

Topic: Cultural Adjustment/Education

Activity: Reaching Out for Advice: A Critical Incident for Use With African Refugees

Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Participants will consider some challenges children may face in the United States✓ Participants will determine who to ask for help regarding the well-being of their children✓ Participants will identify ways to help their children overcome challenges
Lesson Time	30 minutes
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Critical incident (included)<input type="checkbox"/> Optional: Flipchart paper, markers, tape
Introduction	Everyone adjusts to life in the United States differently, children included. Some children may find learning English easy, some may find it different. Children may also feel lonely and scared about making friends. It is important for a parent to help their children do well both in school and socially. Identifying resources to help support your children may be essential.
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 “Reaching Out for Advice: A Critical Incident for Use With African 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 Sharifa* do to help her children?• What are some things you could do if you were Sharifa?
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.

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Reaching Out for Advice: A Critical Incident for Use With African Refugees

Sharifa* arrived in the United States six months ago. While she knew it would be hard to find a job in the United States, she was excited about the opportunities for her children. She was happy for the free public education system in the United States. With help from her case manager, Sharifa enrolled her three children in school.

Stop and reflect:

- Why was Sharifa excited about enrolling her children in school?
- Who did she ask for help?

While working with her case manager to find a job, Sharifa talked with her children about their new school regularly. She was happy that they were learning English so quickly and enjoying their studies. However, they were having trouble making friends.

Stop and reflect:

- What was going well for Sharifa's children?
- What were their challenges?
- What would you do if you were Sharifa?

Sharifa talked to her case manager, who suggested she discuss the matter with her children's teachers. She did so. One teacher paired Sharifa's son with a friend to help him learn the school system and get more involved in class. Another suggested getting her children involved in some extracurricular activities such as the school newspaper or a school soccer team. The third recommended a local recreational center in which some of Sharifa's daughter's classmates spent time outside school.

Stop and reflect:

- What can Sharifa do to help her children?
- What are some things you could do if you were Sharifa?

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