

RESOURCES, STRATEGIES, AND ADVOCACY
A Bibliography of Supports for Refugees, Refugee Advocates, and ESL Teachers

Compiled by Kathleen Cloutier

I. COMMUNITY CENTERS IN RHODE ISLAND PROVIDING SERVICES TO REFUGEES

- Dorcas International Institute of Rhode Island

<http://www.diiri.org>

North Campus: 220 Elmwood Avenue, Providence, RI

South Campus: 645 Elmwood Avenue, Providence, RI

(401) 784-8600

- Genesis Center

<http://www.gencenter.org>

620 Potters Avenue

Providence, RI

(401) 781-6110

- Refugee Dream Center

<http://www.refugeedreamcenter.org>

340 Lockwood Street

Providence, RI

(401) 499-2745

II. WEBSITES

- Colorin Colorado!: <http://www.colorincolorado.org/article/how-support-refugee-students-ell-classroom>

“How to Support Refugee Students in the Classroom” is a comprehensive, well-organized, and lively resource for educators and advocates of refugees. It includes refugee facts, testimonials, a concise list of challenges refugees face, a practical list of potential supports educators can provide, as well as a Refugee Resource Section that includes videos, books, and relevant websites. Videos include testimonials and advice from ESL professionals. Highly recommended.

- Refugees International <http://www.refugeesinternational.org>

This group is perhaps the best known of any refugee advocacy organization, with a history spanning nearly forty years. Its mission is to improve the lives of displaced persons all over the world and it advises policymakers on solutions. The website is rich with images and information about refugee crisis, and the stories include assessments and recommendations. It will provide information at a glance for educators and advocates seeking information about situations their students have fled.

- UNHCR – The UN Refugee Agency: <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home>

The purpose of this agency is to safeguard the rights and wellbeing of refugees. The website offers up-to-date news stories about refugees all

over the world and includes a video gallery. It is useful for educators and advocates who want to understand the scope of the issues and to see advocacy in action.

- U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI):

<http://refugees.org/resources/>

Provides extensive resources for refugees, immigrants, and the people who support them. The Resource Library includes valuable tools for refugees, employers, lawyers, advocates, and more. The online resource library has manuals, pamphlets, brochures, and more available on a variety of resettlement topics such as cultural orientation, financial literacy, health, family strengthening, etc.

- U.S. Department of State - Refugee Admissions:

<http://www.state.gov/j/prm/ra/>

Provides invaluable background, statistics, and procedural information about refugee resettlement in the U.S. Also provides many links to related information. A must-have tool for educators and advocates in order to understand the admissions process to inform their understanding of the refugee experience.

- Welcome to the USA.gov: <http://www.welcometousa.gov>

For immigrants and refugees who need information about finding a job, learning English, learning about their new home, childcare, personal finance, healthcare, etc. Includes many links to other resources and publications, some of them in English and Spanish.

Note: an English language learner might need support navigating this wordy site.

III. ONLINE ARTICLES AND PAPERS THAT INCLUDE IMPLICATIONS, RESPONSES, AND RESOURCES USEFUL FOR EDUCATORS AND ADVOCATES

- CAELA – Center for Adult English Language Acquisition. (multiple dates)
CAELA is a repository for a number of very good and fully cited papers addressing issues related to best practices for ESL educators who also serve as refugee advocates. At the end of each article are suggestions that include: ways to support second language development; factors to consider in designing programs for refugees; recognizing signs of mental distress; recommended curricular approaches; ways to promote cultural adjustment and mental health; how to become a part of a larger network of providers; and implications for practice that make the classroom safer for all.

Recommended articles can be found through the links below:

http://www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/beginQA.html

http://www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/mental.html

http://www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/trauma2.html

http://www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/Refugee.html

- Trauma and Adult Learning by Sandra Kerka, 2002.

<http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED472601.pdf>

Includes strategies for educators facing symptoms of PTSD in the classroom, such as dissociation and all or nothing reactions. It also

outlines a number of realistic adult education responses to learners dealing with trauma.

IV. BOOKS

- Faltis, C. and Valdes, G. (Eds.). (2010). *Education, Immigrant Students, Refugee Students, and English Learners*. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University.

This book includes several essays and chapters on the issues relevant in the ESL field today. It includes a chapter that “counters the notion of refugee-ness as a condition to overcome in favor of a holistic and action oriented approach to the experiences of refugee students and their families”. The last section presents recommendations for educators.

- Flaitz, J. (2006). *Understanding Your Refugee and Immigrant Students*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.

A good resource that seems well researched. The author focuses on 18 countries that contribute the majority of refugees and immigrants to the United States. She creates country profiles that include statistics, a historical synopsis, overview of the education policy, linguistic systems of the languages, and cultural perspective of each country. In doing so, she creates a developmental snapshot of refugee students that will help educators and advocates understand the cultural background of their students. This volume also features a problem solving section containing classroom strategies. I find the format of this book extremely useful and easy to use. However, I would like to see additional volumes because

very often, my students' home countries are not among the 18 featured. Highly recommended.

- Haines, D.W. (2012). *Safe Haven? A History of Refugees in America*. West Hartford, CT: Kumarian Press.

From the blurb: "The notion of America as land of refuge is vital to American civic consciousness, yet, over the past seventy years the country has had a complicated and sometimes erratic relationship with its refugee populations. Attitudes and actions toward refugees from the government, voluntary organizations, and the general public have ranged from acceptance to rejection; from well-wrought program efforts to botched policy decisions. Drawing on a wide range of contemporary and historical material, *Safe Haven?* provides an integrated portrait of this crucial component of American immigration and of American engagement with the world."

V. VIDEO

- Fleming, M. (2014, October). TED Talk. *How to Help Refugees Rebuild Their World*.

https://www.ted.com/talks/melissa_fleming_let_s_help_refugees_thrive_not_just_survive?language=en

Description provided: "Today's refugee crisis is the biggest since World War II, and it's growing. When this talk was given, 50 million people had been forcefully displaced from their homes by conflict and war; now, a year later, the number is 60 million. There were 3 million Syrian refugees

in 2014; now there are 4 million. Inside this overwhelming crisis are the individual human stories — of care, growth and family, in the face of lost education, lost home, lost future. Melissa Fleming of the UN's refugee agency tells the refugees' stories — and asks us to help them rebuild their world.”