Teaching the Refugee Newcomer Student

Welcome

Objectives:

- EXPLORE REFUGEE/IMMIGRANT INTAKE
- IDENTIFY & MITIGATE KEY SYMPTOMS OF TRAUMATIC STRESS IN THE SCHOOL SETTING

Hello!

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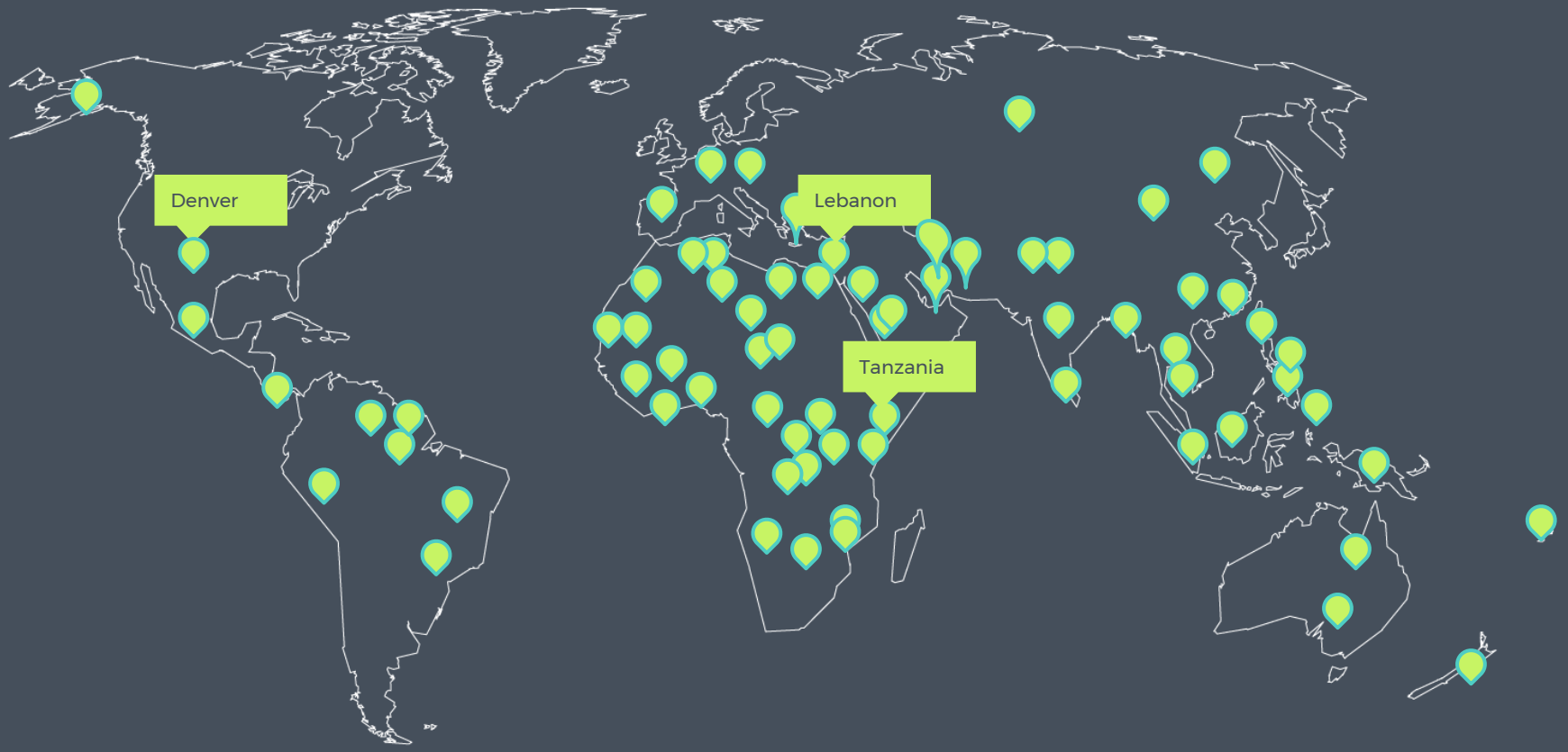
Author: *The Newcomer Student: An Educator's Guide to Aid Transitions*
(Rowman & Littlefield International Press, 2016)

refugeeclassroom.com

Role

To guide districts, schools and teachers in defining and refining exceptional Newcomer/ELL programming and to effectively connect school and community resources.

Demographics



1.

Refugee Intake: by the Numbers

Let’s start with the facts.

A refugee is defined as one whom,

"owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country."

UNHCR Geneva Convention, 1954

65,300,000

Globally displaced persons, 2016

21.3 million

Refugees in the world (UNHCR 2016)

Less than

0.05%

Percentage of global refugees departed for third party resettlement/year

Global Countries Accepting Refugees

Refugee Intake in the U.S.

Each fiscal year, the United States issues a "Presidential Determination" on refugee admissions.

Presidential Determination ceilings have declined significantly since the 1980s.

From 2000 to present, the U.S. has maintained historical lows in refugee intake and resettlement.

U.S. Refugee Admissions

	Presidential Quota	Actual Admission	Difference
1980	**231,700**	**207,116**	**30, 584**
1999	**91,000**	**85,525**	**5,475**
2006	**70,000**	**41,223**	**28,777**

Admissions ceiling

- 2016
  President Obama increased the ceiling:

  70,000 to 85,000.

- 2017
  President Trump reduced the ceiling:

  85,000 to 50,000.

Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration

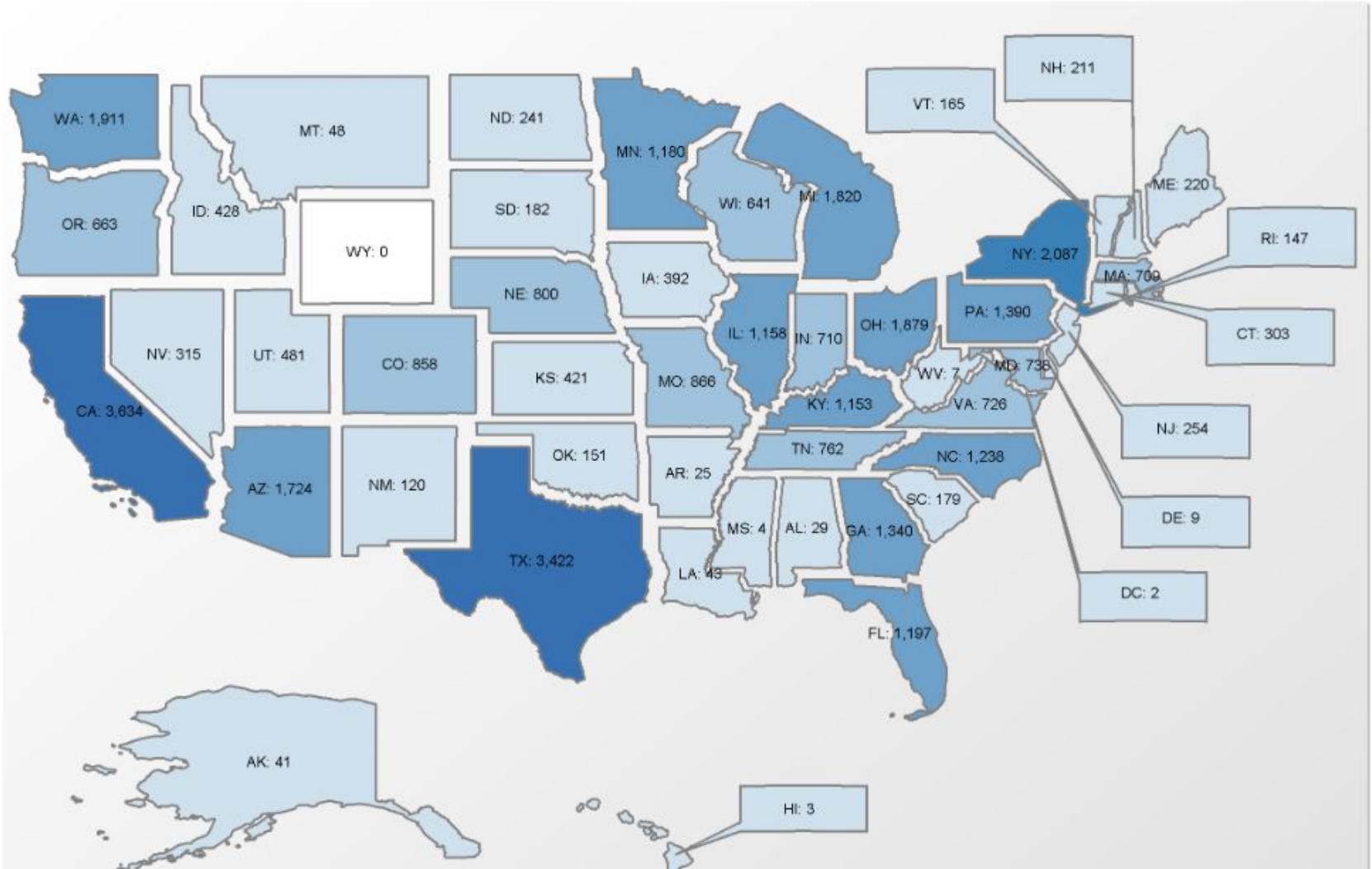
Office of Admissions - Refugee Processing Center

Refugee Arrivals by State

From October 1, 2016 through February 28, 2017

Cases:	14,210	**Individuals:**	37,027

Arrivals by State



50,000

2017 Refugee Intake Ceiling/ per year

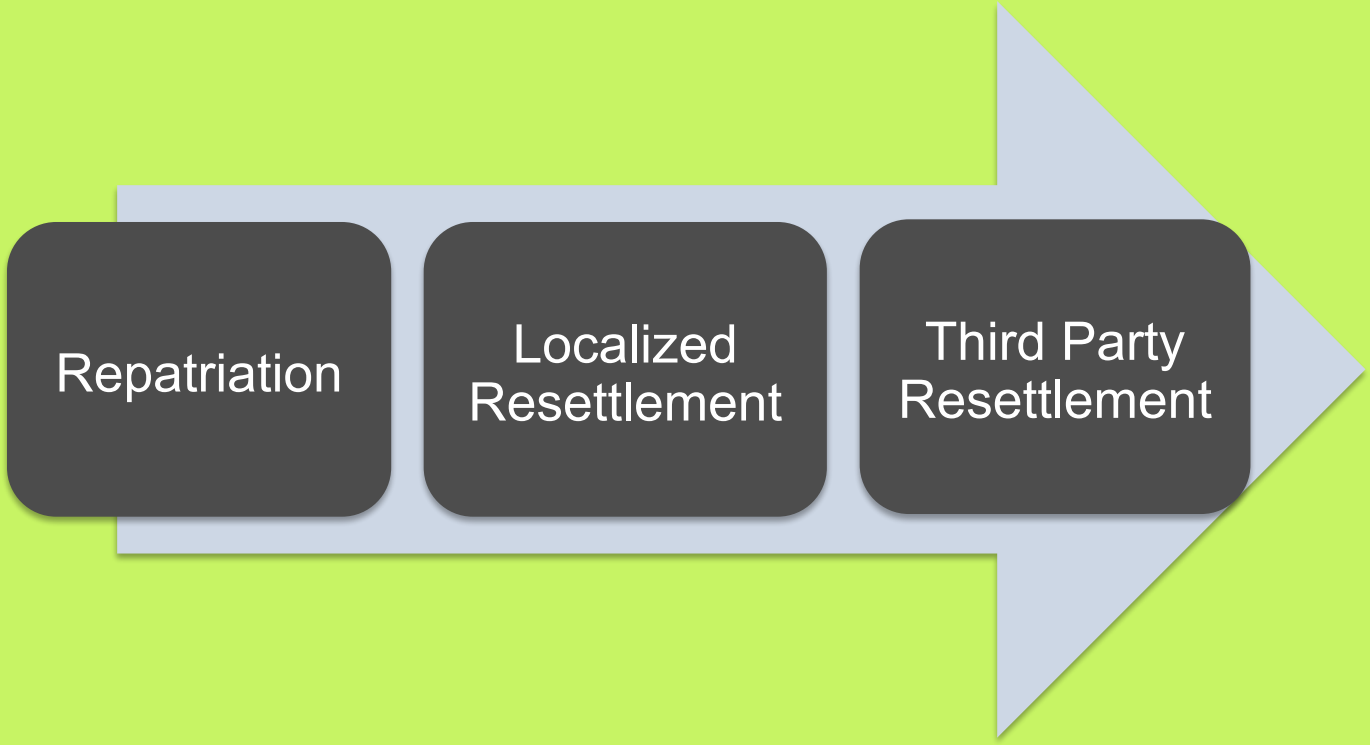
1,000

Ex: Colorado @ 2% per year

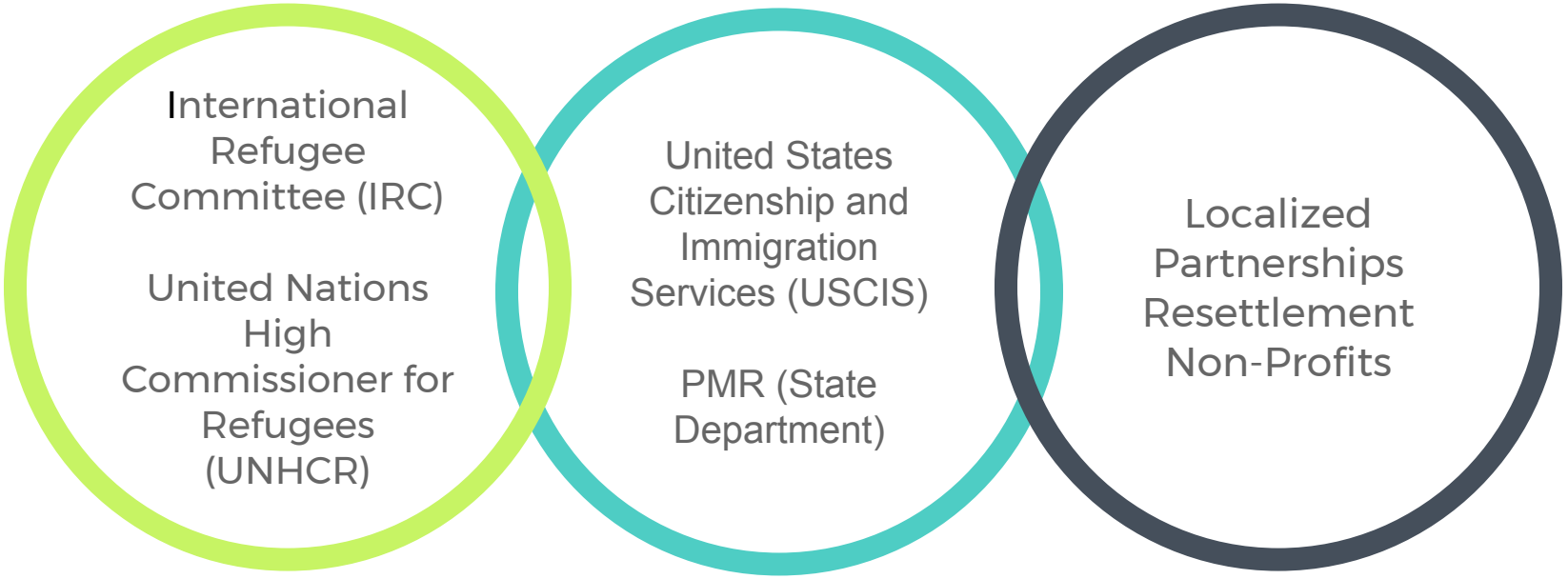
250

Ex: Denver @ 25% per year

Resettlement Schedule



Resettlement Entities



Vetting Procedures

3-12 years
Needs Assessment
Biometrics
Background Check
Interviews

1-4 years
Needs Assessment
Biometrics
Background Check
Interviews

0-6 months
Needs Assessment
Interviews

2.

Defining the Newcomer Student

Let’s be clear in our language.

Newcomer

One year or less in the host country
Native language other than English
Demonstrated gap(s) in formal education
WIDA ACCESS score of 5 or under

Baseline requirements are subject to district standards and/or WIDA participation

Newcomer Eligibility

- 2 Semesters
  Approved status as “Newcomer”
- Extended Newcomer Services
  With significant body of evidence
- Continued ELA-E Services
  As needed until WIDA exited/BoE exited

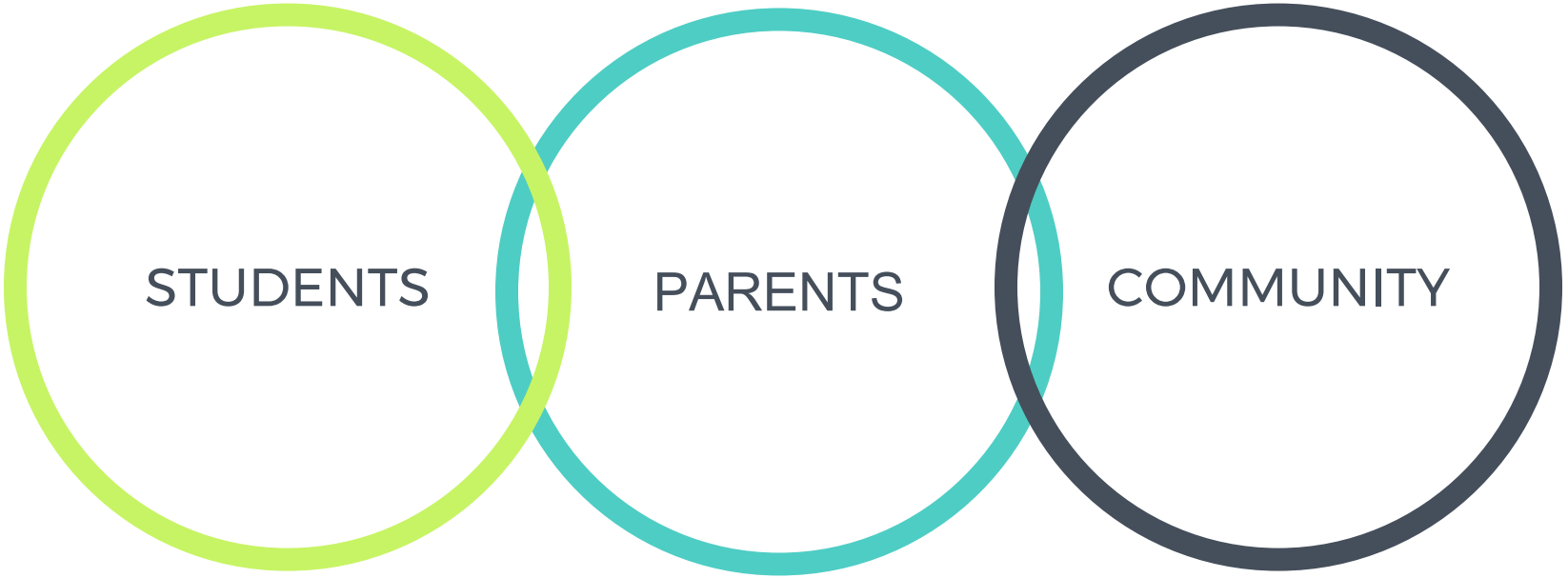
Our unified goal:

Healthy, holistic
& long-range
integration.

Immigrant integration is the process of economic mobility and social inclusion for newcomers and their children.

-Migration Policy Institute, 2017

Whole Integration



Food Needs
Housing
Medical Needs
ESL Coursework
Social Skills Building
Mental Health Resources
Balancing Cultural Expectations

Food Needs
Housing
Medical Needs
ESL Coursework
Social Skills Building
Mental Health Resources
Job Training
Citizenship Classes

“Buddy” Programs
Mentorship Opportunities
Strengthened School Culture
Transportation Assistance
Religious & Interest groups
Biases Exploration

Focus Areas

Culture & Diversity
Cultural awareness and sensitivity; diversity in learning materials; bias workshops.

Traumatic Shock, Stress & Learning
Culture shock, stress and the brain; mitigating transition shock in the school setting.

Best Practices in Newcomer Instruction
Newcomer program design and roll-out; teacher training and building-wide coaching around effective ELA-E instruction.

3.

Exploring Trauma, Stress & Learning

Let's create awareness.

1 in 4

children attending school has been exposed to a traumatic event that can affect learning and/or behavior

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network, (NCTSN)

Transition Shock

A broad value that encompasses:

“Trauma restructures a child’s neural networks…”

“ ...It affects attention and memory, in addition to executive functioning skills, such as organization, planning and self-regulation.”

-Glen Cook

Stress & shock impair cognitive function.

Understanding instructions
Problem-solving
Self-regulation
Creativity
Memory
Motivation
Anticipation of success
Anticipation of failure
Reflection
Categorizing
Ability to accept adult guidance

Kaplan, etal, *Cognitive assessment of refugee children: Effects of trauma and new language acquisition,* Transcultural Psychiatry, 2015

Manifestations of Traumatic Shock

Physical

Physical Pain or Nausea
Nightmares or sleep apnea
Uncontrolled urination/bowel movements
Abrupt changes in appetite

Internalized

Excessive tidiness
Notable disorganization
Extreme sensitivity to stimuli
Boredom

Externalized

Speech Impediments
Concentration difficulties
Toe-walking, W-sitting,
Coordination challenges

Emotional

Guilt
Anxiety
Anger
Weepiness

Social

Repetitive play and self-talk
Clinginess
Inability to trust and/or maintain relationships

Detachment

Defiance
Delinquency
Attendance issues
Compulsive behaviors
Lack of Engagement

School Absences

Drop-Out Rate

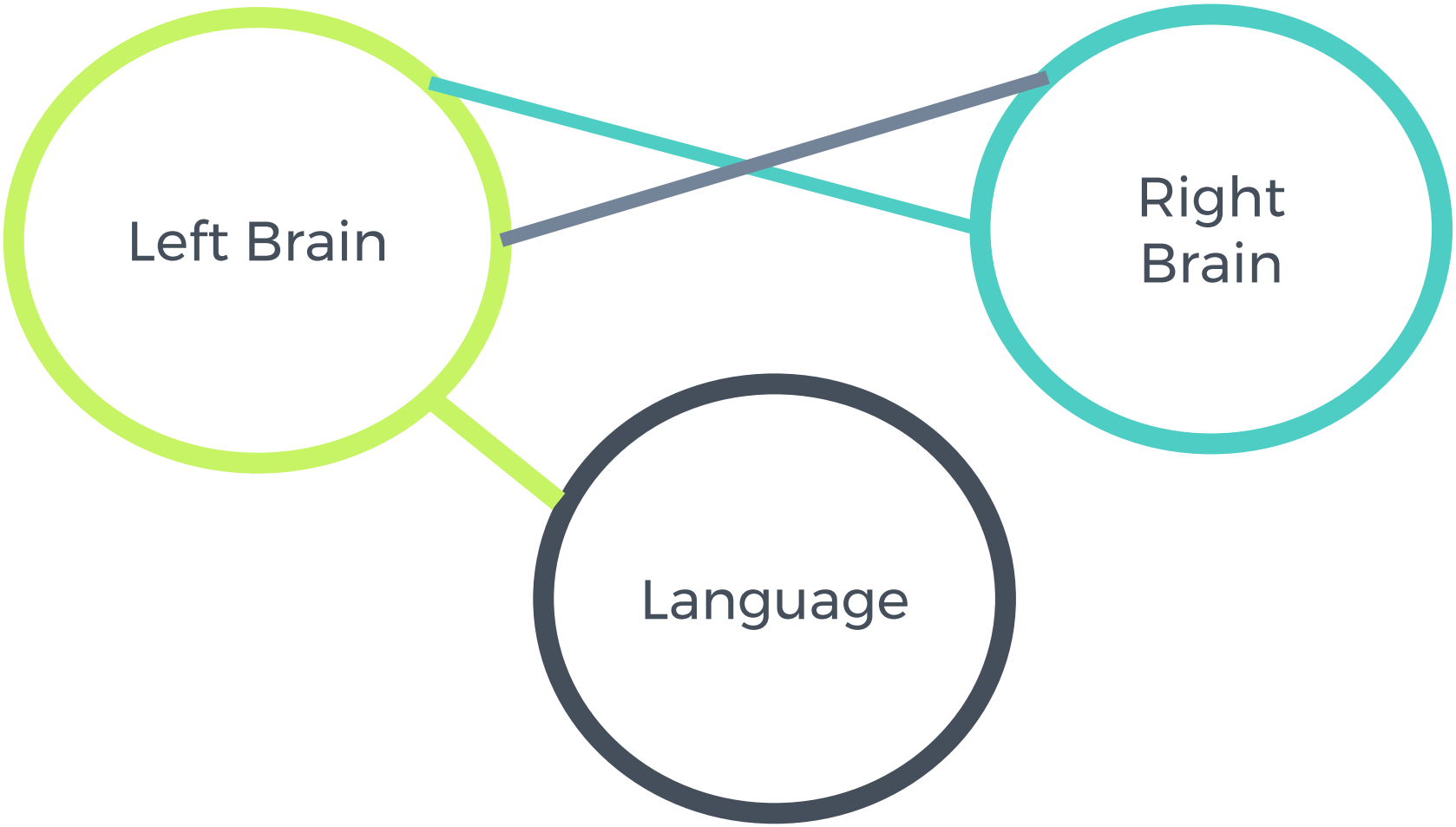
Suspensions

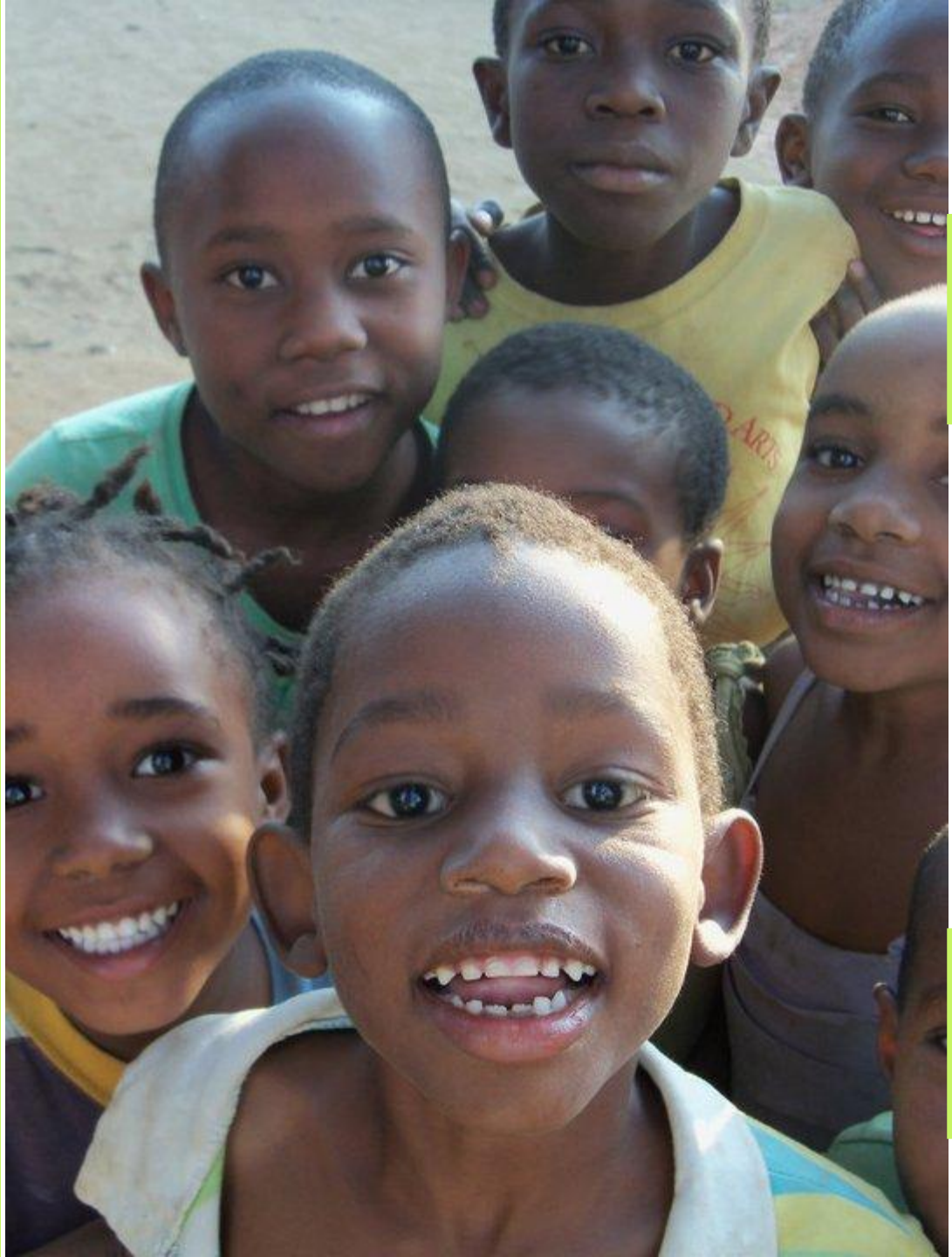
Expulsions

GPA

Reading Level

Trauma & Language Learning





Restricted *left brain* activity impairs the ability to **acquire and make sense of language**.

4.

Mitigating Trauma & Stress at School

Let's be part of the solution.

Good News!

Research

...indicates that trauma-informed interventions are overwhelmingly successful in repairing social and academic indicators for success.

Relevant educator training

District/School Accountability

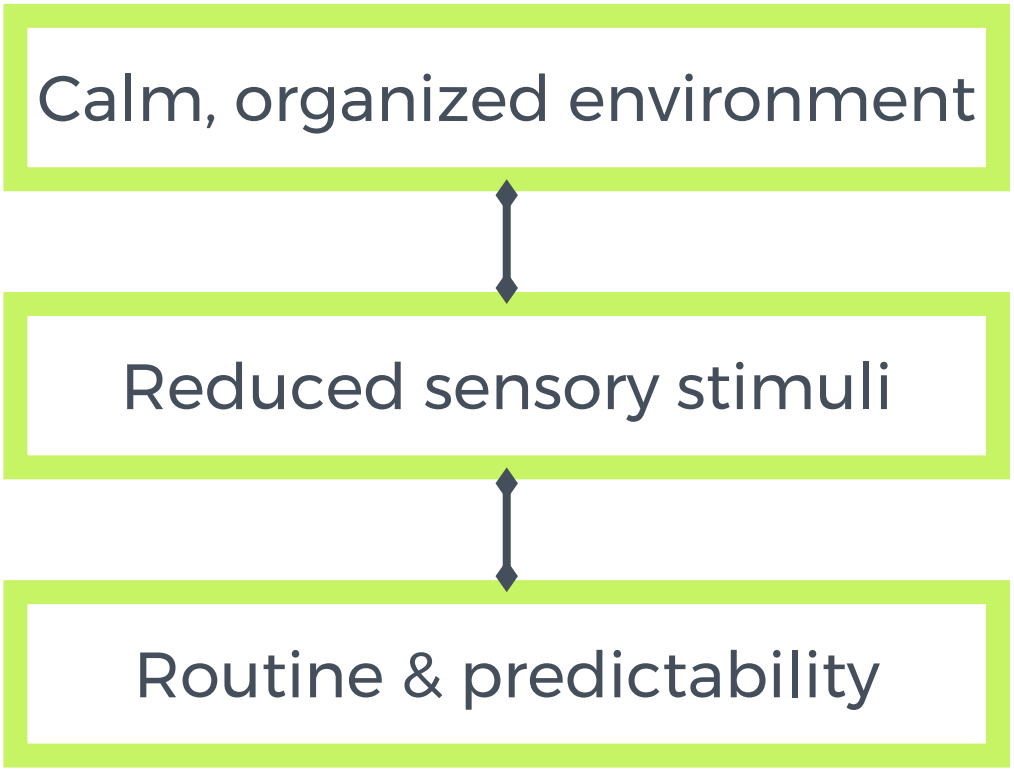
Evidence-based strategies

Teacher Accountability

Individualized Interventions

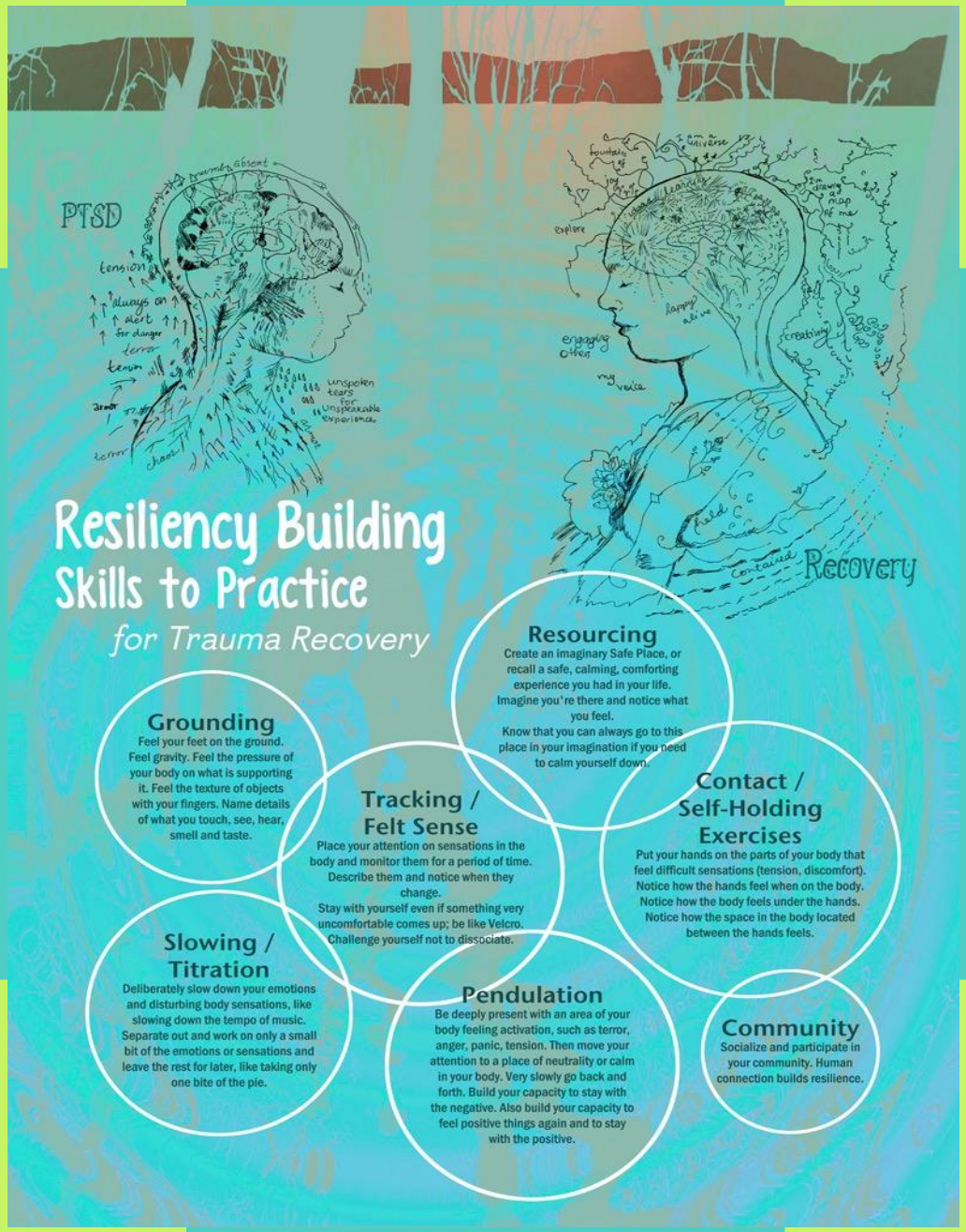
Student Participation

Mitigating Traumatic Upset

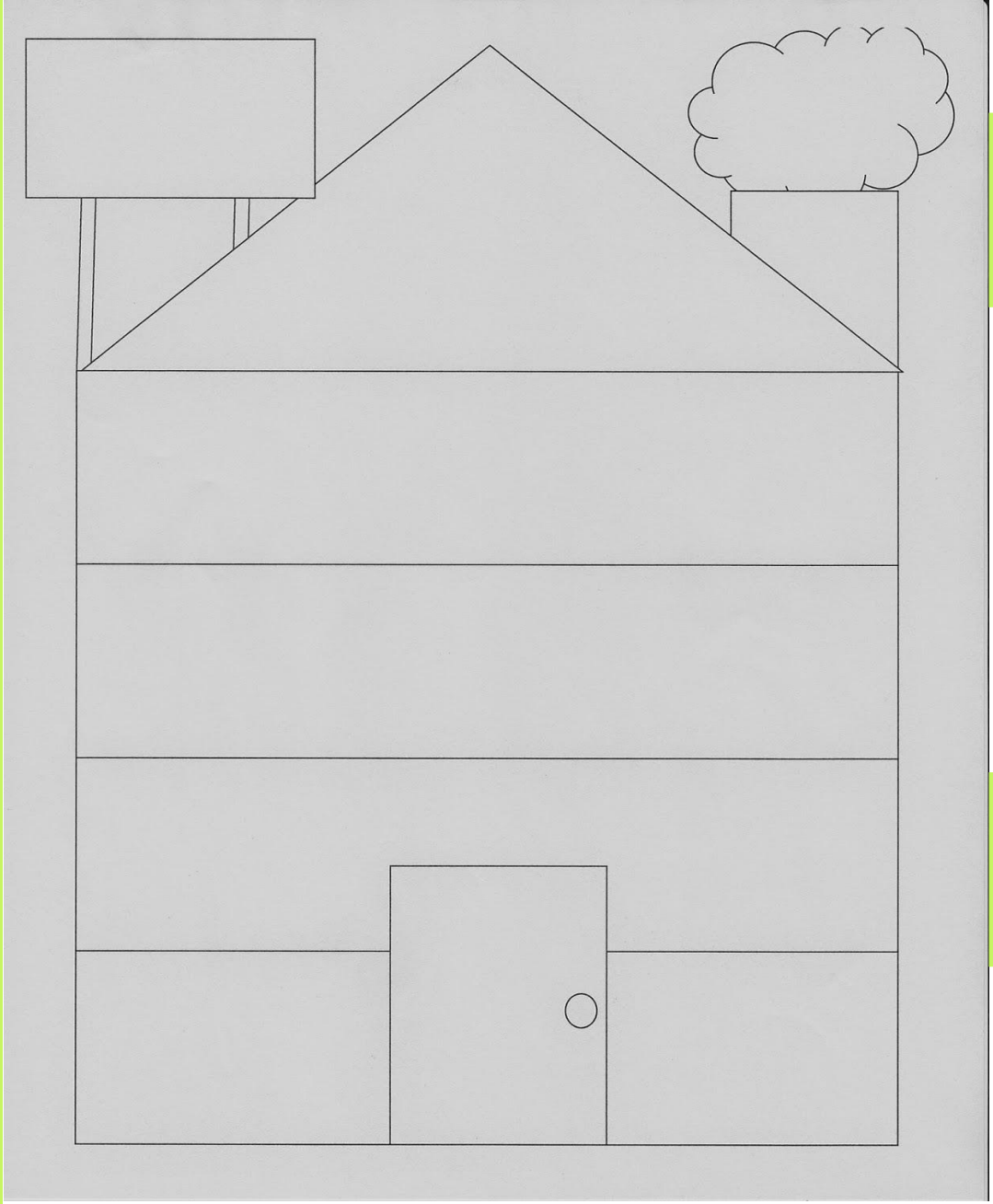


Mitigation Tools

- **Guided choice**
- **Deferred re-enactments**
- **“Time In” vs. “Time Out”**
- **PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports)**
- **Efforts to promote cross-cultural understanding**
- **Art, song and drama therapy**
- **Crossing midline activities**
- **DBT Houses**
- **Timely referrals for advanced care**
- **Self-care**



Credit: The Art of Healing Trauma, 2017



Into practice: Addressing Trauma with the "DBT House".

Dialectical Behavior Therapy Skills: 101 Mindfulness Exercises and Other Fun Activities for Children and Adolescents (Christiansen, 2009).

DBT House

Parts of the House:

Foundation: On the floor of the house, write the values that govern your life.
Walls: Along the walls, write anything or anyone who supports you.

Roof: On the roof, name the things or people that protect you.

Door: Write the things that you keep hidden from others.

Chimney: Coming out of the chimney, write down ways in which you blow off steam.

Billboard: On the billboard, write the things you are proud of and want others to see.

Levels of the House:

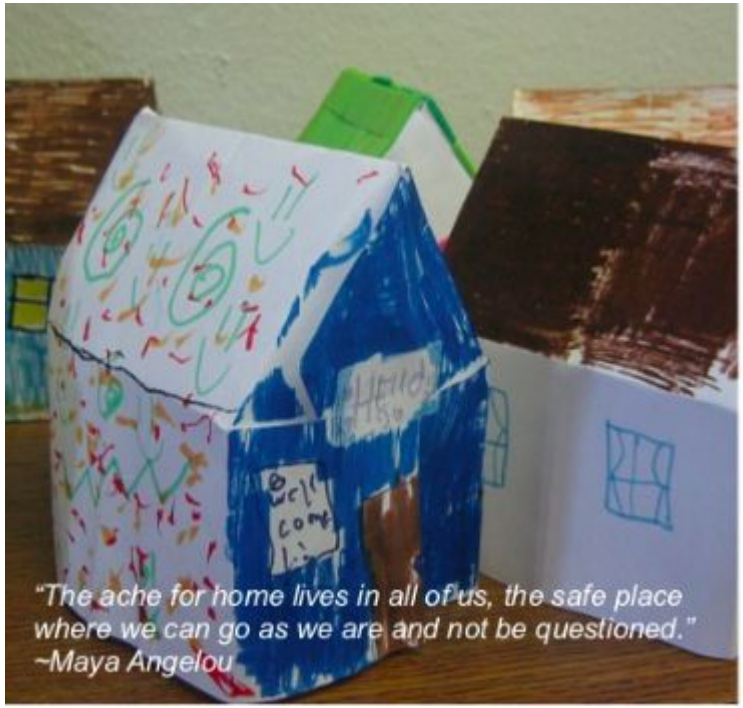
Level 1: List behaviors that you are trying to gain control over or areas of your life you want to change.

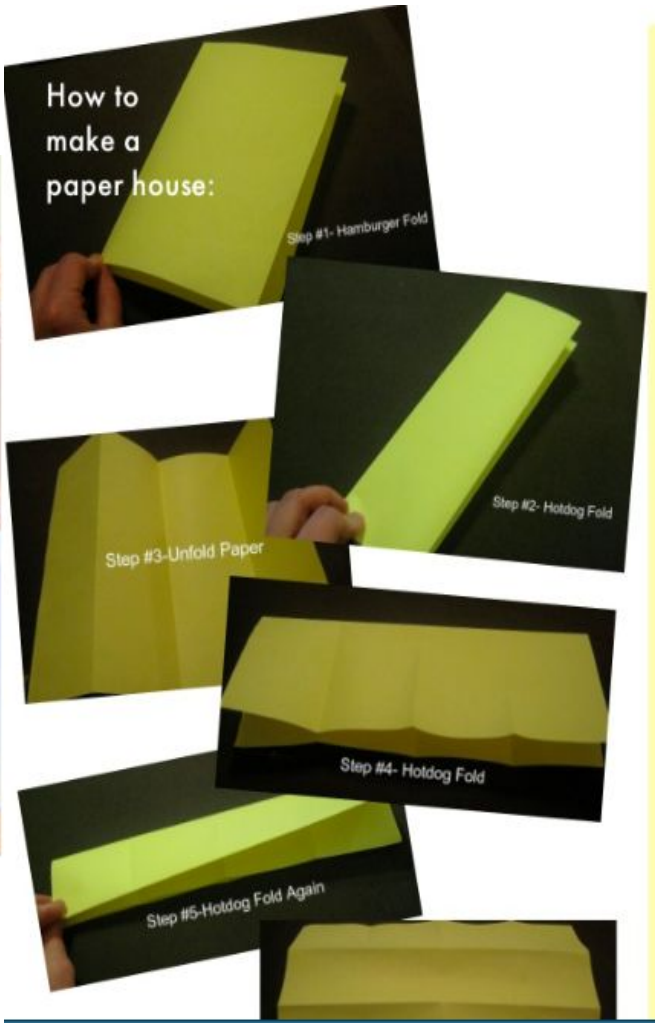
Level 2: List or draw emotions you want to experience more often, more fully, or in a more healthy way.

Level 3: List all the things you are happy about or want to feel happy about.

Level 4: List or draw what a “Life Worth Living” would look like for you.

Next Steps: Safe Houses, Safe Schools





Materials Needed:

- 8 1/2 x 11 paper
- Scissors
- Glue Stick
- Markers, Magazine Photo Collage, Color Paper & Other Materials

Themes to Explore:

- Safety Planning
- Shelter Adjustment
- Creating a Safe Place
- Moving & Separation
- "What Makes a House a Home?"

Creates:

- Repetitive, here & now focus through paperfolding process
- Containment of emotions connected to worry, fear, uncertainty
- Opportunity for symbolic storytelling

Credit: Gretchen Miller, MA, ATR-BC, ACTP

Thanks!

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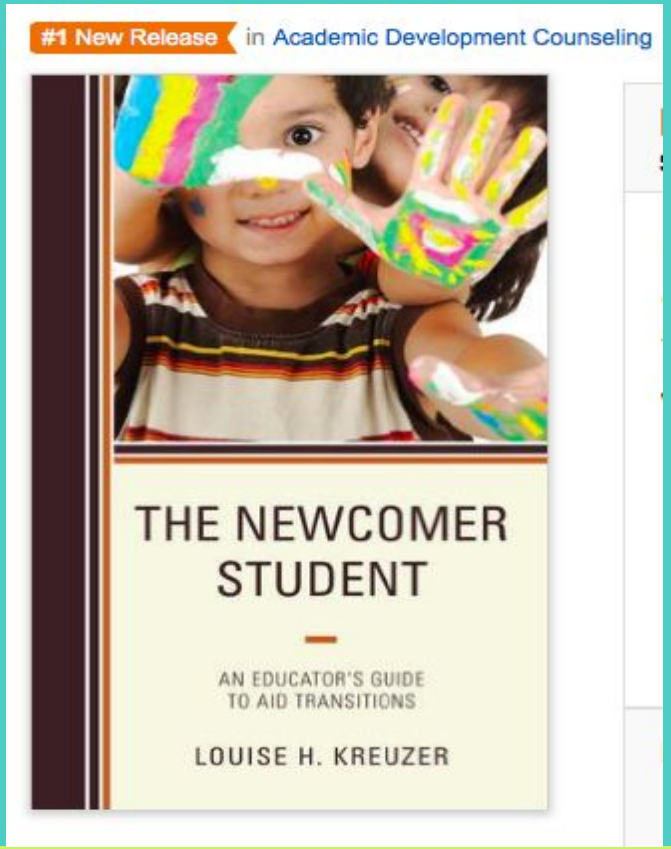
Coming Soon:
The Newcomer Teacher: A Workbook Companion to The Newcomer Student



Name / Role / Contact (optional)

On a scale of 1-5, how helpful was this presentation to you?

On a scale of 1-5, how engaging was your presenter?

What questions or recommendations can you share?

Please provide one comment about your professional experience during this session.