

Working with Immigrants – A Social Service Perspective

Culturally Responsive Best Practices

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A social service perspective



My job is to figure out what services a family can access and connect them. I try to do that in the most respectful and least intrusive way possible.

- It is impossible to know someone's immigration situation.
- **It is an honor when someone shares their status with me – I try to handle it with respect.**
- What do I look like to others? Am I creating a safe space?
- Are the people affected included in the conversation? Am I listening and believing their truths?
- People are deported and separated from their families all the time. That is reality.
- Terminology is important – I do not use illegal or alien.

Lina's Story



Lina is a 23 year old HS 21 student. She is bilingual and bicultural (her family is from Honduras and she grew up in the US) and reads and writes in both Spanish and English. She hopes to become a nurse, and because of her lived experience, motivation, and language skills Goodwill staff feel confident that she will excel in the medical profession.

Lina and Goodwill staff make a plan – after she gets her diploma she will move into our Career Pathways program which will help her go to community college, find funding to pay for it, and think about next steps after her AA.



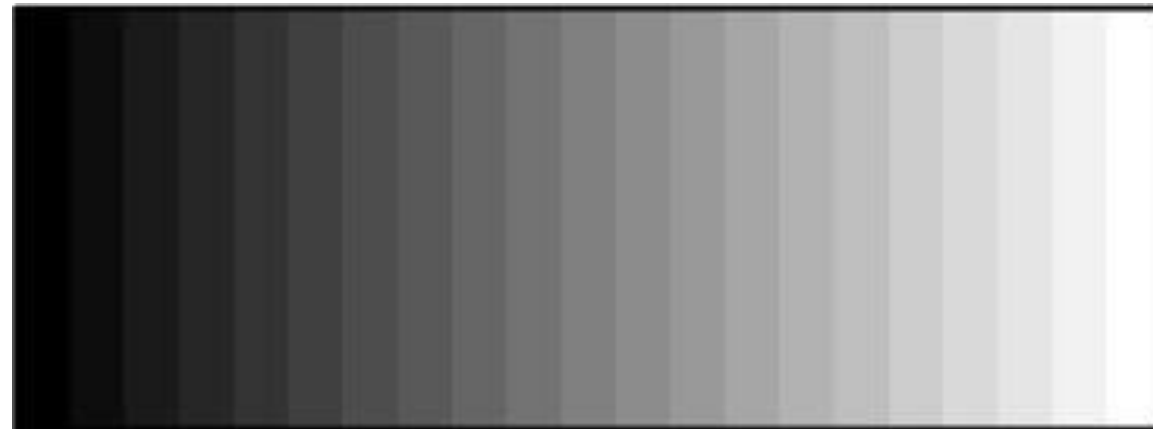


Lina is married and has two young children who were born in the US. They live with her parents and her two younger siblings. Her parents met and married in Honduras, and moved to the US two decades ago when Lina was a small child. Her two younger siblings were born here. Lina's husband is an immigrant from Mexico. Lina's father owns a landscaping business and her husband works for him.



There are 8 family members living in the house that Lina's parents own.

Lina has DACA. Her husband came on a tourist visa that long ago expired. Their two children were born here. Her parents are undocumented and did not enter with a visa. Her two younger siblings were born here.





One day Lina's father is approached by ICE in the parking lot of their apartment building. He is put in deportation proceedings and detained in Tacoma. Because he is no longer working, her mother takes a second job to make ends meet, meaning that she is working 80 hours a week plus using public transportation. Now Lina's mother is not able to watch her children while Lina goes to class at Goodwill.

Because of their status, not all of the family can visit him in the detention center. Lina's younger sister struggles in school and becomes aggressive. She is expelled and spends her days at home alone because the rest of the family is working or in school. She starts self-harming and things quickly escalate.

Immigration Services at Goodwill



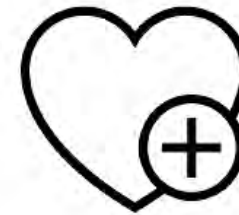
Know Your
Rights



Legal Clinic



Family Support
Planning



Mental Health
Support

Mixed Status Families

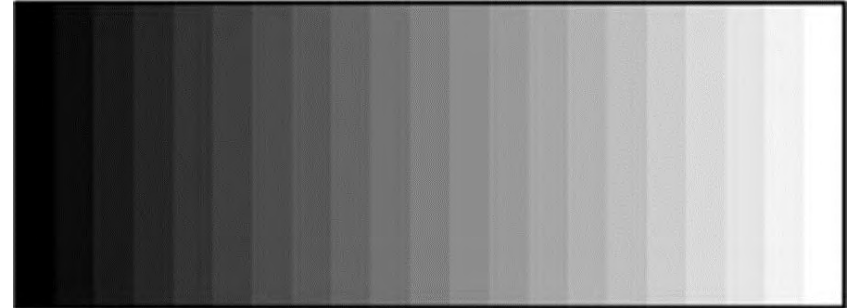


TABLE 1
People with at least one unauthorized family member living in their household

	Population with at least one unauthorized family member in the same household		
	Child	Adult	Total
U.S.-born population	5,856,276	1,152,560	7,008,837
Naturalized immigrant population	61,352	1,099,004	1,160,356
Noncitizen immigrant population	226,713	2,351,765	2,578,479
Unauthorized immigrant population	1,036,169	4,950,445	5,986,613
Total population	7,180,510	9,553,774	16,734,285

Note: "Noncitizen immigrant population" excludes the unauthorized immigrant population. "Child" refers to people under 18 years of age. The total number of people with at least one unauthorized family member in their household may not add up to the sum of the "child" and "adult" population due to rounding.

Source: Center for the Study of Immigrant Integration analysis of Steven Ruggles and others, "Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Version 6.0: American Community Survey, 2010–2014," available at <https://usa.ipums.org/usa/> (last accessed March 2016).



Out of Status/ Undocumented/ No Papers*



- Can happen when a visa expires or if you enter without inspection
- Washington State has been considered to be more comfortable than other states because of things like in state tuition and driver's licenses
- In theory anyone can get an ID/ driver's license in Washington
- 19 and under can receive a form Apple Health
- Can receive in-state tuition at colleges and universities in some situations
- Can access a bank account and some loans

* Not legal advice



On pathway to citizenship....*



- Asylee
- Refugee
- Family Visa
- U Visa
- DV Visa (Diversity Visa)



**Legal Permanent Resident /
Green Card Holder/ LPR**

Can receive most services, sort of. After 3-5 years with a green card, can receive more service such as Apple Health and disability support.

Refugees and asylees on a different track with services.

* Not legal advice

Social Services



Healthcare

Regardless of status:

- Community clinics / sliding scale services
- Charity Care / financial assistance @ the hospital
- Medicaid for pregnant women, children under 19, cancer/ kidney care, AEM (but different than Apple Health)

When it gets complicated:

- Can purchase insurance through the Exchange – depends on status and time in the US

US citizens, refugees, asylees, green card holders after 3 years:

- Apple Health / Medicaid

Childcare

BFET
City of Seattle
Working Connections

Food Stamps

Federal SNAP (BFET)
State funded

Best Practices



Never assume

Handle all questions of status carefully

People are not trying to trick you

Always refer people to an immigration attorney you trust

Build relationships with other providers who understand

Acknowledge your own privilege

This is someone's reality – families are separated every day

Create a safe space – what do you look like to others?

When you work with undocumented youth, think of their parents

There are permanent bars to changing/ gaining status that you would never think of-- learn them

Ways to talk about status



- Do you get food stamps? Are they in your name or your child's name?
- I'm happy to fill out this application with you. It requires a social security number and they will check the number. If that's okay, we can get started. If you want to think about it that is fine too.
- Do you know what kind of number you use to pay your taxes? Is it called an ITIN?
- We do not ask about immigration status here. This form asks for a social security number, but if you do not want to share one, we will skip this page.

Contact Info



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