

Supporting refugee children and youth, programming models, and resources



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- Bridging Refugee Youth and Children's Services (BRYCS): BRYCS helps service providers from refugee resettlement agencies and other groups such as child welfare, schools, and ethnic community-based organizations. BRYCS offers expertise on how to best help refugee children and families. In addition, BRYCS offers thousands of resources, among which are [Refugee children in U.S. schools: A toolkit for teachers and school personnel](#) and [Growing up in a new country: A positive youth development toolkit for working with refugees and immigrants](#).
- *Daring to dream: Raising the achievement of 14 to 16 year old asylum-seeking and refugee children and young people*. This report from the United Kingdom shows that asylum-seeking and refugee children and youth are highly motivated and can potentially be high achievers. This report also shows the marginalization of their parents. See <www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/policy/position/2005/children.htm>.
- *Helping students cope with trauma and loss—Online training for school personnel*. This online course by Columbia University deals with self-care and vicarious traumatization. Part 1 is available online for self-study. See <<http://ci.columbia.edu/w0521/index.html>>.
- *The Refugee toolkit. A toolkit for all practitioners* is a website developed by The Children's Society Family Health Inclusion Project. It is funded by the United Kingdom Department of Health. See <www.refugeetoolkit.org.uk/>.
- Hamilton, R. J., Anderson, A., Frater-Mathieson, K, Loewen, S., & Moore, D.W. (2005). *Interventions for refugee children in New Zealand schools: Models, methods, and best practice*. This document examines what works best when it comes to helping refugee children in New Zealand schools. See <www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/schooling/5463>.
- The La Trobe Refugee Research Centre (LaRRC). <www.latrobe.edu.au/larrc/> works to promote the overall well-being of refugees. Several of LaRRC's research projects have focused on refugee youth and education issues. A variety of publications and resources are available. However, the Good Starts for Refugee youth research is especially relevant. See [Good starts for refugee youth, La Trobe University](#).
- *Opening the school gate* is a resource kit containing strategies to encourage parents and families from diverse and newcomer backgrounds to participate in the education experience of their children. (Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues, ph (03) 9340 3700, download from <www.cmyi.net.au/>)

- **The Pharos School Prevention Programmes:** Since 1993, the Pharos National Knowledge and Advisory Centre on Migrants, Refugees and Health (formerly called Pharos Refugees and Health Knowledge Centre), a Netherlands-based agency, has developed a number of school initiatives for refugee and asylum-seeking children and youth, both in primary and secondary education. The overall aim of the initiatives has been the reduction of social-emotional problems and the reinforcement of children's intrapersonal strength. In addition, training initiatives and support materials for teachers have been developed to improve teacher's competencies in supporting these pupils in the classroom setting. The two most successful initiatives developed through Pharos are *The World United* and *Welcome to School*. The effectiveness of these initiatives has been demonstrated in large-scale effect studies. Resources from Pharos include the following:

- (1) **The Pharos School Prevention Programmes Manual:** The manual was written to give British experts a global idea of the Dutch preventive school initiative for refugee and asylum-seekers' children. The manual mainly focuses on the philosophies and theoretical framework behind the initiatives so that implementation in other contexts may be feasible.
- (2) ***The World United (F.C. De Wereld)*** is an initiative for 10- to 12-year-old asylum-seeking and refugee children. It aims to strengthen these children's competencies with regard to self-esteem, coping and social skills, and behavioural adjustment. Necessary conditions for the initiative are a safe and familiar atmosphere in which children feel free to express themselves and their feelings. The initiative consists of eight weekly sessions of about one and a half hours. The topics are: me; my school; my home; my family; celebrating days; friendship; play and games; and me, you and we. Every session begins and ends with *The World United* song. During the sessions, the children make their own ME-book; a kind of diary in which they can write about themselves and collect the creations they have made during the sessions.

For further information on **The World United** and to download the teacher's manuals and related student documents, see the PHAROS website: <www.pharos.nl/information-in-english/school-programmes-for-refugee-youth-in-primary-education>.

Welcome to School is an initiative for secondary school pupils that can be used in a classroom setting for groups of new arrivals: asylum seeking, refugee, and migrant youngsters. This 21-lesson series aims to improve well-being and prevent psychosocial problems. The guiding principle of *Welcome to School* is building bridges between the past, the present, and the future. Classmates become companions and learn how to support each other. Themes for group discussions are: getting acquainted; where do I come from; my school; who are we; important days; living in the Netherlands; important people; friendship; being in love and marrying; leisure time; feeling excluded; on the road to the future; etc.

For further information about **Welcome to School** and to download the teacher's manuals and related student documents, see the PHAROS website: <www.pharos.nl/information-in-english/school-programmes-for-refugee-youth-in-secondary-education>.

Additional information on the implementation of *The World United* and *Welcome to School* initiatives is available as follows:

- The 2007 *Listen to them, Final report of the project supporting refugee and asylum-seeking children at school* is funded by the European Refugee Fund of the EC. It provides additional information on the two Pharos initiatives and their implementation in the United Kingdom, Austria, Germany, Italy, and Sweden. See <www.pharos.nl/information-in-english/school-programmes-for-refugee-youth-in-primary-education>.

- An article about implementing the project in the UK and who to contact for the English language version of the manual (Ingleby, D., & Watters C. (2002). Refugee children at school: Good practices in mental health and social care. *Education and Health*; 20(3): 43–45.) is available at: <<http://sheu.org.uk/sites/sheu.org.uk/files/imagepicker/1/eh203di.pdf>>.
- A report by Koreen Geres, a teacher in Saskatchewan who undertook an action research project on the use of digital storytelling with immigrant and refugee youth that utilized the PHAROS Welcome to School materials, is also a source of information. The authors' action research project took place in a secondary school, in a beginner level English as an additional language (EAL) classroom in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, over one, five-month semester. Her 2010 report to the Dr. Stirling McDowell Foundation provides some insights as to how these resources may be applied in a Canadian setting. See Using digital narratives with refugee and immigrant youth to promote literacy, healing, and hope (2010) available at: <www.mcdowellfoundation.ca/main_mcdowell/projects/research_rep/200_using_digital_narratives.pdf>.
- A presentation used for a one-day course for teachers and managers from several European countries titled *Educating new arrivals: teacher, therapist or integration expert?* by Bram Tuk of the PHAROS Knowledge Centre, a key person in the development of both programs, provides information on PHAROS and its initiatives, as well as contact information. It is available at: <www.carmelcollegegouda.nl/site_me/docs/grundtvig/GrundtvigEurope%20Carmelcollege%20Gouda%20vml.%20St.Antoniuscollege/Meeting%20in%20The%20Netherlands%20March%202009/Pharos%20Presentation%20maart%202009.pdf>.
- Foundation House (Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture) creates resources to facilitate the understanding of the specific needs of refugees among health and other professionals, (in government and outside of government). They have also created some school and education resources, as well as curriculum materials. *Schools in for refugees: Whole-school guide to refugee readiness* is one such resource. Its purpose is to aid schools in identifying and meeting the needs of refugee students. It can be downloaded from <www.foundationhouse.org.au>. Other relevant resources from Foundation House include the following:
 - *A guide to working with young people who are refugees (1996 and 2000)* includes strategies for providing individual counselling and group work.
[download](#)
 - *The Rainbow program for children in refugee families (2002)* is a seven-session structured group program for primary-aged children (ages 9 to 12).
[download](#)
 - HealthWise—health literacy teaching resource for refugee and other ESL students (2004) is health literacy programming for secondary school students from refugee and other culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
[download](#)
 - *Taking action—Human rights and refugee issues teaching resource (2005)* is an eleven-lesson curriculum unit that aims to develop attitudes and behaviours that promote human rights.
[download](#)
 - *Klassroom kaleidoscope: A program to facilitate connectedness and well-being in the culturally diverse classroom (2007)* is a ten-lesson unit adapted from the Kaleidoscope program for classrooms comprised of both refugee and non-refugee students.
[download](#)

- *Education and refugee students from Southern Sudan* provides information on the background and experiences of South Sudanese students. Its purpose is to help schools understand the needs of South Sudanese students in order to provide a more supportive educational environment.
[download](#)
- *Talk's in. Families of refugee background and schools in dialogue* is a resource to help school communities provide a supportive and inclusive environment for families of refugee backgrounds. The resource includes background information, practical suggestions, and resources for workshops with school staff and families.
Talk's in (booklet) [download](#)
Workshop for families (PowerPoint presentation) [download](#)

- *A three part guide to working with students from refugee backgrounds* is a resource that includes
 - a teacher's guide
 - a school counselling guide
 - a school's guide

It is published by QPASTT (Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma). It can be downloaded from www.qpastt.org.au/resources_index.html.

- Bigelow, M. H. (2005). *The social and cultural capital of a Somali teenage girl by LESLLA*. Adolescent immigrants and refugees to the United States need access to good quality schooling. Too often though, there is a focus on what these young people don't know. Instead, we need to not only determine what they don't know but also concentrate on their strengths and assets. The author recommends doing this by learning about the home- and community-based aspects that they bring to their schooling. See www.theliteracyinstitute.org/projects/pdf/LESLLA%20Research1.pdf.
- Stewart, J. (2011). *Supporting refugee children: Strategies for educators*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press. This document deals with the experiences of refugee children who have come to North America; the systems, structures, and programs in place to help them and the strategies and activities that help them adjust.
- Dunn, B., & Adkins, M. A. *The multicultural classroom: Teaching refugee and immigrant children*. A short paper that talks about the multicultural classroom and common misconceptions. See http://jtp.ipgkti.edu.my/map/resource/kplspm/sumber/KB/NewHorizon/www.newhorizons.org/strategies/multicultural/adkins_dunn.htm.
- Rutter, J. (2006). *Refugee children in the UK*. New York, NY: McGraw Hill Education. This book takes a closer look at factors that have an effect on refugee children's education, such as social policies.
- De Capua, A., Smathers, W., & Tang, L. F. (2009). *Meeting the needs of students with limited or interrupted schooling*. Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press. This book deals with some of the issues surrounding English language learners who have limited or interrupted formal schooling. Practical guidance is given throughout the book to help teachers meet the needs of these students.
- Hamilton, R., & Moore, D. (Eds.). (2004). *Educational interventions for refugee children: Theoretical perspectives and implementing best practice*. New York, NY: Routledge Falmer. This document focuses on the education of refugee children.

- Rutter, J. (2001). *Supporting refugee children in 21st century Britain: A compendium of essential information*. Sterling, VA: Trentham Books Limited. This document, even though it is intended for educators in the United Kingdom, provides useful information for all educators of refugee students; of particular interest is part two (Refugees in Schools).
- Rousseau, C., & Guzder, J. (2008). School-based prevention programs for refugee children. *Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinics of North America*, 17(3), pp. 533–549. This article was written by two doctors from the Department of Psychiatry at McGill University. Its purpose is to review school initiatives developed to improve the mental health of refugee children; more specifically, their overall adaptation and well-being as well as the psychological consequences of trauma or loss. See <www.nps.uqam.ca/prevention/rousseau.pdf>.
- Manitoba Education. (2011). *Teaching refugee and war-affected students*. Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education. This is a bibliography that lists resources for teachers who teach refugee or war-affected students, especially those with interrupted schooling and trauma related to their war-affected situations. See <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/iru/library_publications/bibliographies/index.html>.
- Ngo, H.V. (2004). *Immigrant children in focus: A map of needs, strategies and resources*. Calgary, Alberta: Coalition for Equal Access to Education. See <www.eslaction.com>.
- UNICEF. (2000). *Helping children cope with the stresses of war: A manual for parents and teachers*. See <www.unicef.org/publications/index_4398.html>.