for a fee). It may also be purchased from the publisher: The Guilford Press, 72 Spring Street, New York, NY 10012, (212) 431-9800, <http://www.guilford.com>.

"This book covers the breadth of issues involved in working with immigrant and refugee children and families. Within an innovative conceptual framework, essential knowledge is presented to guide culturally competent practice with clients from over 14 immigrant groups whose numbers are growing in the United States today. Expert authors review the history of each group's migration to the U.S. and discuss key issues facing families, including cultural conflicts, trauma associated with refugee experiences and/or illegal status, and the effects of poverty and discrimination. Particular attention is given to ways that the practitioner can help families draw on culturally based resources for coping and resilience as they navigate the challenges of their new lives. Recommendations for strengths-based assessment and intervention are brought to life in detailed case examples." - Publisher's description

**5. Culturally Sensitive Risk Assessment: An Ethnographic Approach.** Walker, Pamela J., and Tabbert, Wynn. California Social Work Education Center (CaLSWEC) (Long Beach) 213 pages. Berkeley, CA: University of California at Berkeley, California Social Work Education Center (CaLSWEC), 1997.

*Availability:* This resource can be ordered from the publisher at: [http://www.csulb.edu/projects/ccwrl/CaLSWEC\\_curriculum\\_products.htm](http://www.csulb.edu/projects/ccwrl/CaLSWEC_curriculum_products.htm).

"This curriculum combines systematic risk assessment (developed to address inconsistency and randomness in existing assessment tools and used to both identify factors which truly endanger children and illuminate strengths that may be built upon to ameliorate risk and preserve the family) with ethnographic interviewing (developed in response to a growing awareness of the importance of cultural differences in the helping process and the right of clients to receive culturally appropriate services). The combination of the two conceptual frameworks which helps clarify risks and strengths enables case plans and interventions to be more closely matched to what families are able and willing to do." - Publisher's description, reprinted here with permission of the publisher

**6. Immigrants and Refugees in Child Welfare: A Special Issue of CWLA's Child Welfare Journal.** Child Welfare Journal. Arlington, VA: Child Welfare League of America, 2005 September-October.

*Availability:* This issue is available for purchase from the publisher at: <http://www.cwla.org>.

Contents: Introduction: What Do We Know About Immigrant and Refugee Families and Children? by Ilze Earner and Hilda Rivera; Effective Child Welfare Practice with Immigrant and Refugee Children and Their Families by Barbara A. Pine and Diane Drachman; Assessment of Issues Facing Immigrant and Refugee Families by Uma A. Segal and Nazneen S. Mayadas; Parenting and the Process of Migration: Possibilities Within South Asian Families by Anne C. Deepak; Social Work with Bosnian Muslim Refugee Children and Families: A Review of the Literature by Cindy S. Snyder, J. Dean May, Nihada N. Zulcic, and W. Jay Gabbard; Sudanese Refugee Youth in Foster Care: The "Lost Boys" in America by Laura Bates, Diane Baird, Deborah J. Johnson, Robert E. Lee, Tom Luster, and Christine Rehagen; Finding the Bicultural Balance: Immigrant Latino Mothers Raising "American" Adolescents by Yolanda Quinones-Mayo and Patricia Dempsey; Working Together as Culture Brokers by Building Trusting Alliances with Bilingual and Bicultural Newcomer Paraprofessionals by Carol L. Owen and Meme English; Cultural Competence in the Assessment of Poor Mexican Families in the Rural Southeastern United States by Tina U. Hancock; Serving Immigrant Families and Children in New York City's Child Welfare System by Zeinab Chahine and Justine van Straaten; The Call-Centre: A Child Welfare Liaison Program with Immigrant Serving Agencies by Margaret Williams, Cathryn Bradshaw, Beverly Fournier, Admasu Tachble, Rob Bray, and Fay Hodson; In the "Best Interest" of Immigrant and Refugee Children: Deliberating on Their Unique Circumstances by Qingwen Xu; An Educational Model for Child Welfare Practice with English-Speaking Caribbean Families by Alma Carten and Harriet Goodman; Bridging Refugee Youth and Children's Services: A Case Study of Cross-Service Training by Lyn Morland, Julianne Duncan, Joyce Hoebing, Juanita Kirschke, and Laura Schmidt.

**7. Information Packet: Cultural Sensitivity With Immigrant Families and Their Children.**

Feldman, Inga. 18 pages. New York: City University of New York (CUNY), National Resource Center for Family-Centered Practice and Permanency Planning at the Hunter College School of Social Work, April 2003.

*Availability:* This resource is available free in PDF format on the Web at:

<http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfcpp/downloads/cultural-sensitivity-with-immigrants2.pdf>.

Provides basic information on incorporating cultural sensitivity in interventions with immigrant families and children. Social workers, child welfare professionals, and related professionals get: (1) a fact sheet on cultural perspectives on child rearing, which emphasizes the importance of taking into account a family's background and culture in order to avoid misinterpreting behaviors and making inappropriate interventions; (2) best practice tips for promoting a climate of cultural sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect and also for ensuring the preservation of the child's unique cultural identity; (3) definitions of such terms as culturally competent agencies and systems, ethnocultural diversity, and organizational reflectiveness; (4) a list of model programs and Web-based resources, including the Alliance for Children and Families, the Child Welfare League of America, and the National Resource Center on Child Maltreatment; (5) a summary of policies and procedures regarding cultural sensitivity, including organizational structure and procedures as well as agency training curricula; and (6) a list of

suggested reading on topics related to cultural competency and sensitivity. Using these resources, social workers and child welfare professionals can work with immigrant families to understand cultural differences and find ways to bridge them.

**8. Interviewing Immigrant Children and Families About Child Maltreatment.** Fontes, Lisa Aronson. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications USA, 2000.

*Availability:* This resource can be ordered from the publisher at: <http://www.sagepub.com>.

"Listeners will learn how to help diverse immigrant children speak as comfortably and accurately as possible about experiences of child abuse and neglect. Participants learn how to build rapport with children and families of diverse backgrounds, and how to conduct interviews with children who do not speak English. This tape is geared to all professionals who speak with diverse children about child maltreatment including social workers, forensic interviewers, psychotherapists, law enforcement professionals, physicians, nurses, educators, and attorneys. Listening carefully to this tape is an important step on the road to cultural competence." - Publisher's description

**9. Migration: A Critical Issue for Child Welfare - 2006 Transnational Research and Policy Forum Report.** Velazquez, Sonia, and Bruce, Lara, and Haymes, Maria Vidal de, and Mindell, Robert, and Dettlaff, Alan J. 43 pages. American Humane Association Loyola University Chicago University of Illinois at Chicago Jane Addams College of Social Work, December 2006.

*Availability:* This resource is available free in PDF format on the Web at:

[http://www.americanhumane.org/site/DocServer/roundtable\\_report\\_Feb07.pdf?docID=4721](http://www.americanhumane.org/site/DocServer/roundtable_report_Feb07.pdf?docID=4721).

This report, from a roundtable discussion held in July 2006 by the American Humane Association and Loyola University at Chicago, provides an overview of the issues in the field and recommendations.

**10. Multi-Cultural Guidelines for Assessing Family Strengths and Risk Factors in Child Protective Services.** Pecora, Peter J. (ed.), and English, Diana J. (ed.) Multi-Cultural Advisory Committee of the Washington Risk Assessment Project. 121 pages. Seattle, WA: Washington Risk Assessment Project, February 24, 1993.

*Availability:* The full text of this document is available in the BRYCS Clearinghouse from the full record page for this publication.

Reports on an alternative to risk assessment in child protective services that builds on advances in multicultural practice. Features of this approach include analyzing child, family, and community as well as staff resources, and differentiating between internal and external factors limiting family functioning. Chapter 1 broadly describes the report and modifications to the Washington Risk Matrix. Chapter 2 discusses assessing family strengths and risk factors in child abuse and neglect. Chapter 3 presents a checklist for use in training or in case assessment. Chapter 4 reviews the literature on cultural norms and risk factors in connection with families of color. Chapter 5 offers multicultural practice guidelines referenced to risk area. Chapter 6 contains both the preliminary risk assessment matrix and selected guidelines. Chapter 7 contains summary assessment forms. The risk assessment approach encourages child welfare workers to build upon family strengths - rather than focusing on negatives - to address problems or needs. The risk factors may require modification to address ethnic, geographic, and cultural differences, and the risk-factor rating scales need to be validated.

**11. Multicultural Approaches in Caring for Children, Youth, and Their Families.** Cohen, Neil A., and Tran, Thanh V., and Rhee, Siyon Y. 400 pages. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Pearson Education, 2007.

*Availability:* This resource can be ordered from the publisher at: <http://www.ablongman.com>.

"This text emphasizes the importance of utilizing a pro-active, strengths-based practice strategy in working with multi-culturally diverse children, youth, families, organizations and communities. The text

adds to the body of child welfare practice knowledge by blending contemporary child issues with emphasis on practice skill enhancement. The book's authors have systematically focused on serving communities, child welfare organizations and families of different racial, ethnic, religious, economic, and structural backgrounds. Emphasis is placed on developing a pro-active, strengths-based practice strategy. Each chapter contains rich case examples wherein the respective authors present teaching points designed to further the reader's comprehension of knowledge for practice. Our book also contains new material on white ethnics, working with torture victims, issues surrounding fairness and equity in the child welfare system, and administrative, policy practices and their interface with multicultural dynamics in services to children, youth and families." - Publisher's description

**12. Perspectives on Cultural Competence: A Special Issue of CWLA's Child Welfare**

**Journal.** Child Welfare Journal. Arlington, VA: Child Welfare League of America, 2003 March-April. *Availability:* This issue is available for purchase from the publisher at: <http://www.cwla.org>. Contents: Preface; Beyond the Rhetoric: Strategies for Implementing Culturally Effective Practice with Children, Families, and Communities by Anna R. McPhatter and Traci L. Ganaway; Beyond Cultural Competence: What Child Protection Managers Need to Know and Do by Fernando Mederos and Isa Woldegiorgis; Framework for Culturally Competent Decisionmaking in Child Welfare by Elena P. Cohen; Building Effective Working Relationships Across Culturally and Ethnically Diverse Communities by Cheryl A. Hosley, Linda Gensheimer, and Mai Yang; Culturally and Ethnically Diverse Communities: Building Blocks for Working Relationships by Annette Woodroffe and Mavis Spencer; Beyond Cultural Competence: Language Access and Latino Civil Rights by Layla P. Suleiman; A Culturally Responsive Practice Model for Urban Indian Child Welfare Services by Robert Mindell, Maria Vidal de Haymes, and Dale Francisco; Trauma of Children of the Sudan: A Constructivist Exploration by Patty Stow Bolea, George Grant Jr., Marcy Burgess, and Olja Plasa; A Model of Culture-Centered Child Welfare Practice by Oronde A. Miller and Rebecca Jones Gaston; Transracial Adoption: Families Identify Issues and Needed Support Services by Maria Vidal de Haymes and Shirley Simon; Racism and Sexism in Child Welfare: Effects on Women of Color as Mothers and Practitioners by Isa M. Woldegiorgis

**13. Protecting Children Special Issue: The Influence of Culture and Cultural Competence on Child and Family Well-being.** Protecting Children. v.20. n.1. 56 pages. 2005.

*Availability:* This resource may be available for free at your local library. The entire issue of this journal can be purchased from the publisher's Web site: <http://www.americanhumane.org>. This issue offers a review of the literature on factors contributing to disproportionality, information pertaining to cultural competence and Family and Child Well-being, and also includes an article on interviewing immigrant children and their families about child maltreatment.

**14. Protecting Children Special Issue: Migration - A Critical Issue for Child Welfare.**

Protecting Children. v.21, n.2. 2006. *Availability:* Articles from this resource may be available for free from your local library or from other sources (free or for a fee). The entire journal issue can be purchased from the publisher's Web site [http://www.americanhumane.org/site/PageServer?pagename=pb\\_home](http://www.americanhumane.org/site/PageServer?pagename=pb_home) This issue of Protecting Children, the American Humane Association's professional journal, focuses on the intersection between migration and child welfare in the United States. The American Humane Association collaborated with the Loyola University Chicago Graduate School of Social Work to produce this seminal issue titled Migration: A Critical Issue for Child Welfare.

**15. Refugee Children: Theory, Research, and Services.** Ahearn, Frederick L., Jr., and Athey, Jean L. Johns Hopkins Series in Contemporary Medicine and Public Health. 248 pages. Baltimore, MD:

Johns Hopkins University Press, July 1991.

*Availability:* This resource can be acquired through a library on interlibrary loan.

Explores the unique physical, social, and mental health needs of refugee children, particularly those who escape war or other forms of violence, and proposes effective and timely interventions to assist this vulnerable population. The three objectives of the book are: (1) the presentation of theory, research, and services that define the effects of the migration experience on children; (2) to increase the understanding of child refugees; and, (3) to suggest delivery of services and to describe model strategies for programming. Part I, Theoretical Overviews, discusses common stressors facing refugees, including trauma, loss, and deprivation. Also, the process of "acculturation," or resettlement, is examined with particular emphasis on how specific native cultures buffer, or appear to neglect, children during this transition period. Part II, Research Studies, presents three case studies, two on the Indochinese refugees and one on Central American youth. Each case study discusses the impact of massive trauma and exposure to violence on academic and intellectual achievement, anti-social behavior patterns, post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms, and economic adjustment. Part III, Service and Treatment Issues, outlines common types of psychopathology among refugee children and offers several model treatment programs. Primary prevention programs aimed at refugee children are nearly non-existent. Suggestions are provided to develop these programs in order to identify and address potential behavior problems. (IP-CW)

**16. Serving Foreign-Born Foster Children: A Resource for Meeting the Special Needs of Refugee Youth and Children.** Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) United States Conference of Catholic Bishops/Migration and Refugee Services (USCCB/MRS) 59 pages. Baltimore, MD and Washington, DC: Bridging Refugee Youth and Children's Services (BRYCS) 2003.

*Availability:* Available in PDF on the BRYCS Web site Publications page at

[http://www.brycs.org/brycs\\_resources.htm](http://www.brycs.org/brycs_resources.htm).

This document addresses the special challenges in serving foreign-born children in U.S foster care systems. It is intended for administrative and casework staff of child welfare agencies and other public and private organizations that work with refugee children and families. The document draws on the experiences of existing foster care programs to suggest practical means of meeting the assessment and placement needs of foreign-born children in foster care. In addition, the paper highlights potential areas for collaboration between public and private entities and identifies the laws, policies and professional standards relevant to serving refugee and immigrant children. The appendix includes resources on topics such as developing refugee foster families, identifying the particular service needs of refugee children in foster care, and assisting trafficked children.

**17. Sexual Abuse in Nine North American Cultures: Treatment and Prevention.** Fontes, Lisa Aronson (ed.) 328 pages. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc. 1995.

*Availability:* This book is available for purchase from the publisher at: <http://www.sagepub.com>.

"A beautiful foreword by Eliana Gil and a very helpful preface and introduction by the editor, Lisa Aronson Fontes, elucidate the many ways in which culture is relevant to sexual abuse. They set the personal tone and the fresh scholarly information that characterizes the chapters. The reader is treated to an impressive, state-of-the-art array of ideas on culture that opens new avenues for inquiry." - Publisher's description

**18. Undercounted. Underserved. Immigrant and Refugee Families in the Child Welfare System.** Lincroft, Yali, and Resner, Jena. The Annie E. Casey Foundation. 56 pages. Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2006.

*Availability:* This resource is available free in PDF format on the Web at:

<http://www.aecf.org/upload/PublicationFiles/IR3622.pdf>.

"This report focuses on the needs of immigrant and refugee children in the child welfare system. It is a

result of extensive research, including a literature review; interviews with child welfare workers, immigration attorneys, adoptive parents, foster youth, advocates, staff of community-based agencies, researchers, and policymakers; and the recommendations from a consultative session with national experts and child welfare practitioners." - Publisher's description