Providing Emotional Support for Immigrant Communities During COVID-19 in 200 Words

Family & Community Health

Date Posted:

Jun 10, 2021

Difficult and stressful events are common in life. Unfortunately, getting help is not.

Nearly 1 in 10 resettled refugees are affected by post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and even though we know treatment is helpful and effective for adults with different trauma histories, preferred languages and cultural backgrounds, those in refugee and newcomer communities face many challenges in accessing mental health care.

Barriers include lack of information about existing services, fear and stigma, and insufficient use of interpreters and translators within the mental health system. Many of these issues have been amplified by the pandemic as isolation has made it more difficult to share information about emotional wellness and mental health providers have faced new challenges integrating language access with telehealth.

During this difficult time, refugee community leaders have played an even more critical role in reducing stigma, sharing information, and helping others in their communities navigate access to mental health care. That's why, as part of our Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute-supported project, our team of experts in mental health and wellness, refugee community services, and primary care are sharing resources and strategies for community leaders who are assisting refugee community members experiencing increased stress or trauma during the pandemic through a series of webinars.

Through these recorded virtual events, we hope to increase provider and community awareness of resources available to help immigrant families cope with stress to improve not only the well-being of individuals but also of their children.

Our webinars are available in English (with ASL), Arabic and Nepali on this **YouTube playlist**. Webinars in Burmese and Swahili are coming soon. You can also find a list of resources for refugee community leaders **here**.

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This post is part of our "____ in 200 Words" series. In this series, we tackle issues related to children's health policy and explain and connect you to resources to help understand them further, all in 200 words. If you have any suggestions for a topic in this series, please send a note to PolicyLab's Strategic Operations & Communications Director Lauren Walens.

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