



General Recommendations for Practitioners Serving Undocumented and Mixed Status Immigrant Families



- Engage in intentional and ongoing critical self-reflection about the role of your own history, socio-cultural context, and professional culture in shaping your values, beliefs and implicit biases to avoid replicating systems of oppression with the families you serve (St. John, Thomas & Norona 2012).
- Conduct sessions in the home or community locations, when possible.
- Take the time to learn the risks mixed status and undocumented families face.
- Provide accurate information to families and advocacy by facilitating knowledge on immigrant's rights, benefits, and access to supports that could assist the children and the family in general.
- Be careful about creating false expectations.
- Reassure families that they have rights in the United States, regardless of legal status.
- Know where you are referring families by ensuring that these organizations/resources are reputable and have experience and a commitment to serving this population.
- Clarify with your organization what are the policies in terms of documenting and protecting information about clients'/patients' immigration status.
- Keep updated information on the changing landscape of immigration law through recent literature, seminars, webinars and by establishing relationships with local agencies that work for immigrant rights.
- Support families in having choice, control, address risk and feel empowered through tools and resources like *Family Preparedness Plans* and *Know Your Rights information*.
- Participate in task forces and collaboratives dedicated to immigrant issues.
- Strive to implement an approach in your work that is respectful of and encompasses each family's/individual's strengths, ways-of-knowing, diversity (including socio-cultural context, race, ethnicity, language and other aspects of identity), history and developmental stage.
- Facilitate access to developmentally appropriate, diversity- and trauma-informed mental health services to address the effects of immigration trauma and other traumatic experiences on the family/individuals.
- Encourage families and individuals to establish connections with community organizations to avoid isolation and learn new information.
- Do not do this alone, seek reflective supervision, peer supervision or consultation and pay attention to the effects of the work like vicarious traumatization and secondary traumatic stress.
- Advocate for change at a policy level: Increase awareness through public speaking, writing articles and other activities.

Adapted From:

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RESOURCES FOR PROVIDERS AND CAREGIVERS

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- (n.d.). Resources. *Boston Medical Center*. Retrieved from <https://www.bmc.org/programs/center-family-navigation-and-community-health-promotion/resources>
 - Family Preparedness Plan for Children 0-18 with Special Needs Including Trauma Exposure: Created by Boston Medical Pediatrics Department. It can be adapted to different contexts and tailored based on each State's policies.
- (n.d.). Resources for Families Facing Deportation and Separation. *Women's Refugee Commission*. Retrieved from <https://www.womensrefugeecommission.org/rights/gbv/resources/1409-resources-for-families-facing-deportation-separation>
- (n.d.). Resources for Parents. *Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors*. Retrieved from <http://apod.org/resources?s=immigration>
- **Reliable Resources around Immigration**

The following organizations have legal expertise in the field of immigration:

 - The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) – <https://www.aclu.org/issues/immigrants-rights>
 - The American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) – <http://www.aila.org/>
 - The National Immigration Law Center (NILC) – <https://www.nilc.org/>
 - Immigration Legal Resource Center (ILRC) – <https://www.ilrc.org/>
- **State-Specific Information about Immigration**
 - The American Immigrant Council at <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/> has state fact sheets highlighting key data about immigrant populations in each state.
- **Diversity-Informed Practice** found at DiversityInformedTenets.org

- **Implications for Early Care and Education Settings and Other Settings Serving Immigrant Families**
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- **Implementing Trauma Sensitive Strategies in Early Care and Education Settings**
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 - (n.d.) Resources for Schools Teams. *Trauma Essentials*. Retrieved from <https://traumaessentials.weebly.com/resources.html>
 - (n.d.) Trauma Sensitive School Checklist. *Lesley University & Massachusetts Advocates for Children*. [http://www.tolerance.org/sites/default/files/general/trauma%20sensitive%20school%20checklist%20\(1\).pdf](http://www.tolerance.org/sites/default/files/general/trauma%20sensitive%20school%20checklist%20(1).pdf)