

USCRI

Partnering with Parents & Caregivers: Strengthening Engagement to Promote Safety and Well-Being of Refugee and Newcomer Children & Youth

Refugee Youth Resource Center

Aug 26, 2026

WHO ARE WE?



- Refugee Services
- Policy and Advocacy
- Humanitarian Legal Services
- Anti-Trafficking Services
- International Programs
- Children's Services

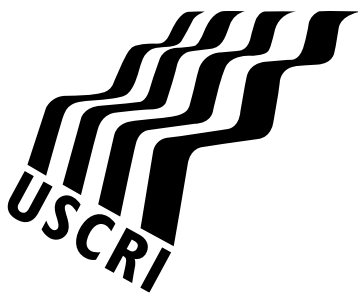
**Note: USCRI is a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO)*

REFUGEE YOUTH RESOURCE CENTER



- **Refugee Youth Resource Center funding ends 9/29/26**
- How to continue receiving support:
 - **RYRC Training Library**
 - Monthly Webinars
 - Shared Resources/Tools
 - E-Learning (3 courses)
 - Recorded Trainings
 - **Information and Resources**
 - For Youth/Families
 - For Providers
 - **USCRI Community Resource Directory**
- Visit us at refugee-youth.org

INTRODUCTIONS



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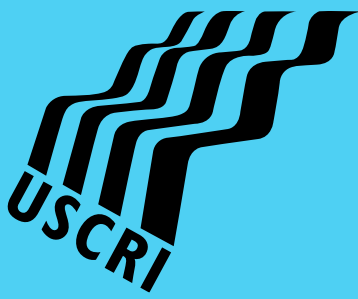
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the webinar, you will be able to...

- ① Explain how meaningful engagement between providers and newcomer parents and caregivers can promote child and youth safety and well-being.
- ② Explore positive parenting and discipline strategies that can be used to support newcomer parents and caregivers.
- ③ Equip newcomer parents and caregivers with practical guidance and resources related to child safety and well-being.

The Importance of Family Engagement

CORE STRESSORS REFUGEE & NEWCOMERS MAY EXPERIENCE



- Forced displacement and potential trauma
- Social isolation
- Resettlement and adjustment challenges
- Language barriers
- Immigration uncertainty
- Financial hardship

A teal-tinted background image showing a woman and a young girl. The woman is standing and looking down at a smartphone held by the girl, who is seated at a table. The table has some food on it. The overall tone is somber and focused on digital communication.

COMMON BARRIERS WHEN ENGAGING NEWCOMER PARENTS & CAREGIVERS



■ Family & Resettlement Challenges

- Language barriers and limited access to interpretation
 - Work, transportations, and childcare demands
 - Navigating technology and digital communication
 - Difficulty navigating U.S. systems
 - Different cultural expectations
 - Fear or uncertainty of government systems
 - Competing needs & priorities
 - Limited awareness of available resources and supports
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- A decorative graphic in the bottom right corner consisting of several overlapping, wavy, parallel lines in a light red or pink color.

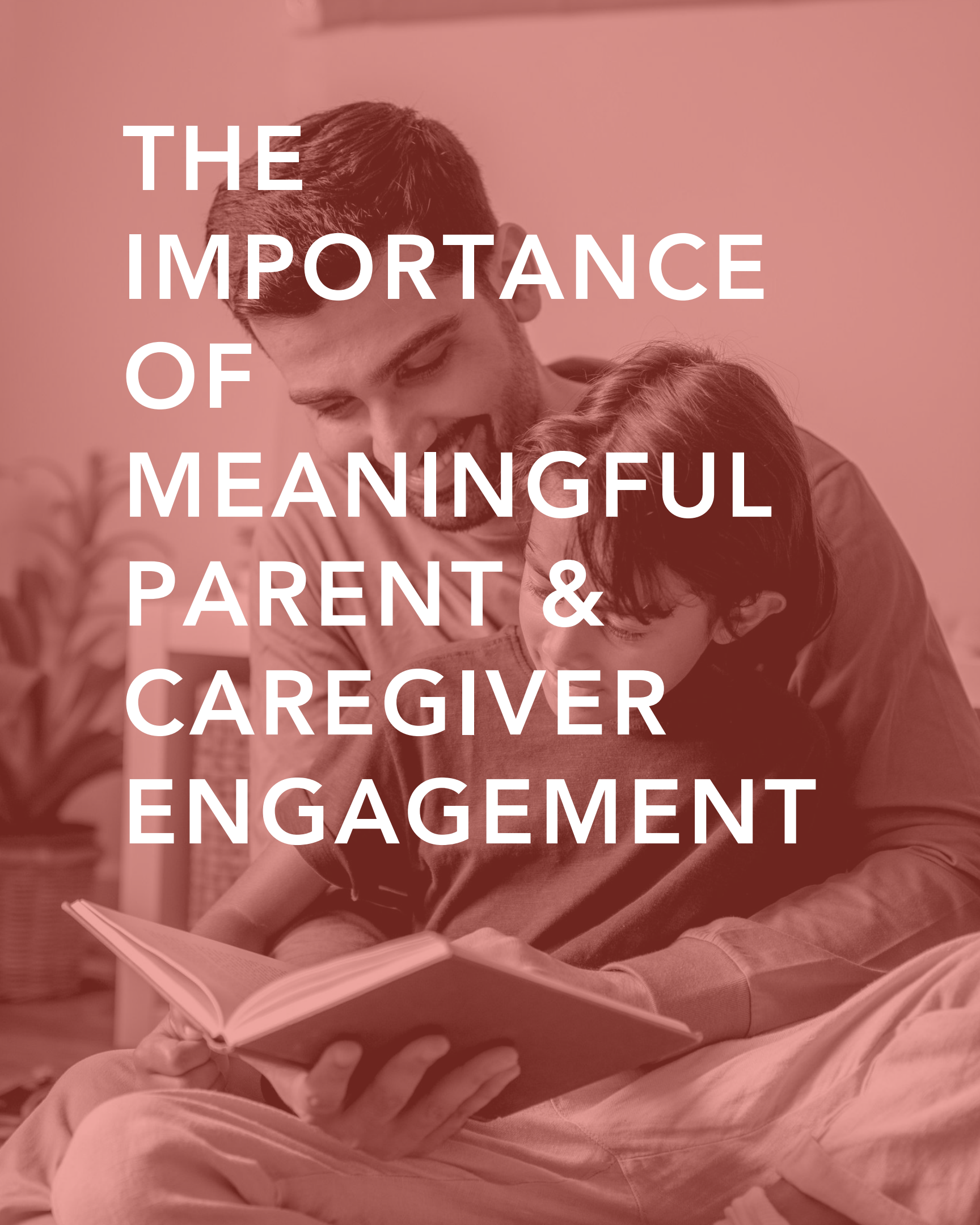
A woman with dark hair is sitting at a desk, looking at a laptop. She is holding a white cup. In the foreground, the back of a child's head is visible. The scene is overlaid with a teal tint.

COMMON BARRIERS WHEN ENGAGING NEWCOMER PARENTS & CAREGIVERS



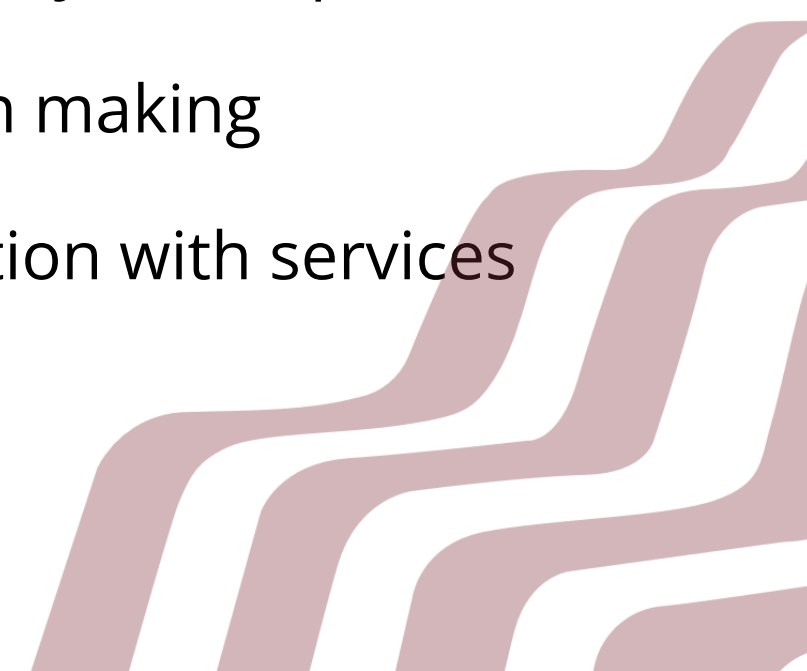
School & Provider Challenges

- Complex or inaccessible communication systems
 - Lack of culturally and linguistically responsive information
 - Limited opportunities for family engagement
 - Complex school system and processes
 - Lack of specialized skilled staff specially at schools
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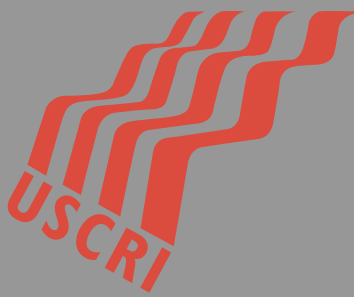


THE IMPORTANCE OF MEANINGFUL PARENT & CAREGIVER ENGAGEMENT



- Reduce the impact of trauma and resettlement stress
 - Strengthen children's emotional well-being
 - Improve school attendance and academic success
 - Help address family conflict and intergenerational tension
 - Increase children and families' access to services & resources
 - Promote youth safety and healthy development
 - Promote advocacy and decision making
 - Increases buy-in and collaboration with services
- 

BOOSTING ENGAGEMENT RESOURCE



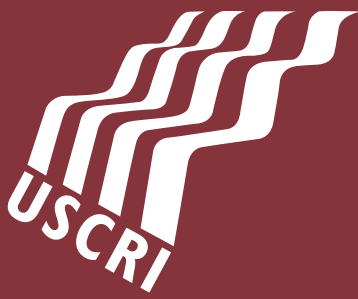
To access these resources, visit the [RYRC Training Library](#)

Introduction

[Click to open video](#)



PARENT/PROVIDER DISCUSSION



Please share responses in the chat

- What initially made engagement difficult?
- What helped build trust?
- What did GirlForward do differently to engage the family?
- How did the partnership benefit Khadija?
- What advice would you give to other providers, parents and caregivers?



The Four C's of Meaningful Engagement

THE FOUR C'S OF MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT



Communication



Connection



Confidence



Collaboration

COMMUNICATION



- Use simple, clear, and culturally responsive language
- Offer interpretation if needed
- Use multiple communication methods
- Explain unfamiliar terms, expectations, and protocols clearly
- Allow time for questions
- Communicate regularly

CONNECTION



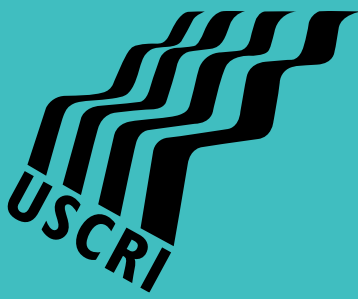
- Build trust before asking for participation
- Meet families where they are
- Offer flexible scheduling
- Provide childcare, transportation, and interpretation
- Honor culture, language, and lived experiences
- Partner with trusted community leaders and community-based organizations.

CONFIDENCE



- Provide information about navigating complex systems
- Regularly ask for parent feedback and use it to improve programs and services
- Offer workshops on education, youth development, safety, and well-being
- Organize family engagement events and community gatherings
- Empower parents and caregivers to advocate for their children

COLLABORATION

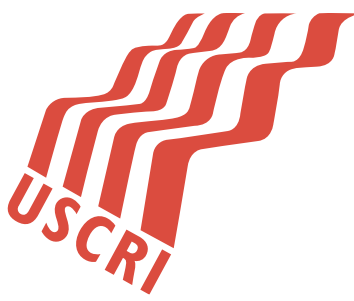


- Share decision-making
- Partner with community organizations and leaders
- Elevate family and youth voices
- Focus on shared goals for children's success



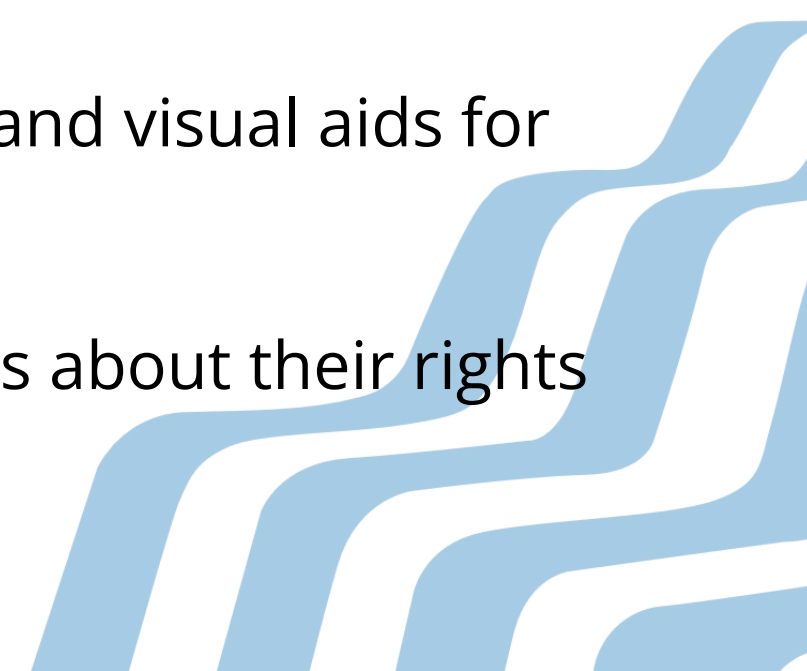
Positive Parenting, Discipline, & Healthy Boundary Setting

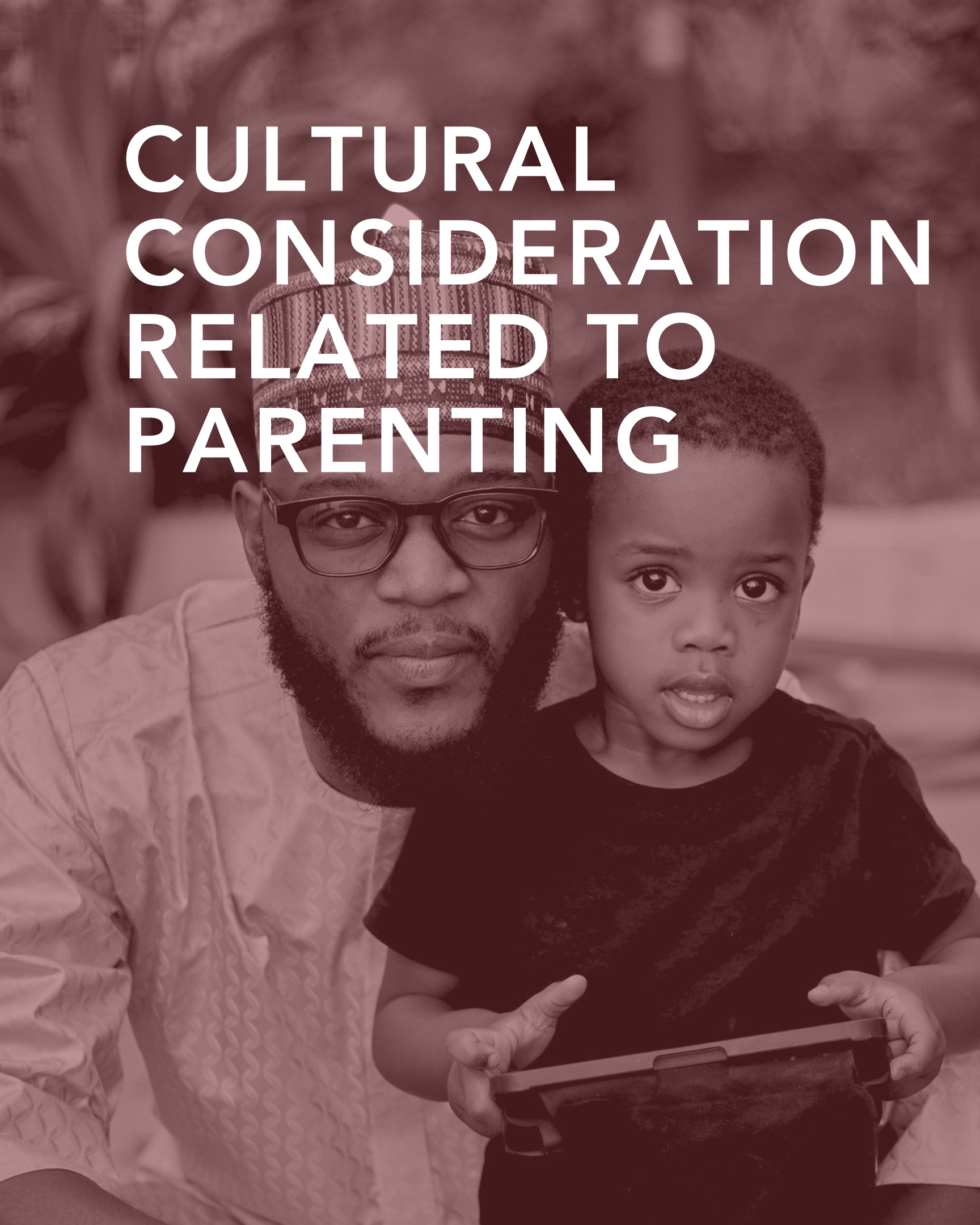
PROVIDER APPROACH



As service providers, our role is to:

- Ask about the family's strengths, concerns & goals
- Recognize that every family is unique, avoiding cultural assumptions.
- Explain parenting expectations in the U.S.
- Recognize and build on families' existing strengths
- Connect families to resources and practical support
- Integrate parenting and child safety tips throughout services
- Use professional interpreters and visual aids for cultural orientation.
- Educating children and parents about their rights and responsibilities





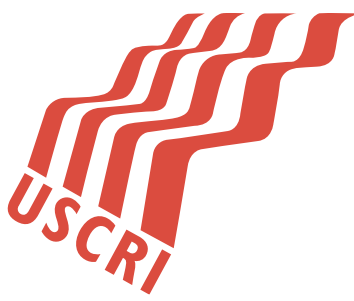
CULTURAL CONSIDERATION RELATED TO PARENTING



For service providers, it's important to keep in mind that parenting expectations may differ regarding:

- Parent and caregiver roles
 - Children's independence and decision-making
 - Expectations for children's behavior
 - Physical discipline and other responses to misbehavior
 - Communication between adults and children
 - Expectations for teenagers, friendships, dating, and social activities
 - Parents' roles in education and communication with schools
- 

SAFETY TIPS FOR PARENTS



General Safety Tips

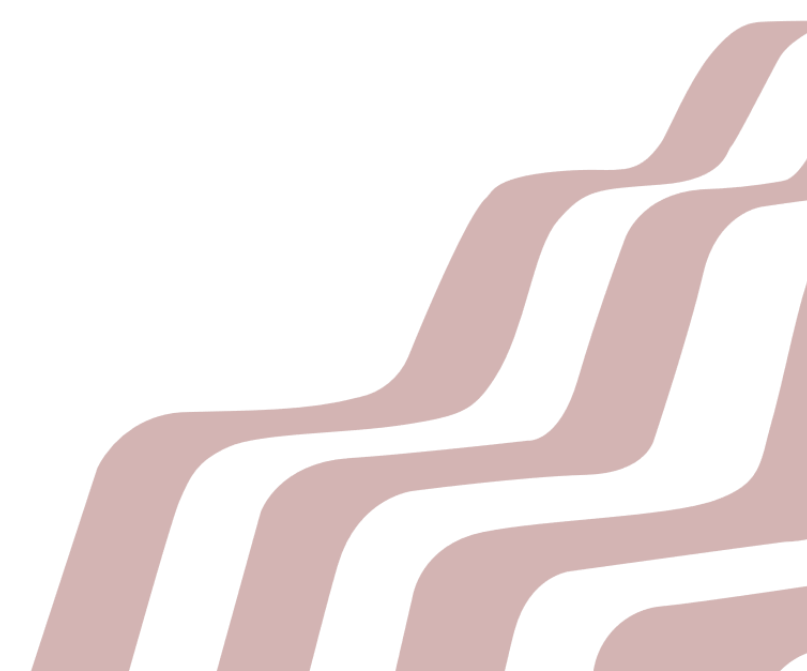
- Keep emergency phone numbers easily accessible
- Store medications and household chemicals safely
- Use car seats, booster seats, and seat belts correctly
- Supervise children around water and teach basic water safety
- Ensure children wear helmets and other protective gear during physical activities

POSITIVE PARENTING



Positive Parenting Means:

- Teaching rather than punishing
- Setting clear, consistent expectations and boundaries.
- Building trust with children and youth through respectful communication
- Practicing discipline in line with U.S. child protection laws
- Setting clear limits and follow through calmly

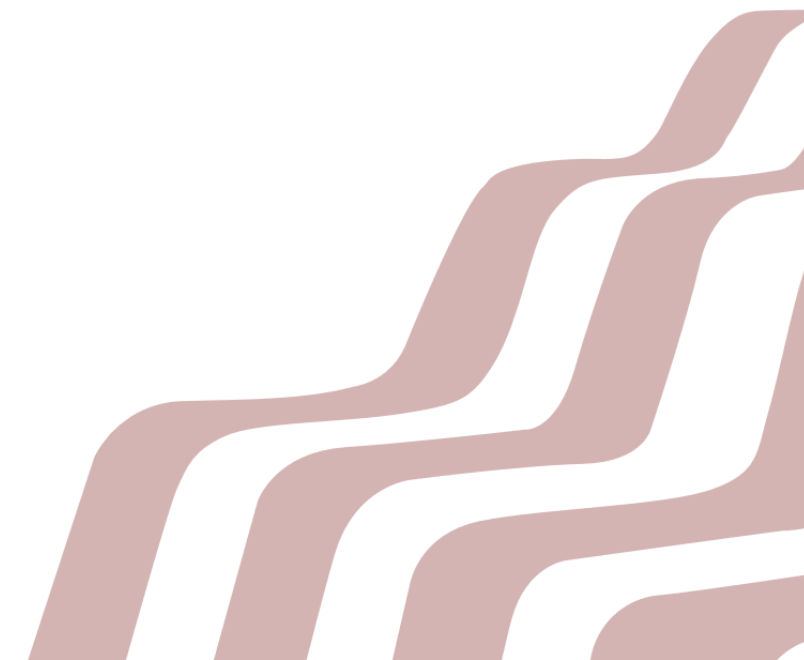


POSITIVE PARENTING



Positive Discipline Does Not Mean:

- Using harsh punishment
- Emotional and psychological abuse
- Withholding basic needs
- Inadequate supervision
- Permissive parenting



CASE EXAMPLE

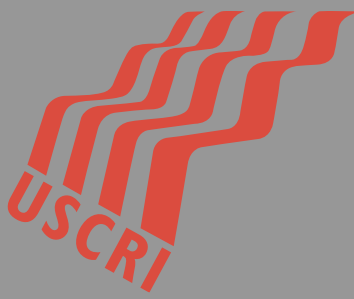


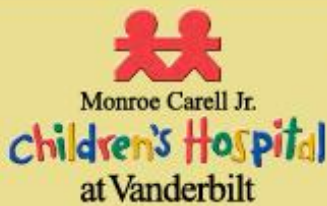
Sami is a 14-year-old boy from Afghanistan who arrived to the United States 2 years ago with his parents and siblings. Since starting high school and making new friends, Sami has become more independent. He sometimes talks back, resists helping with chores, stays out later than his parents expect, and prefers spending more time with friends than with his family.

His parents are concerned that Sami is becoming disrespectful and worry they are losing both their authority and their connection with him. They have tried talking with him, but conversations often end in arguments, and Sami has become increasingly withdrawn and less willing to communicate.

During a meeting with their case manager, Sami's parents share these concerns and ask for advice on how to rebuild their relationship with their son while maintaining appropriate boundaries.

POSITIVE PARENTING TIP SHEET





Monroe Carell Jr.
children's Hospital
at Vanderbilt

VANDERBILT SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
DEPARTMENT OF PEDIATRICS
DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL MEDICINE
CENTER FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT



For more information
about positive parenting,
please contact the
Center for Child Development

(615) 936-0249

Positive Parenting Tip Sheet

Positive Parenting is a way to parent your child that focuses more on your child's positive behaviors rather than on your child's problem behaviors.

Things to do:

- Praise your child and tell him exactly what you like about his behavior. "I like how you cleaned up your toys!"
- Ignore minor negative behaviors such as whining and screaming.
- Play with your child for about 5 minutes a day and let her lead the play.
- Actively listen to your child by reflecting what he says back to him. "I understand that you want another cookie."
- Use a when-then approach. "When you put on your shoes, then you can go outside."
- Tell your child what to do instead of what not to do. "Please walk" instead of "Stop running."
- Redirect your child by making something else seem more interesting.

Things to avoid:

- Spanking or threatening your child. These increase hitting and other negative behavior.
- Yelling and screaming at your child.
- Teasing and laughing at your child's negative behavior.
- Giving attention to negative attention-seeking behavior.

Things we know:

- Being consistent lets your child know what to expect and lets your child know that you mean what you say.
- Offering a child choices between 2 possibilities gives the child a sense of control. "Do you want to wear the red shirt or the blue shirt?"
- Rewarding good behavior increases the chances of that behavior happening again.
- Picking your battles allows you to work on one thing at a time.

Acknowledgements:

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To access these resources, visit the [RYRC Training Library](#)

Digital & Online Safety: Keeping Children and Youth Safe

COMMON ONLINE RISKS



Help parents and caregivers recognize and discuss risks with their children such as:

- Cyberbullying
- Sexting and image sharing
- Identity theft and online scams
- Online predators
- Exposure to pornography and other inappropriate content
- Use of AI as a counselor, advice giver, or confidante rather than a parent, caregiver, or professional

PROMOTING HEALTHY SOCIAL MEDIA USE

Encourage parents and caregivers to talk with their children about :

- Keeping social media accounts private
- Only accepting requests from people they know
- Disabling/not sharing their location
- Not posting stories in real time that show location
- Not sending nude or sexually explicit photos



HELPING PARENTS & CAREGIVERS KEEP CHILDREN SAFE WHEN USING AI



Encourage parents and caregivers to:

- Know which AI tools their children are using
- Set rules about when and how AI can be used
- Talk about safe and responsible use
 - Protecting personal information
 - Using AI as a helper, not a replacement for thinking
 - Checking information and sources
 - Never using AI to create or share harmful or inappropriate content

SUPPORTING PARENTS & CAREGIVERS NAVIGATING DIGITAL SAFETY

Encourage parents and caregivers to:

- Learn about the social media platforms their children are using
- Maintain open, ongoing communication with youth about online activity
- Set age-appropriate limits/boundaries
- Monitor devices, accounts, and online activity based on the child's age and maturity
- Learn how cyberbullies work
- Talk with their children about the risks and create an open/safe environment to maintain communication



SUPPORTING PARENTS & CAREGIVERS NAVIGATING DIGITAL SAFETY

Encourage parents and caregivers to:

- Watch for warning signs of unsafe digital engagement
 - Conversation with someone **starts normally, then escalates** towards requests for photos
 - Someone **pressures or uses urgency language**, such as asking to delete messages or keep secret
 - Message received from an **unknown account**
 - Someone makes a sudden push to move the conversation to **a different, less-monitored app**
 - Child **becomes secretive or anxious** about their phone or notifications



MONITORING YOUTH'S ONLINE USAGE



Educate parents and caregivers about setting boundaries and expectations:

- Create family network
 - Android: use the google family link app
 - iPhone: Go to settings screen time --- choose child's name under family --- turn on screen time--- set up
- Set limits on screen time
- Monitor youth's phone: text, apps, conversations
- Use phone sharing locations apps: family locator (find my friend, 360, etc.)
- Maintain honesty and transparency with youth regarding parental monitoring

INTERNET SAFETY RESOURCE



The image shows two overlapping informational posters. The top poster, titled "For Parents & Caregivers: Encouraging Healthy Screen Time Habits for Youth", is from USCRI. It features a blue header with the USCRI logo and an illustration of a woman walking and talking on a phone. The main content is under the heading "Be a positive example" and includes three bullet points: "Limit your own screen time, especially during family time, you wake up, and just before bed.", "Model healthy behavior on social media." (with sub-points: "Take breaks from social media", "Keep a positive online presence", "Be mindful of what you post"), and "Place value on relationships." (with a clock icon and the text "Create time for play"). The bottom poster, titled "Strategies for healthy screen time limits", is from refugees.org. It features a blue header with the refugees.org logo and an illustration of a family. The main content is under the heading "Strategies for healthy screen time limits" and includes four strategies: "Ask your school, church, or community organization about free or low-cost extracurricular activities in your area.", "Provide youth with rewards for off-screen activities rather than punishing them for using electronics.", "Create house norms about which times of the day screens are allowed." (with an example: "On school days, screens are allowed after your homework is completed until the time we eat dinner."), and "Use the built-in functions and apps in mobile phones to create time limits for apps." (with an example: "I set a time limit on my phone so that I have 1 hour of time on social media per day."). Below these strategies is a section titled "An example" which shows a flowchart of a family discussion about screen time limits, with a "Consider:" section listing four points: "Requiring completion of chores and school work before screen time begins", "Designating specific times phone use is not allowed, such as meal time, before school, or family gatherings", "Charging the phone outside of bedroom at night to ensure adequate sleep", and "Agree on consequences if screen time is causing the youth to neglect school work, health, or activities with friends and family". Both posters have a footer with the refugees.org logo and a URL: "If you are interested in obtaining more information, visit our Unaccompanied Children Resource Center: ucrcresourcecenter.org". The bottom poster also features the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants logo.

For Parents & Caregivers: Encouraging Healthy Screen Time Habits for Youth

Be a positive example

- Limit your own screen time, especially during family time, you wake up, and just before bed.
- Model healthy behavior on social media.
 - Take breaks from social media
 - Keep a positive online presence
 - Be mindful of what you post
- Place value on relationships.
 - Create time for play

Strategies for healthy screen time limits

- Ask your school, church, or community organization about free or low-cost extracurricular activities in your area.
- Provide youth with rewards for off-screen activities rather than punishing them for using electronics.
- Create house norms about which times of the day screens are allowed.
For example, "On school days, screens are allowed after your homework is completed until the time we eat dinner."
- Use the built-in functions and apps in mobile phones to create time limits for apps.
For example, "I set a time limit on my phone so that I have 1 hour of time on social media per day."

An example

Consider:

- Requiring completion of chores and school work before screen time begins
- Designating specific times phone use is not allowed, such as meal time, before school, or family gatherings
- Charging the phone outside of bedroom at night to ensure adequate sleep
- Agree on consequences if screen time is causing the youth to neglect school work, health, or activities with friends and family

refugees.org

If you are interested in obtaining more information, visit our Unaccompanied Children Resource Center: ucrcresourcecenter.org

U.S. COMMITTEE FOR REFUGEES AND IMMIGRANTS

To access these resources, visit the [RYRC Training Library](#)

Conclusion & Resources



PRESENTATION TAKEAWAYS

- Build meaningful parent and caregiver engagement through the four C's: communication, connection, confidence, and collaboration.
- Equip parents and caregivers with practical tools and resources that promote youth safety, well-being, and positive parenting practices.
- Provide parents and caregivers with digital and online safety guidance to encourage safe, healthy, and responsible technology use among refugee and newcomer youth.



Switchboard [Training and Technical Assistance Request](#)

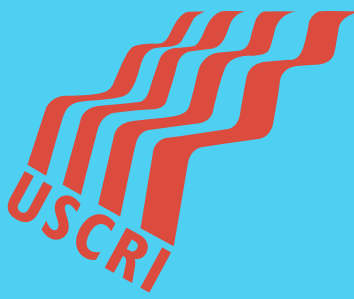
Switchboard Training and Technical Assistance Office Hours

Join Switchboard every first Thursday of the month from 1:00 – 2:00 PM ET. Need additional guidance on a Switchboard training you attended or quick advice on a specific case management challenge? This informal Q&A-style session is your chance to ask questions, share challenges, and talk through solutions with our team. Submit your questions [here](#) and they will help you think through them, pointing you to helpful tools and resources you can use right away.

All Things Data Office Hours

Do you have a one-off question related to data and M&E? Submit it [here](#) and go to Switchboard's All Things Data Office Hours! Join them on the first Monday of every month for All Things Data Office Hours (2:00-3:00 PM ET) to address your one-off data challenges! This is a Q&A format driven entirely by the questions you bring to the space.

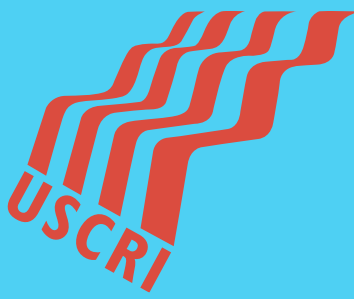
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



Parent, Caregiver and Provider Resources

- [Communication Tipsheet.pdf](#) Parent Power
- [English_Digital-Awareness-for-Refugees_factsheet-low-res.PDF](#) CORE available in English, Arabic, Burmese, Dari, Kinyarwanda, Pashto, Russian, Spanish, Swahili, Ukrainian and Haitian Creole
- [Three Steps to Help Empower Refugee and Immigrant Clients through Digital Literacy - Switchboard](#) a series of 6 videos
- [Integrating Digital Citizenship into Refugee and Immigrant Youth Programs](#) – by Switchboard
- [Increasing Family Engagement within Schools to Support Refugee Students - Switchboard](#) Aug, 2024
- [How to Build Partnerships with Immigrant Families](#) – by Colorín Colorado
- [The 5 Cs of Media Use](#) Center of Excellence Social Media and Youth Mental Health separated by age groups: English and Spanish
- [Online Safety Resources and Guides](#) – by NSPCC
- [Leaving Your Child Home Alone](#)
- [Home Safety by SettleIn](#)
- [Fire Safety](#) (Multiple Languages)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



MENTAL HEALTH OF NEWCOMER CHILDREN AND YOUTH

- [Fire Prevention and Safety Tips | SettleIn US](#)
- BRYCS - Raising Children in a New Country: An Illustrated Handbook: <https://www.switchboardta.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/BRYCS-Guide-Raising-Children-in-a-New-Country-Illustrated-Handbook-English-1.pdf>
- [Home Fire Prevention and Safety Tips](#)
- [Child Safety Checklist](#)
- [Car Seat Safety](#)
- [Guidance for Refugee and Immigrant Families: Parenting in a New Country](#)
- [Safety Tips for Parents](#)



Thank You!

Contact Us:

refugeeyouthrc@refugees.org

The production of this material was supported by Grant #90RB0054 from the Administration for Children and Families (ACF). Its contents are solely the responsibility of the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI) and do not necessarily represent the official views of ACF.