

Topic: Education

Activity: School Enrollment and Parental Involvement: A Critical Incident for Use With Darfuri Refugees

Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Participants will understand that school is mandatory for children in the United States✓ Participants will identify ways to become involved in their children's education
Lesson Time	30 minutes
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">☐ Critical incident (included)☐ Optional: Flipchart paper, markers, tape
Introduction	School is mandatory for children ages 6-16 in the United States, and public schools are free. The resettlement agency will make sure parents are helped enrolling their children. Parents in the United States are expected to be involved in their children's education, which will help their children succeed.
Practice	<p>(Note: Change names used in the critical incident to reflect those of your participants.)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Put participants into groups of 2 to 4 and ask each group to choose a spokesperson.2. Read "School Enrollment and Parental Involvement: A Critical Incident for Use With Darfuri Refugees" aloud, pausing after each set of reflection questions.3. In small groups, participants discuss the reflection questions. Listen in on the discussions to check for understanding.4. After the last set of reflection questions, bring the large group together and ask the spokesperson from each group to summarize the main ideas from their group discussions. Discuss as necessary.
Reflection Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What happened in this critical incident?• What can Ohini and Binata* do to help their children succeed in school?• What can they do even if they don't speak English?• How can they help even if they don't understand what their children are studying?
Variations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Give flipchart paper and markers to each small group and have groups draw and present the highlights of their discussions.• If literacy levels allow, prepare flipchart paper with reflection questions for each small group and have groups write and present their answers.• Discuss only one topic covered, or discuss the topics separately to hone in on the two main points: children need to be in school, and parental involvement is important

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and refugee parents should be involved in their children's education.

* This critical incident is based on the real-life experience of resettled refugees. All identifying information has been changed to protect privacy.

School Enrollment and Parental Involvement: A Critical Incident for Use With Darfuri Refugees

Ohini and Binata* arrive in the United States with their children, ages 6, 12, and 16. From their Cultural Orientation classes in Chad, they know that education is mandatory and public education is free in the United States. They are not sure how to enroll their children in school. Their caseworker in the United States mentioned school at their first meeting, but they don't remember what he said.

Stop and reflect:

- What should Ohini and Binata do?
- Who should they talk to?

Ohini and Binata ask their caseworker, who helps them enroll their 6-year-old in an elementary school, their 12-year-old in a middle school, and their 16-year-old in a high school.

They ask school staff what else they need to do. The teachers say that parental involvement is very important. It will help their children do better in school. Ohini and Binata think this is valuable, but do not know how to get involved.

Stop and reflect:

- Who should they talk to?
- What are some ways they can support their children's education?

Ohini and Binata talk to their neighbor who has an 8- and 10-year-old. The neighbor suggests regular bedtimes, so the children get enough rest. Their 12-year-old's teacher advises Ohini and Binata to ask their children what they are learning in school and how their days are going. Their caseworker recommends making sure their children are doing their homework and are asking the teacher if they have questions.

Stop and reflect:

- What can Ohini and Binata do to help their children succeed in school?
- What can they do even if they don't speak English?
- How can they help even if they don't understand what their children are studying?

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