



B2 - Access for New Immigrant Children: Early Intervention with Refugee Families Using the Baby TALK® Model



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Presentation Agenda



- **Overview:** Introduction to refugee resettlement in the U.S. and populations living in Chicago and the need for early intervention.
- **Culturally sensitive EI models:** An introduction to the Baby TALK® model.
- **Application:** Examine the impact the Baby TALK® model when used with refugee families in Chicago.
- **Implications for practice and research:** Supporting EI with new immigrants in the United States.
- **Final remarks** with Q & A session

What does it mean to be a **refugee**?

- What does it mean to be a refugee?
- Who are the refugees and where do they live?
- What do we know about the refugee experience?
- Current challenges in the field



New arrivals from the Middle East



New arrivals from Southeast Asia



New arrivals from East and Central Africa



Life in a refugee camp

- Sleeping accommodations
- Medical facilities
- Hygiene facilities
- Food distribution centers
- Education/common areas
- Security check-points
- Daily activities



Refugee Resettlement Policies

- What are options for refugees?
 1. Repatriation
 2. Host country integration
 3. Third country resettlement
- Who gets to be resettled?
- What does the resettlement process look like in the United States versus other countries?



refugee
ONE



Universal themes surrounding the refugee experience and trauma



- History of fear and uncertainty
- Need for safety
- Loss of homeland, loved ones, and cultural underpinnings
- Worry about the future
- Feelings of guilt for families left behind or for personal safety
- Feelings of loneliness, homesickness, and isolation
- Losing personal supports
- Cumulative impact on mental health.



Vulnerable parents and their children



- What is the refugee experience like for families? For single mothers? For children?
- How can we support early intervention with vulnerable refugee families?



The Baby TALK® Model: A culturally-sensitive intervention



- A relational model
- Connects resources
- Universal approach to families
- Prenatal to age three
- Support, encouragement and resources.
- Began in 1986
- Replicated in 36 states and Canada.
- Trains professionals across disciplines

Baby TALK in 12 Words

- Build a system
- Screen every family
- Identify the need
- Deliver appropriate services





Baby TALK's Approach



Baby TALK's

“Critical Concepts”

Baby TALK's mission is to positively impact child development and nurture healthy parent-child relationships during the critical early years

- Systems Building
- Building Relationships
- Going Where Families Are
- Facing Difficult Issues
- Parallel Process
- “Tell Me About Your Baby”
- Becoming Ever Better
- Coming Alongside
- Collaboration



Joining parents in the task of raising their children



- Listen for their story
- Set aside our agenda to respond to needs
- Recognize parents as experts on their own children
- Support parents' mastery
- Promote parent-child interaction
- “Hold families in our minds”

Applying the Baby TALK model at
RefugeeOne: Culturally-sensitive
interventions

Our families:

- (1) The case of “Masoka” - Congo
- (2) The case of “Janu” - Burma
- (3) The case of “Riziki” - Sudan



How do we understand **risk** among families?

- Defining “high risk” and “vulnerable families.”
- What does risk and vulnerability look like for refugee children and families?

A story of risk and resilience
for the Democratic
Republic of Congo



Lessons Learned



- Home visiting utilizing the BabyTALK model offers a **different perspective** into a client's life
- The curriculum **fosters trust and helps relieve stress/anxiety**
- Connecting clients to resources **decreases feelings of isolation**
- Clients appear **more willing to engage** in therapeutic services after being educated in this capacity

Implications for Early Intervention

- What is **the understanding** of early intervention among new immigrants?
- To what extent **do they access services**?
- How does the **Baby TALK model support early intervention**?





Current & Future Research



- The current study examines the ways in which the Baby TALK model is able to engage and support refugee families.
- Future research will study **child and parent outcomes** in the areas of parenting stress, parent-child engagement, and developmental outcomes for the child in the areas of language, social-emotional, and cognitive development.

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