

# The Refugee Health Orientation Continuum: Overseas and Domestic Perspectives

## *Introductions:*

Sanja Bebic, Director, Cultural Orientation Resource Center, Center for Applied Linguistics

Jennifer Cochran, Director, Massachusetts Refugee and Immigrant Health Program

## *Overseas Panelists:*

Peter Salnikowski, Cultural Orientation Program Coordinator, International Organization for Migration Nepal

Sarah Krause, Cultural Orientation Regional Coordinator, Church World Service/Resettlement Support Center Sub-Saharan Africa

Jamal Al-Fakhouri, Regional Cultural Orientation Coordinator, International Organization for Migration Amman

Jason Crislip, Cultural Orientation Coordinator, International Rescue Committee/Resettlement Support Center East Asia

## *Domestic Panelists:*

Leslie Douglass, Health Educator, Colorado Refugee Health Program

Elizabeth Edghill, BA, RN, BSN, Refugee Health Educator/Coordinator, Family Health Centers – Americana, Louisville, KY

# Overseas Orientation: Locations

Headquarters:

Africa: Kenya

Near East & South Asia:

Jordan

Nepal

Turkey

Southeast Asia: Thailand

Europe: Russia

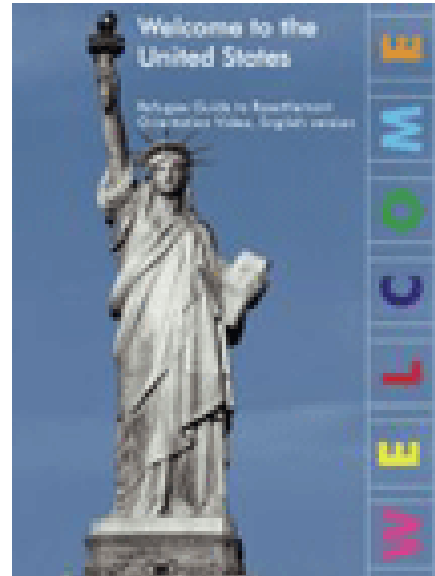
Austria



# Overseas Orientation: Topics

## Eleven essential topics:

- ▶ Pre-Arrival Processing
- ▶ The Resettlement Agency
- ▶ Community Services
- ▶ Housing
- ▶ Transportation
- ▶ Employment
- ▶ Education
- ▶ Health
- ▶ Managing Money
- ▶ Rights and Responsibilities
- ▶ Cultural Adjustment







# **IOM Nepal CO**

**Cultural Adjustment  
and Mental Health**















**3 Glasses of Water...**  
**...with oil, orange juice, sugar.**



Attitudes: Passive, Aggressive, or Pro-active and Polite?









**Strict or Flexible?**





**NO!!!**









**Bhutanese granny in Nepal**  
भूटानी बृद्धहरू  
नेपालमा

**Grandfather / grandmother**  
हजुरबुवा / हजुरआमा



**American elderly in America**  
अमेरीकामा अमेरिकन बृद्धहरू



**Bhutanese elderly in America**  
अमेरीकामा भूटानी बृद्धहरू

Washes the dishes  
अन्न धोउनु गर्छिन्

Cooks meals  
खाना पकाउनु गर्छिन्

Clean the house  
घर सफा राख्ने गर्छिन्

Shops for food  
बाजारमा गएर खाना खरिद गर्छिन्

Cares for children  
बच्चालाई हेरेर राख्छिन्

Shops for food  
बाजारमा गएर खाना खरिद गर्छिन्

Washes the dishes  
अन्न धोउनु गर्छिन्

Cooks meals  
खाना पकाउनु गर्छिन्

Clean the house  
घर सफा राख्ने गर्छिन्

Makes repairs around the house  
घरमा बिचोल्न सज्जना गर्छिन्

Takes care of children  
बच्चालाई हेरेर राख्छिन्

Takes care of children  
बच्चालाई हेरेर राख्छिन्

Clean the house  
घर सफा राख्ने गर्छिन्

Handles money  
धरौं चलाउनु गर्छिन्





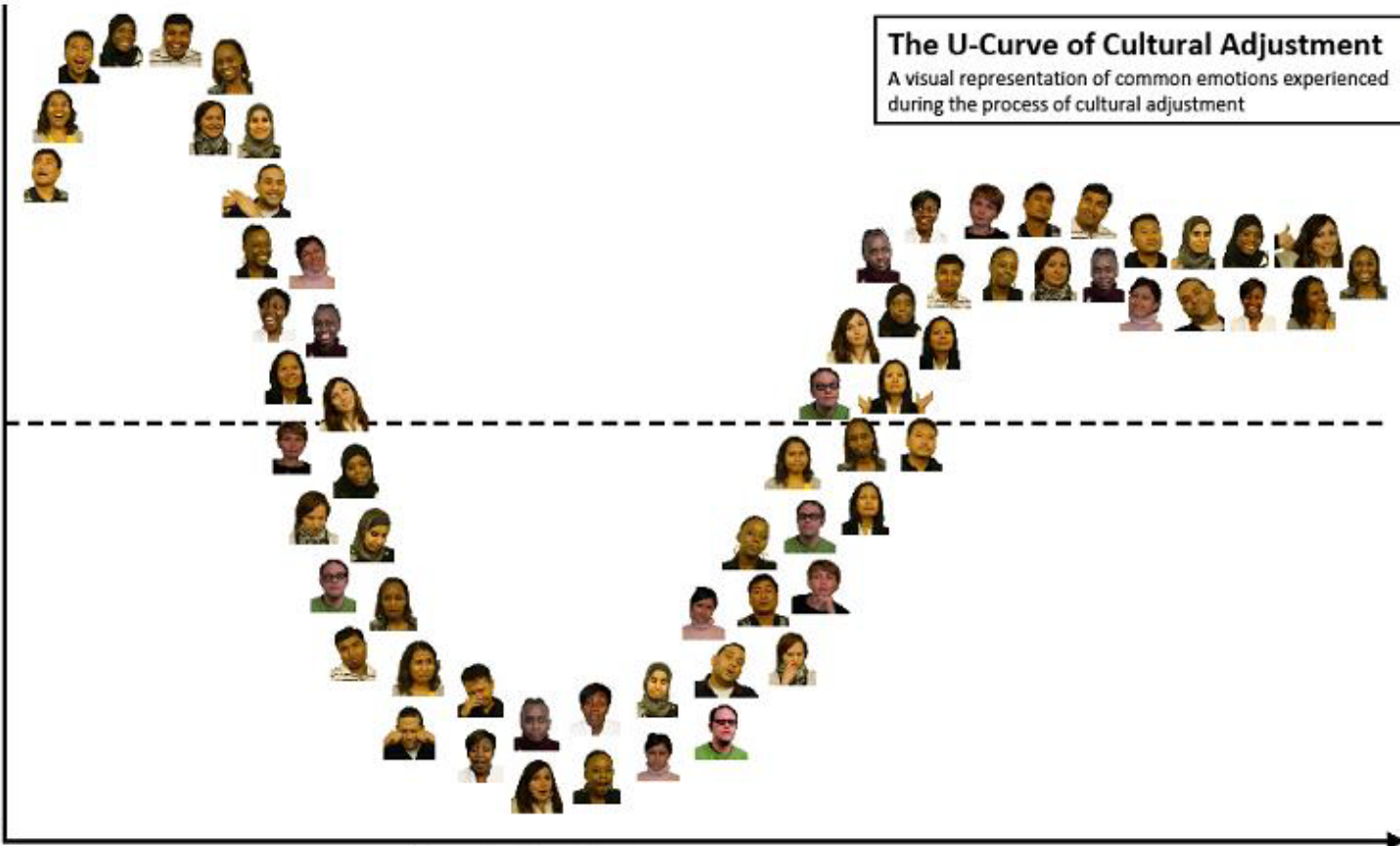


High

Level of Happiness

Low

**The U-Curve of Cultural Adjustment**  
A visual representation of common emotions experienced during the process of cultural adjustment



Time in New Environment

OR Cultural Orientation  
Resource Center

Culture Shock!



**Culture shock: red means danger!**



As a result of Bhutanese suicides in the US...

# IOM Nepal Culture Shock Video



A Bhutanese family arrives in the US...



**At first, everything is wonderful!!!**





**Dil Maya writes to a friend...what a great place!**

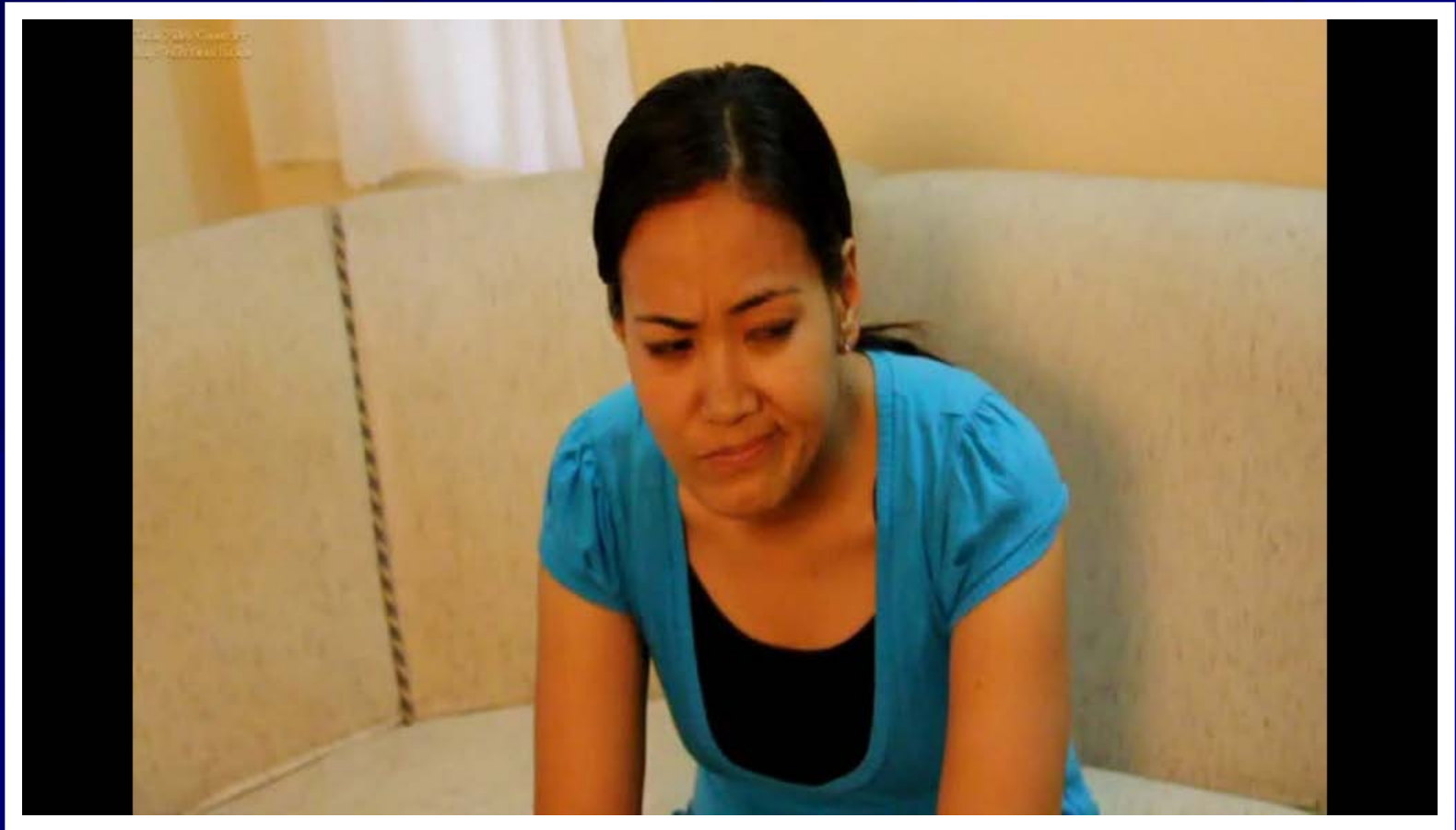
# Stop the film!

What happens next?





**The caseworker says: “you need to get a job...”**



**...but Dil Maya wants to go to school...**





**Granny has been depressed...**



**And Kishor is in trouble at school.**





**Father gives up learning English...**



**...and now he's drinking!**





**Dil Maya gets a job...  
...but is she happy?**



**She writes home again.**



**The activity ends in a role play...**

## **What must this family do to come to a happy ending?**

- Expect difficulties; it's normal (this will happen to us).**
- Each person in the family must take responsibility.**
- Talk to each other and support each other.**

# In the IOM Transit Center...







# Challenges

- **Lack of time**
- **Relatives in U.S. say there is no problem**
- **Can't change a lifetime's attitudes in a few hours**





**Church World Service**

# Program Administration



- Administered by CWS/RSC Nairobi
- Trainers experienced in intercultural communication and education, with a collective proficiency in English, Somali and Kiswahili







# Cultural Orientation Objectives



- To inform participants of the processes and systems that will impact on their resettlement to the United States;
- To assist participants in developing realistic expectations of the US;
- To equip participants with the skills and attitudes necessary to enable them to have a positive acculturation experience



© Amina Egal



# Information Throughout the Process



- In the camps
- At RSC interviews
- At Cultural Orientation training sessions



# CO Training Structure



- Standard CO
  - 3 working days; 6 hours per day
  - Targets those 15 years and above
- Chad CO
  - 5 working days; 6 hours per day
  - CO for children/youth as well as for adults
- Somali Youth CO
  - Standard CO + 1 working day; 6 hours
  - Targets those ages 15 - 26
- URM CO
  - A minimum of 3 working days; 1 hour per day



# Training Content



- U.S. Overview
- Pre-Arrival Processing
- Resettlement Agency
- Community Services
- Housing
- Employment
- Financial Literacy
- Transportation
- Education
- **Health**
- Cultural Adjustment
- Travel
- Rights and Responsibilities
- U.S. Law





# Health Unit Objectives



- U.S. health care
- Standards for basic hygiene
- Importance of bringing an initial supply of medications and relevant prescriptions
- Initial health screenings and immunizations
- Limit to extensive health care in initial weeks of resettlement



# Training Methods



- Visual aids
- Videos
- Activities
- Lecture
- Working models



**Waxyaabaha soo socda hadii aad wadatid, fadlan waxaad gelisa boorsada yar ee 5ta kiilo ah.** 

If you have any of the following items, place them IN YOUR 5 KG BAG

 **Daawo (uu takhtarka soo qoray) oo logu talagalaya 30ka beri ee ugu horeysa**  
Medicine (with Doctor's Prescription) for First 30 Days

 **Caday iyo daawada lagu cadayada**  
Toothbrush & Toothpaste

 **Suufka dumarka caadada qaba ay xirtaan**  
Sanitary Pads

 **Caana kugu filan oo ah kuwa caruurta yaryarka ee naaska hooyo aan haysan, si aad goobta ula gaartid**  
Enough Breast Milk / Baby Formula to Reach Your Destination

 **Waxyaabaha qiimaha leh (sida dahabka)**  
Valuables

 **Dharka dheeriga ah**  
Change of Clothes

 **Xafaayadaha**  
Diapers

 **Lacagaha**  
Money

 **Cadarka (wixii aan ka badnayn 50ml)**  
Deodorant (No More than 50 ML)

# Activity: “What’s in the Bag?”



- Activity Objectives:
  - To educate participants regarding standards for U.S. hygiene
  - To educate participants regarding potential consequences of not adopting those standards



CWS/RSC Nairobi

[culturalorientation@cws-rscnairobi.org](mailto:culturalorientation@cws-rscnairobi.org)



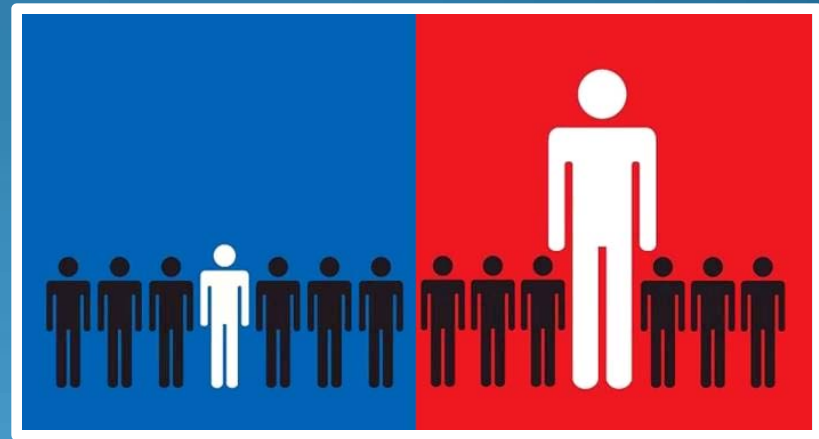
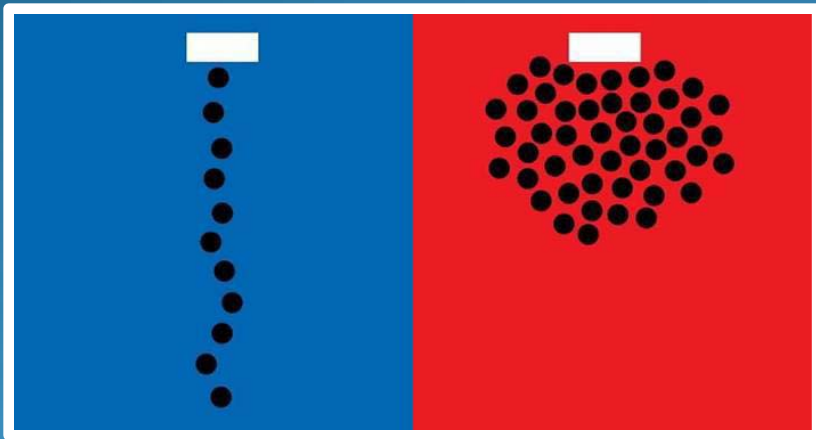
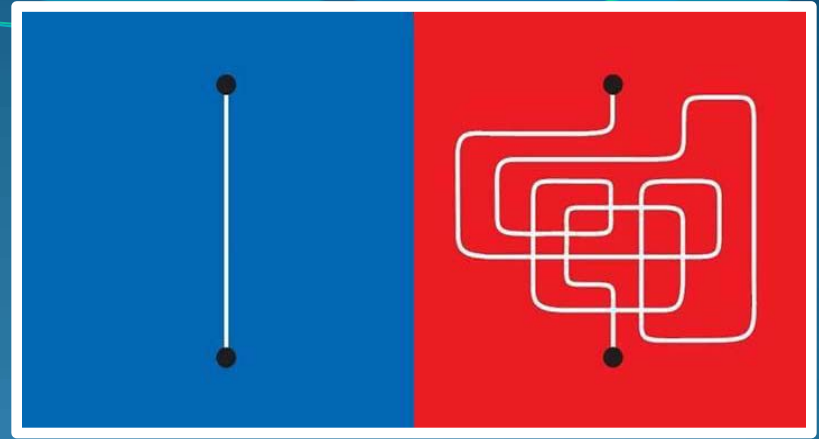


**MANAGING EXPECTATIONS  
AND  
FORMING  
HELPFUL ATTITUDES  
TOWARD RESETTLEMENT**

# *Are You In Danger of Culture Shock?*







**What do East <-> West cultural differences look like?**



# Social Core Values



**YOUR CASEWORKER???**



**AIRPORT RECEPTION**



**ASSIST IN FINDING A JOB**

# US Services Matching Game





# Housing Expectations



# 3 Glasses of Water

How do YOU  
feel about  
integration?

## WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

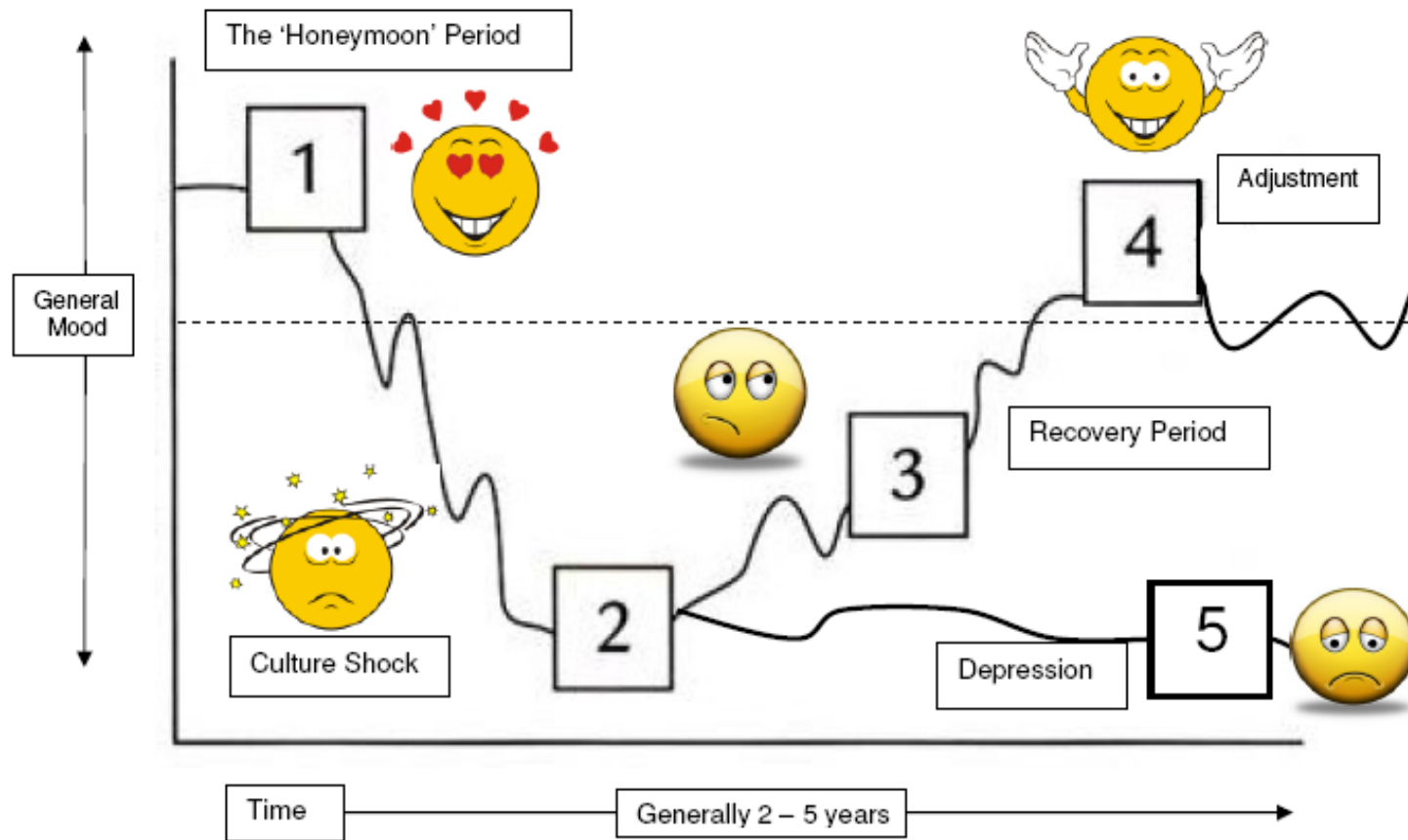
Moving to a new culture can cause considerable stress on your family. What would you do in the following situations?

1. Your 13-year-old son, Ahmed, comes home from school and tells you he wants to change his name to Andy. The other kids are laughing at him, calling him rude names. Ahmed is his deceased grandfather's name.
2. Your children refuse to speak to you in your language. They insist on using English. You feel that, little by little, they are forgetting their language and culture. Your children never bring their friends home; they are ashamed of their parents with their poor command of the language and their old country ways.
3. Your 16-year-old daughter wants to put on make-up and wear a short skirt. This is unheard of in your culture. She cries that all the girls at school dress this way and she won't have any friends if you don't allow her to have her way.

**Family Situations**  
**What would YOU do?**



## STAGES OF CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT



# Stages of Cultural Adaptation

# Introduction to Health Topic



- Dangers of fast food
- Importance of exercise
- Med. Coverage in US
- Need for prescriptions
- Emergency: 911
- Medicare for seniors
- Risks of having no insurance

# Preventative Health & Hygiene Topics in Cultural Orientation: IRC RSC East Asia





# Preventative Health

## Healthy Living Tic Tac Toe



# Preventative Health Class Discussion



# Preventative Health

## Tic Tac Toe





# Preventative Health Tic Tac Toe



# Hygiene

## The Hygiene Kit



# Hygiene

## The Hygiene Kit





# Hygiene

## The Hygiene Kit



# Hygiene

## The Hygiene Kit



# From overseas to the United States....

Leslie Douglass, Health Educator, Colorado Refugee Health Program

Elizabeth Edghill, BA, RN, BSN, Refugee Health Educator/Coordinator, Family Health Centers – Americana, Louisville, KY



# Domestic Health Orientation





# Objectives

- Present a brief overview of the current methods used for carrying out domestic health orientation.
- Discuss the challenges in providing domestic health orientation.
- Promote ideas for future collaboration and educational opportunities.



# The Big Picture

- Method, topics and amount of time covered vary dramatically from state to state, clinic to clinic, and resettlement agency to resettlement agency.
- We will cover in the upcoming slides:
  - Methods and topics
  - Time spent on health orientation:
    - 15 minutes to 3 hours



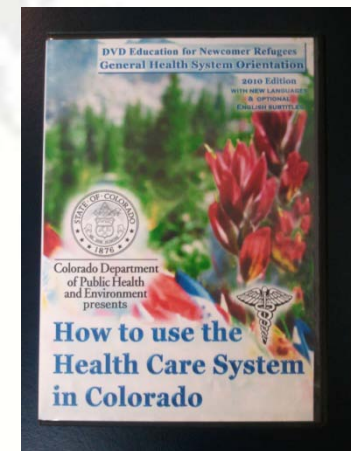
# Service Providers

- Resettlement agencies- case managers and/or health coordinators
- ESL classes/centers
- Refugee health clinics
- Community healthcare providers
- Partner agencies
  - Resident programs/medical students
- Mixed models



# Orientation Materials and Methods

- Individual or family intake meetings @ resettlement agency
  - Assess medical concerns
  - Medications
  - Interest in family planning
  - Mental health needs
- Power Point presentations
- Videos
  - In the native language of client
  - In English



- Small group teaching/learning sessions typically by ethnic population and language
- Large group teaching/learning sessions with multiple interpreters
- Manuals for staff who work with refugees





- Handouts

- USCRI translated documents
- Documents created/translated in-house
- Health binders

- Field Trips


- Pharmacy

- Health Navigators





# Health Orientation Themes

- 
1. General health orientation/Overview of US health care system
  2. Population/language group-based
  3. Health topic-based



# Topics Addressed

- What to expect at the initial refugee health screening; when, where, why should you go
- Health Insurance (RMA, Medicaid, Private Insurance); Medical bills
- Healthcare system overview
- Using 911
- Roles and responsibilities of patients, providers, and case managers
- How to make appointments; How to find a PCP
- Preventative health topics
- Immunizations



# Topics Addressed (cont.)

- Family Planning
- Mental Health
- Dental
- Vision
- Nutrition
- Specific health issues a client is experiencing
- Domestic violence
- Hand washing
- Bed bugs/scabies
- Caring for sick family members
- Medication management; OTC medicine



# Timing

- A few days after arrival
- A few months after arrival
- Several times throughout new arrival period, often by various providing agencies and through various mediums.



# Challenges to Quality Orientations

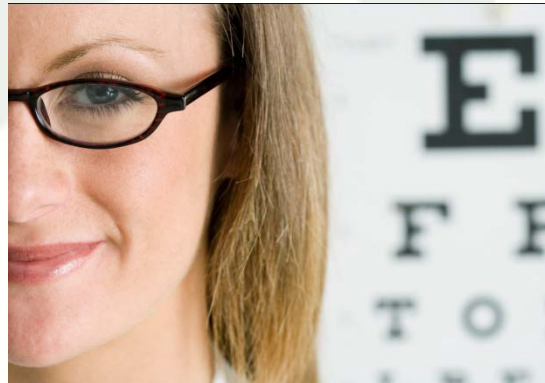
- Lack of time for orientation
- Reaching everyone
- Complexity of US health care system
- US health system changes frequently





# Challenges to Quality Orientations

- Variations in services across states
- Lack of primary care resources at local level (mismatch between advice given and reality)
- Limited insurance coverage (Dental & Vision)
- Transportation (orientations don't always address practical needs)



# Challenges (cont.)

- Basic information dissemination programs
- Minor impact? (Despite time invested, using quality translated and tested resources)
- Difficult to tailor
- Limited financial and staff resources





# Future Directions

- Possibly cover less information, but cover it in a more meaningful way
- Recognize that refugees may learn more by doing
- Research into when in the resettlement process refugees may learn best
- Move toward CHW or Health Navigator-based programs (Refugees may learn best from peers)



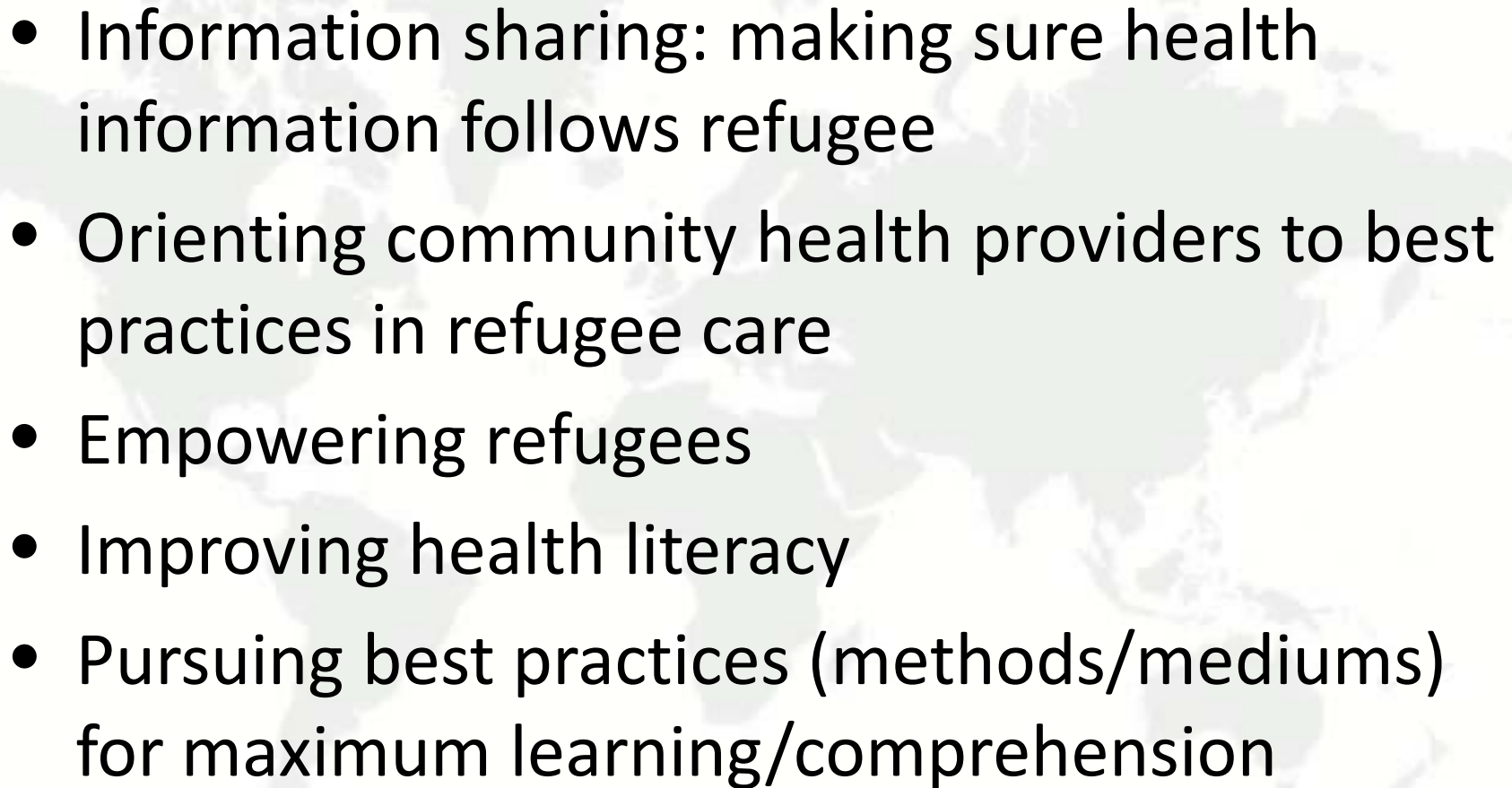
# Preparing the CHW and Patient Navigator Work Force



Outreach Worker Training Institute, a program of Central MA AHEC, Inc. Individuals pictured are CHWs and Patient Navigators.



# Other Considerations

- 
- Information sharing: making sure health information follows refugee
  - Orienting community health providers to best practices in refugee care
  - Empowering refugees
  - Improving health literacy
  - Pursuing best practices (methods/mediums) for maximum learning/comprehension

# Questions?

Please send to the “Chat” box:

For the CO Coordinators:

1. What’s the one health-related key message you’d like refugees to understand prior to coming to the U.S.?

For the domestic panelists:

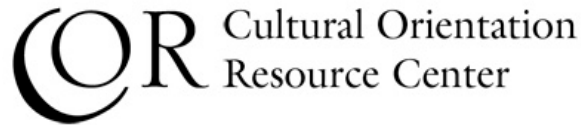
1. Do you have a promising practice or innovative strategy?  
(Leave your email!)

Please send to the “Questions” box:

Any questions you have for the overseas or domestic panelists!



# For more information....



See [www.culturalorientation.net](http://www.culturalorientation.net)

for orientation curricula/lesson plans, information on overseas CO programs and incoming refugee groups, and other resources

Write [COR@CAL.org](mailto:COR@CAL.org) to join “Refugee Discussion” or to request assistance



See [www.refugeehealthta.org](http://www.refugeehealthta.org)

for information on refugee health care needs, topic-specific resources, access to upcoming and archived webinars, and so on

Write [refugeehealthta@jsi.com](mailto:refugeehealthta@jsi.com) for assistance