

All students deal with stressful events as they mature. Immigrant students, however, face additional challenges (Willshire Carrera, 1989b). The most distressing may include violence (often a result of warfare or civil strife in children's native lands) and separation from family members. Other stresses include adaptation to a new culture, the challenge of learning a new language, and, often, the insult of racial discrimination in this country (Willshire Carrera, 1989a). Many immigrant families have a difficult time simply making ends meet; many lead lives of poverty in urban areas (First, Kellogg, Carrera, Lewis, & Almeida, 1988; Olsen & Chen, 1987; Valdivieso, 1990).

As a subset of the immigrant population, undocumented children are likely to confront the most distressing experiences of all (First et al., 1988). In addition to the usual experiences of growing up, and the unusual stress of immigration, undocumented immigrant children worry about deportation (Willshire Carrera, 1989a). If their undocumented status is discovered, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) has the legal authority to investigate them. Further, the INS may detain them--apart from their families--in federally operated centers (First et al., 1988; Morales, 1987).

To better understand our nation's rapidly growing Latino population, such critical factors as demographic characteristics, cultural values, and family structure are examined. Special attention is devoted to the daunting challenges and resultant trauma experienced by many of these children and families who have recently immigrated to this country from war-torn homelands in Central America. The mental health status of Latino children is addressed, along with various service delivery issues and psychotherapeutic modalities to facilitate their personal adjustment and social adaptation in a culturally sensitive manner.

Transition Support for Immigrant Students Article

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/publications/transitionsupportforimmigrantstudents.pdf>

Partnering with Parents and Families to Support Immigrant and Refugee Children at School

<http://www.rwjf.org/files/research/partneringwithparentsandfamiliesimmigrants.pdf>

Strategies for Success: Engaging Immigrant Students in Secondary Schools

http://www.cal.org/resources/digest/digest_pdfs/0003-strategies-walqui.pdf

Children of Immigrants and Refugees: What the research tells us

<http://www.healthinschools.org/News-Room/FactSheets/~media/7B26C7D15BC54ACF8C86F8D05B2AFEFD.ashx>

Meeting the needs of Immigrant Students

An excellent resource of the Northwest Regional Educational Library

<http://www.nwrel.org/cnorse/booklets/immigration/5.html>

Other organizations:

National Alliance for Hispanic Health (formerly COSSMHO)

<http://www.hispanichealth.org>

Office of Minority Health Resource Center, US Department of Health and Human Services, <http://www.omhrc.gov>

National Center for Cultural Competence, Georgetown University
<http://www.ncccurrecula.info/>

Harvard Immigration Project, Graduate School of Education, Harvard University
<http://www.harvardscience.harvard.edu/directory/programs/harvard-immigration-project>