



THE CENTER ON
IMMIGRATION
AND CHILD WELFARE

TRAUMA IN IMMIGRANT & REFUGEE POPULATIONS

RESOURCE LIST

November 2019

This document provides a list of vetted resources that explain the risk of trauma in immigrant and refugee groups, responses and strategies to mitigate the impact of trauma in the context of the political environment in the U.S., and tools for agencies and individual providers use in practice with immigrant and refugee families.

FACT SHEETS & BRIEFS

- **Immigrant Families Across the Life Course: Policy Impact on Physical and Mental Health (2019)**
Colleen K. Vesely, Ph.D., Diamond Y. Bravo, Ph.D., and Mariana T. Guzzardo, Ph.D., *National Council on Family Relations* https://www.ncfr.org/sites/default/files/2019-07/Immigrant_Families_Policy_Brief_July_23_2019.pdf This brief, details mental health (e.g., stress, trauma) and physical health (e.g., nutrition, chronic conditions) impacts of policies focused on immigrants and immigration across the life course.
- **Fact Sheet: The Trauma of Childhood Separation (2018)** Megan J. Wolff. *Cornell University* http://psych-history.weill.cornell.edu/pdf/Trauma_of_Separation.pdf
This fact sheet details the medical aspects of the trauma of child separation. It's intended to be of use for journalists, policymakers, lawyers, and anyone else interested or involved in the issue.
- **Supporting Children and Parents Affected by the Trauma of Separation (2018)** Jessica Dym Bartlett; Maria A. Ramos-Olazagasti. *National Research Center on Hispanic Children & Families* <http://www.hispanicresearchcenter.org/publications/supporting-children-and-parents-affected-by-the-trauma-of-separation/>
This brief provides research-based guidance for parents, service providers, communities, and policymakers regarding children and parents affected by the trauma of separation.
- **Children with Traumatic Separation: Information for Professionals (2016)** *National Child Traumatic Stress Network* <https://www.nctsn.org/resources/children-traumatic-separation-information-professionals>
This fact sheet provides suggestions for helping children who experience traumatic separation from a caregiver. It examines how many children experience the loss of a caregiver, either permanently due to death, or for varying amounts of time due to other circumstances.
- **Mitigating the Effects of Trauma among Young Children of Immigrants and Refugees: The Role of Early Childhood Programs (2019)** Maki Park and Caitlin Katsiaficas. *Migration Policy Institute* <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/mitigating-effects-trauma-young-children-immigrants-refugees>
This brief explores the types of trauma that may affect young children in immigrant families, what the effects of those experiences may be, and what can be done to protect children against them.

● **Unaccompanied Migrant Children** *The National Child Traumatic Stress Network* (2014)

https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/unaccompanied_migrant_children.pdf

This resource provides an overview of working with unaccompanied minors and the unique nature of the trauma they may have experienced. Reviewed are symptoms or behaviors unaccompanied minors may display, cultural considerations for providers, and additional resources.

REPORTS

● **Uprooted in Central America and Mexico: Migrant and refugee children face a vicious cycle of hardship and danger** (2018) *UNICEF* https://www.unicef.org/publications/files/UNICEF_Child_Alert_2018_Central_America_and_Mexico.pdf

[2018 Central America and Mexico.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/publications/files/UNICEF_Child_Alert_2018_Central_America_and_Mexico.pdf)

This report examines the root causes of irregular migration from northern Central America and Mexico, and the challenges faced by migrant and refugee children throughout the migration journey. It concludes with a call to action to protect the safety and well-being of these youth.

● **Trauma and Mental Health Needs of Immigrant Minors, Part 1** (2015) *The National Child Traumatic Stress*

Network https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/spotlight_on_culture_trauma_mental_health_needs_immigrant_minors_part_one.pdf

This article is part I of a series of articles in the Spotlight on Culture addressing the mental health needs of immigrant youth. It offers information on the delivery of trauma-informed services to immigrant children who cross the border into the United States unaccompanied by parents or protective adults.

● **Trauma and Mental Health Needs of Immigrant Minors, Part 2** (2015) *The National Child Traumatic Stress*

Network https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/spotlight_on_culture_trauma_mental_health_needs_immigrant_minors_part_two.pdf

This article is part 2 in a series of the Spotlight on Culture that provides information about the trauma and the mental health needs of immigrant minors. It addresses the mental health needs of immigrant minors during their resettlement process and integration into American schools.

● **For Immigrant Families, Language Opens Door to Healing from Trauma** (2012) *The National Child Traumatic*

Stress Network https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/spotlight_on_culture_immigrant_families_language_opens_door_to_healing_from_trauma.pdf

This article outlines the use of language as a door to healing from trauma for many immigrant families. This Spotlight on Culture discusses trauma and culture, and the barrier that language may have on access to quality care.

● **Working with Immigrant Latin-American Families Exposed to Trauma** (2011) *The National Child Traumatic Stress*

Network https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/spotlight_on_culture_working_immigrant_latin_american_families_exposed_to_trauma.pdf

An article that describes how to use Child-Parent Psychotherapy (CPP) with immigrant Latin American families exposed to trauma. This Spotlight on Culture offers information on assisting with problems of living, case management, and crisis intervention; providing reflective, unstructured, and developmental guidance; as well as attending to a family's cultural norms and values.

● **Adaptation Guidelines for Serving Latino Children and Families Affected by Trauma** (2008) *Chadwick Center for*

Children and Families <https://safehousingpartnerships.org/sites/default/files/2017-01/Adaptation%20Guidelines%20for%20Serving%20Latino%20Children%20and%20Families%20Affected%20by%20Trauma.pdf>

This publication addresses a number of priority areas to fit the needs of traumatized Latino children and families.

RESEARCH

- **Kicks Hurt Less: Discrimination Predicts Distress Beyond Trauma Among Undocumented Mexican Immigrants** (2018) Luz M. Garcini, Michelle A. Chen, Ryan L. Brown, Thania Galvan, Levi Saucedo, Jodi A. Berger Cardoso, Christopher P. Fagundes, *American Psychological Association* <https://cpb-us-e1.wpmucdn.com/blogs.rice.edu/dist/1/4371/files/2018/11/2018-37938-001-1-1ikb2g8.pdf> This study aimed to assess for the prevalence of interpersonal discrimination among undocumented Mexican immigrants residing in high-risk neighborhoods near the California–Mexico border, identify relevant vulnerabilities, and determine its association with clinically significant psychological distress after controlling for sociodemographics, immigration characteristics, and history of trauma.
- **Immigration Policy, Practices, and Procedures: The Impact on the Mental Health of Mexican and Central American Youth and Families** (2018) Stephanie Torres, Catherine Santiago, Katherine Walts, Maryse Richards <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/29504782>

This paper reviews current immigration policies for arriving Mexican and Central American immigrants and links to mental health among documented and undocumented immigrant families and youth.
- **Running to Stand Still: Trauma Symptoms, Coping Strategies, and Substance Use Behaviors in Unaccompanied Migrant Youth** (2018) Jodi Berger Cardoso, *Children and Youth Services Review* <http://cimmcw.org/wp-content/uploads/Running-to-Stand-Still-2018.pdf>

This study explores the frequency of posttraumatic stress disorder, depression, suicidal ideation, and substance use, trauma exposure at pre-migration, migration, and post-migration, and how youth may cope with these adversities among unaccompanied migrant youth.
- **Applying a Community Violence Framework to Understand the Impact of Immigration Enforcement Threat on Latino Children** (2018) Gabriela Barajas- Gonzalez, Cecilia Ayón, Franco Torres, *Society for Research in Child Development* <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/sop2.1>

This paper draws on literature from psychology, sociology, medicine, political science, social work, and developmental psychology to outline how the anti-immigrant climate in the U.S. and the threat of immigration enforcement activities in everyday spaces are experienced by some Latino children as psychological violence.
- **Trauma and Psychological Distress in Latino Citizen Children Following Parental Detention and Deportation** (2017) Rojas-Flores, L., Clements, M. L., Koo, J. H., & London, J. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy* <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/27504961>

This study explores the mental health impact of parental detention and deportation on U.S. citizen children as potentially traumatic events that may cause post-traumatic stress disorder and psychological distress.
- **Pre-Migration Trauma Exposure and Mental Health Functioning among Central American Migrants Arriving at the US Border** (2017) Allen Keller, Amy Joscelyne, Megan Granski, and Barry Rosenfeld, *PLOS ONE* <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0168692>

This study examines pre-migration trauma exposure and current mental health status of migrant families arriving at the U.S. border from the Northern Triangle region, with a focus on why they left their home country and the frequency of qualifying for asylum.

- **Needs Assessments: Trauma-Informed Services for Refugee/Immigrant Children and Families (2017)** *The Illinois Childhood Trauma Coalition's Ad-Hoc Committee on Refugee and Immigrant Children and Trauma*
https://www.ilrmh.org/uploads/5/1/9/2/51926379/ictc-ric_report_final.pdf

This report presents findings on mental health services, cultural competency and quality of staff training related to language, cultural, time and institutional barriers. It highlights the gaps in training, areas for development and recommends future training materials.

- **The Burden of Deportation on Children in Mexican Immigrant Families (2012)** Joanna Dreby. *Journal of Marriage and Family*. <https://lawprofessors.typepad.com/files/jmfdeportationpyramidl.pdf>.

This article looks at the impact enforcement policies have had on Mexican families more broadly and children specifically. This author explores and explains the short-term and long-term impact of deportation and immigration enforcement on children in Mexican immigrant families.

DIRECT PRACTICE RESOURCES

- **Cecilia and the Long Walk (2018)** Julie Ribaud, Sara Stein, Paige Safyer, Maja Rosenblum-Muzik, and Julie Ribaud <http://cimmcw.org/wp-content/uploads/Cecilia-and-the-Long-Walk-Final-English.pdf>

This is a child friendly resource to use with reunified children and parents, available both in English and Spanish. These coloring books may help parents help their children through the transition and reunification and process the traumatic experience of separation and may be especially helpful for those agencies that are on the front lines helping to reunify children and parents. This resource was developed by experts in infant mental health and child development at the University of Michigan.

- **Traumatic Separation and Refugee and Immigrant Children: Tips for Current Caregivers (2018)** *The National Child Traumatic Stress Network* <https://www.nctsn.org/resources/traumatic-separation-and-refugee-and-immigrant-children-tips-current-caregivers>

This tip sheet provides information for current caregivers and others to help address the needs of immigrant and refugee children who have experienced traumatic separation. Included are talking points to guide caregivers when addressing depression, anxiety, or separation-related traumatic stress symptoms that children may develop in response to traumatic separation.

- **Traumatic Separation in Children and Adolescents (2017)** (Webinar) *National Child Traumatic Stress Network* <https://www.nctsn.org/resources/traumatic-separation-children-and-adolescents>

This webinar describes the impact of traumatic separation and attachment disruption on children and adolescents. Perspectives are shared from the child welfare system; including from clinicians, former foster youth, and biological and foster parents.

- **A Social Worker's Toolkit for Working With Immigrant Families (2015)** <http://cimmcw.org/wp-content/uploads/Trauma-Immigrant-Families.pdf>

This toolkit provides guidelines that are designed to assist child welfare and other community-based agencies working with children and families respond to the needs of immigrant families exposed to child maltreatment, domestic violence, community violence and current sources of traumatic stress.

WEBSITE

- **Refugee Trauma** *The National Child Traumatic Stress Network* (n.d.) <https://www.nctsn.org/what-is-child-trauma/trauma-types/refugee-trauma>

This website includes various resources about Refugees and Refugee Trauma, including basic definitions, a description of refugee core stressors, and recommendations related to screening, assessment, and intervention. Information and resources are available for multiple audiences including mental health professionals, healthcare providers, school personnel, policy makers, and more.