



## **Catholic Community Services of Utah**

### **STRENGTHENING REFUGEE FAMILIES & MARRIAGES PROGRAM**

#### **Organization and administration of the program**

The *Strengthening Refugee Families and Marriages* program is managed by the Catholic Community Services of Utah Refugee Resettlement Program. Funding for the program is provided by the Department of Health and Human Services Administration of Children and Families (ACF) and administered through the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). Further administration of the program is provided by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops office of Migration and Refugee Services (USCCB/MRS).

#### **Program objectives**

The objective of the *Strengthening Refugee Families and Marriages* program is to assist in the integration and self-sufficiency of recently arrived refugees by developing, adapting, and implementing programs to strengthen refugee families and marriages.

#### **Program description**

The *Strengthening Refugee Families and Marriages* program in Salt Lake City is based on *Survival Skills for Healthy Families* as developed by *Family Wellness Associates*.<sup>1</sup> The curriculum has been modified to better serve the refugee populations in Salt Lake City, and will focus on communication and listening skills, conflict resolution, problem solving, and negotiation. These skills will be developed through workshops provided by certified trainers and educators.

#### **Groups served by the program**

The *Strengthening Refugee Families and Marriages* program in Salt Lake City seeks primarily to serve the Somali Bantu population during an often difficult period of transition. As the program develops, it is expected to also serve the needs of Salt Lake City's Liberian population. Other refugee populations in Salt Lake City expressing an interest or need for the services provided through the *Strengthening Refugee Families and Marriages* program will not be excluded.

#### **Training model explanation**

*Survival Skills for Healthy Families* works to “teach practical skills based on proven principles that strengthen, support and empower families.”<sup>2</sup> The model is based on the belief that the skills necessary to enhance family relationships, and hence strengthen a community,

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<sup>1</sup> Further information on *Survival Skills for Healthy Families* can be found at [www.familywellness.com](http://www.familywellness.com).

<sup>2</sup> References within this section refer to: Doub, George and Flo Creighton. “What is family wellness?” *Family wellness instructor manual*. p 1-3. *Family Wellness Associates*. 2000.

are simple, and can be learned and taught through proven teaching methods, like coaching and role-playing.

### **Program staff**

All full-time program staff have been trained and certified as Family Wellness Instructors. Additional staff members working with the program have received necessary training and additional information to ensure the quality of the overall program. It is expected that volunteers and local members of the community will be trained and utilized as additional resources.

### **Defining program success**

The program will be successful if the participants of the program are able to demonstrate and utilize key concepts of the program to improve their home and family environments. Post-training questionnaires administered to the refugees will be used in a system of self-reporting, and serve as another way to gauge program success. In cases of a language barrier or illiteracy, the questionnaire may be administered orally or through an interpreter.

### **Program outcomes**

- To build and strengthen communication and listening skills within refugee families
- To give refugee families the skills necessary to resolve familial conflicts in a constructive manner, including alternatives to physical discipline
- To teach refugee families how to solve problems their families may encounter
- To help refugee families understand how to negotiate mutually acceptable compromises while accounting for their existing family structures.

### **Program contact**

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### **Program dates**

The Strengthening Refugee Families and Marriages Grant was awarded to Catholic Community Services of Utah in October, 2005.