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## Background

A refugee is someone who has been forced to flee their country because of persecution, war, or violence. In the last 5 years, the world's refugee population has increased to nearly 26 million people worldwide, with more than 50% being children under 18 years old.

Approximately 140,000 children are unaccompanied or separated minors. This number is considered a significant underestimate.

Refugees are a vulnerable population. They are at high risk for depression, anxiety, and PTSD due to their traumatic life experiences. Forcibly displaced children are especially at risk for mental health challenges from their experiences of home insecurity, violence, war, family separation, or loss of a loved one during their formative stages of development.

In addition to these already adverse experiences, after resettlement, refugee children must learn a new language, culture, education system, and community. This increases their risk for racial discrimination, bullying, and safety concerns and social isolation.

Fostering safety at school, peer affiliation, and a sense of school belonging are protective factors against depression and improve self-efficacy in refugee children. Continuing school-based programs to foster integration and a sense of belonging in refugee children and adolescents is integral in their success and improving resiliency.

## Goals

1. Link school-aged refugee children to after-school programs or social community programs
2. Provide mentorship in medical careers
3. Improve resiliency and empowerment among refugee children and adolescents
4. Decrease risk of anxiety, depression, and PTSD in school-aged refugee children.
5. Empower refugee children to achieve their dreams

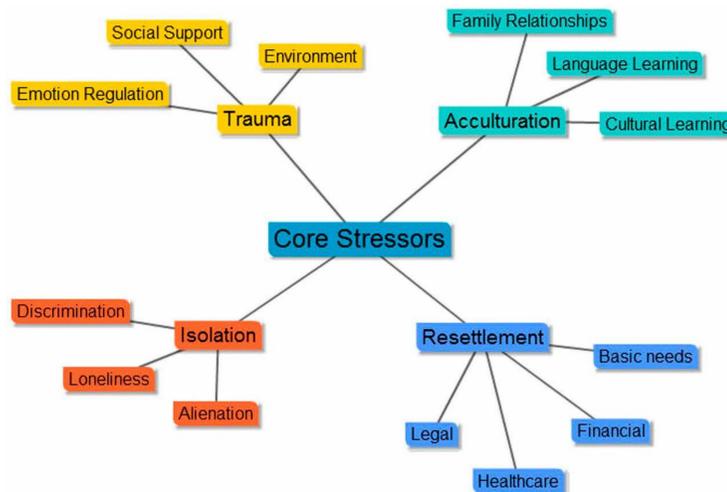
## Objectives

FOR SCHOOL-AGED REFUGEE CHILDREN:

- Improve relationships with peers
- Foster a sense of belonging
- Increase English proficiency
- Aid in acculturation
- Provide fun and safe activities to participate in outside of school

## Relevance

Figure 1: Four core stressors faced by refugee children



Why Rochester students walked out of classes: 'We will be the voice for our schools'



- Rochester City School District budget cuts have led to significant teacher layoffs and also cuts in after-school program funding including programs at Rochester International Academy helping refugee students.

## Methods

- Seek out potential community partners with established after-school or tutoring programs for refugee children
- Attend programs for refugee parents to assess needs of children
- Develop interactive curriculum for school-aged refugee children that discusses/expands on needs addressed by parents & school-aged kids

## Potential Partners



## References

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