

# Special Forum on Supporting Afghan Students in Washington Schools



**APRIL 29 9:30 AM – 12:30 PM**

**Please RSVP by emailing [pchang@schoolsoutwashington.org](mailto:pchang@schoolsoutwashington.org).** Zoom link will follow.

## **Agenda:**

9:30 – 10:00

Refugee Resettlement in Washington State

10:00 – 11:00

Afghans: Background, Culture, and Education

11:00 – 12:00

Mental Health Considerations for Refugee Students

12:00 – 12:30

Governor's Office of the Education Ombuds



# Welcoming Washington: A Collective Effort to Support Afghan Arrivals

April 29, 2022

Sarah Peterson

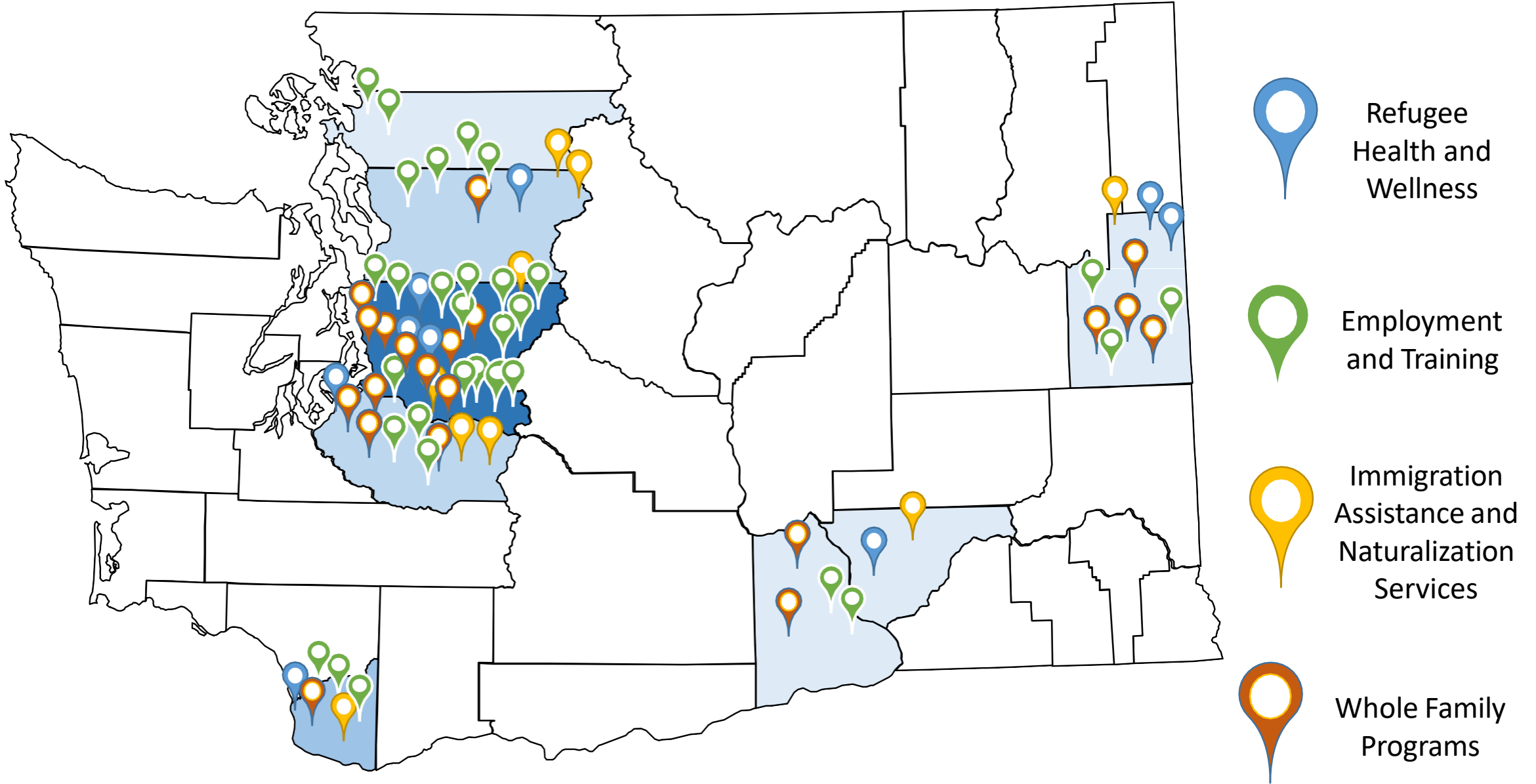
Washington State Refugee Coordinator  
Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance



Thank You

Maake Asante Shukria Dhanyavadagalu Manana Dankon Maanana  
Vinaka Dankscheen Kam Sah Hammida արեւշ Mauruuru Biyan Matondo  
Dank Je Blagodaram Dziękuje Juspaxar Chokrane Diolch i Chi Terima Kasih Taiku Tack  
Ngiyahonga Grazie Mochchakkeram Tingki Gratias Tibi Obrigado  
நன்றி Ua Tsaug Rau Koj Bedankt D'akujem Grazas cảm ơn bạn Kia Ora Kop Khun Khap Paldies  
Suksama Dėkuji Nirringrazzjak Hvala Welalin Di Ou Mèsi Mercì Go Raibh Maith Agat  
Misaoatra Rahmat Matur Nuwun 谢谢 xBana Danke Salamat បាទបាទ អរគុណអរគុណ Najis Tuke  
Djere Dieuf Eskerrik Asko

# Welcoming refugees is a collective effort.

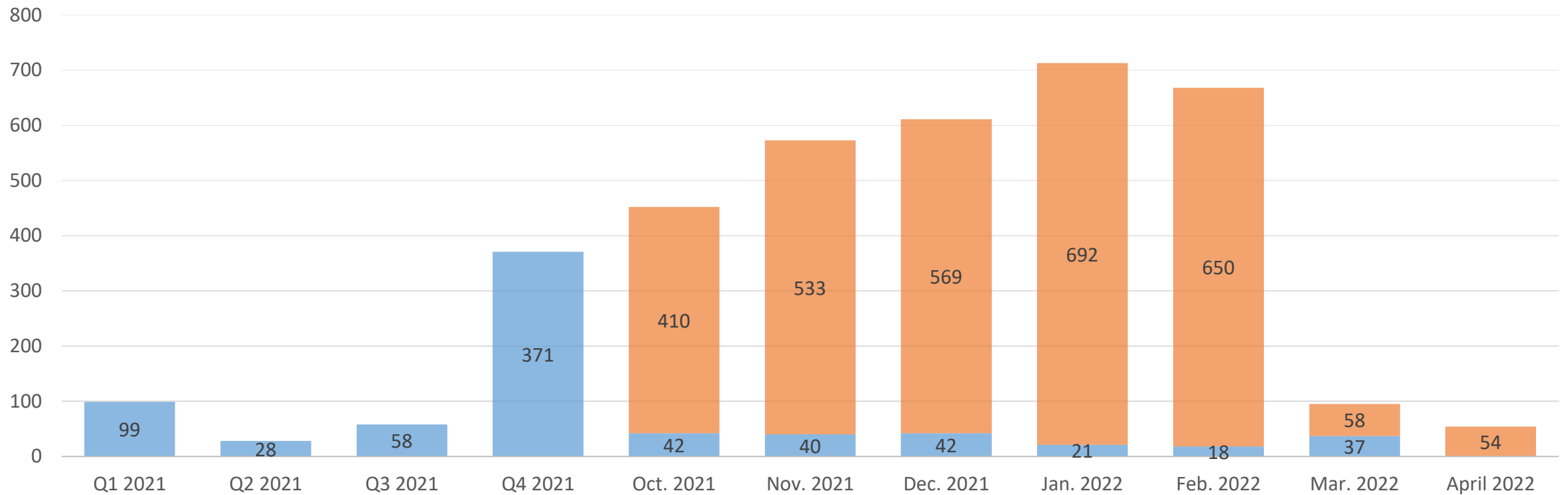


# Afghan Arrivals in Washington 2021 – 2022

**Total Arrivals: 3,722 people**

**US Refugee Admissions Program (RAP) SIV Arrival  
Federal Fiscal Year 2021 and 2022**

**Operation Allies Welcome (OAW)  
Aug. 28, 2021 to April 18, 2022**



**Total US RAP Arrivals: 756 people**

**Total OAW Arrivals: 2,966 people**

Washington State Department of Social and Health Services

# Washington State Operation Allies Welcome Afghan Arrivals – Oct. 2021 to March 2022

Washington welcome 3,106 Afghan arrivals.



County	Total Number
Benton-Franklin	68
Clark	143
Jefferson	>10
King, Pierce, Snohomish	2,583
Spokane	353
Walla Walla	>10
Whatcom	30

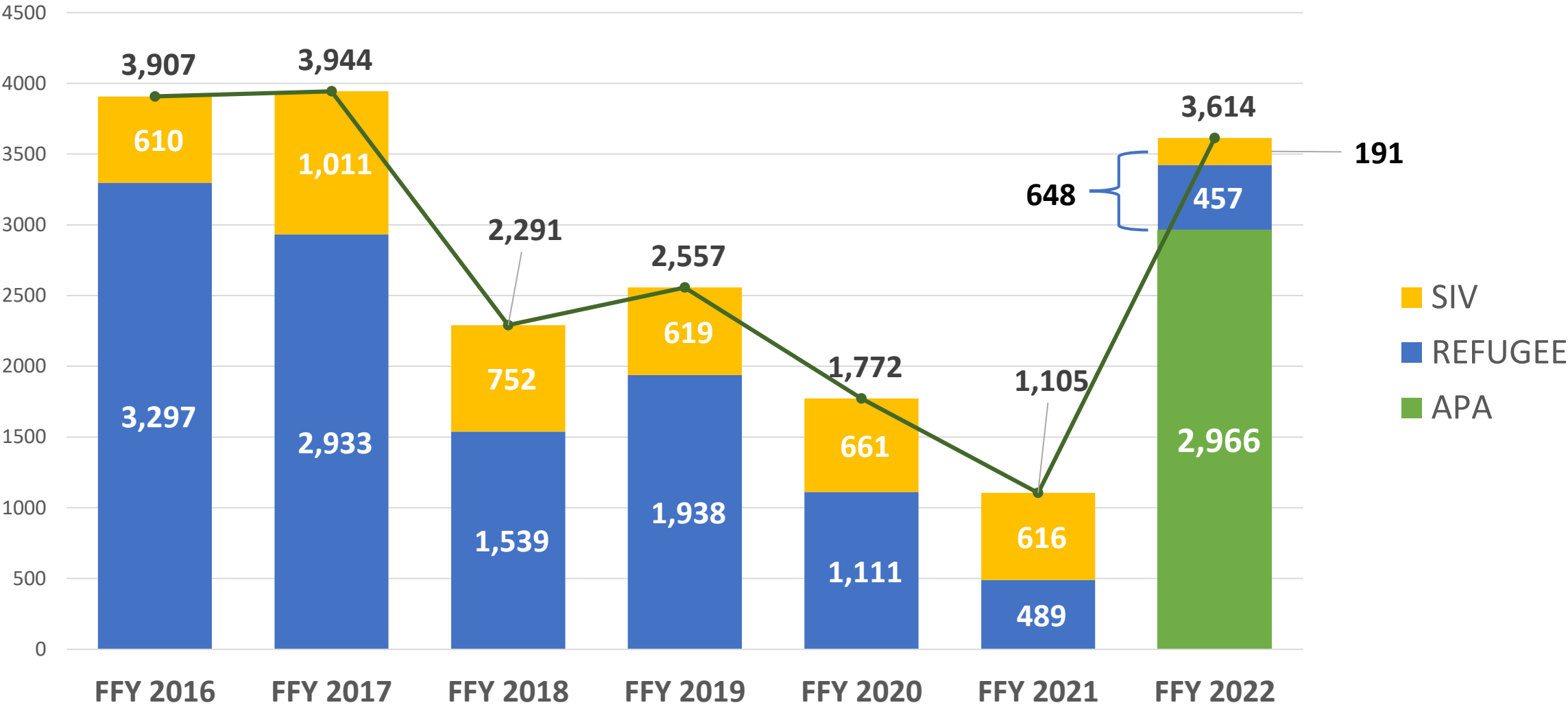
Data retrieved from the Refugee Arrivals Data System, Hummingbird Data, March 2022.

# Washington State Operation Allies Welcome Afghan Arrivals – Oct. 2021 to April 2022

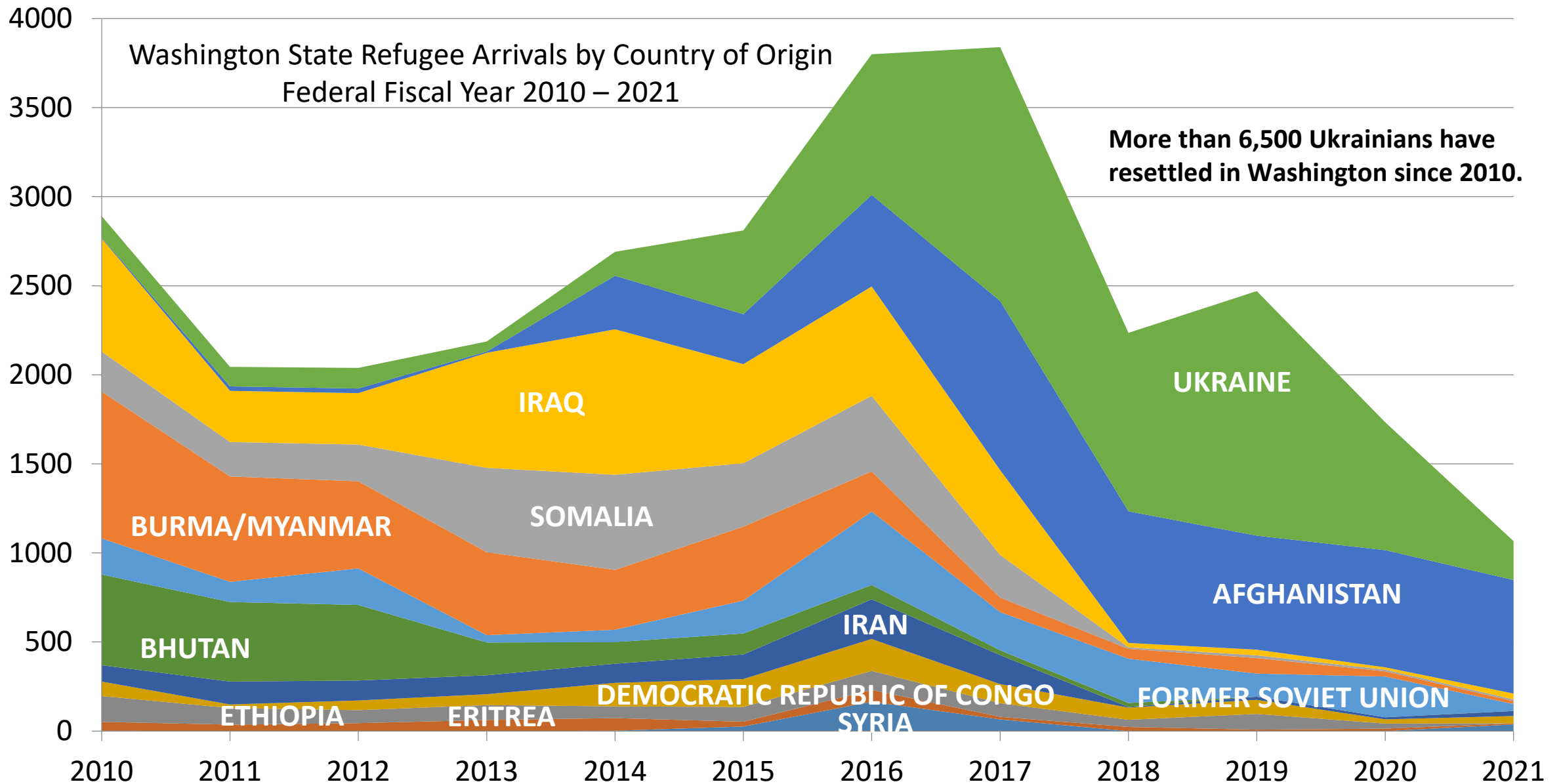
Affiliate State	Affiliate City	Total Departed	Age 0-18	Age 19-24	Age 25-59	Age 60+
Washington	Auburn	383	172	52	157	2
	Bellevue	9	3	1	5	
	Bellingham	30	13	6	11	
	Greenbank	5	2	1	2	
	Issaquah	4	2		2	
	Kent	862	383	106	361	12
	Port Townsend	3	1	1	1	
	Richland	68	37	10	21	
	S. Seattle	4	2		2	
	Sammamish	5	3	1	1	
	SeaTac	646	317	75	244	9
	Seattle	258	116	22	118	2
	Spokane	362	186	40	129	7
	Tacoma	390	175	57	154	4
	Vancouver	144	53	24	66	1
	Walla Walla	6	4		2	
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>3,179</b>	<b>1,469</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>1,276</b>	<b>37</b>

This report shows the total number of departed individuals broken out by age and state/city of the assuring affiliate. This includes, Afghan Humanitarian Parolees, SIVs who went through a safe haven, and independent departures who were later assured. Please note that due to incomplete data entry upon case intake, some totals may not add up and represent the full demographic scope of those departed.

# Washington State Arrivals: Refugee, Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) and Afghan Placement and Assistance (APA) Arrivals FFY 2016 to FFY 2022 (Year to date)



# Washington welcomes more than 30 different nationalities annually.



Source: Data from the Department of State, Refugee Processing Center. [www.wrapsnet.org](http://www.wrapsnet.org)

# Legal Pathways for Ukrainians Seeking Refuge

Immigration Status	Description	Projection
Humanitarian Parole Status granted at the border	Admitted into the United States on a temporary visa; eligible to apply for work authorization.	Estimated at 15,000 across the border (3,000 projected for Washington)
Temporary Protective Status	Must demonstrate continuous residence in the U.S. since 4/11/22 and presence since 4/19/22. Allowed to apply for work authorization	Estimated ~ 60,000 people could be eligible nationwide.
Lautenberg Amendment – United State Refugee Admissions Program	Religious minorities from the Former Soviet Union to reunite with family members in the U.S.	~18,000 pending applications with nearly 2,000 Ukrainians ready to depart
Refugee	Permanent durable solution, 18-24 month processing time; expedited processing for medically fragile cases and security cases	Unknown at this time.
Family reunification, employer-sponsored visas, student visas	Federal government is expected to broaden and expedite these pathways.	Unknown at this time.

## *Uniting for Ukraine*

- Two year program for Ukrainian citizens and immediate family
- Beneficiaries:
  - Must be outside of the U.S.
  - Resided in Ukraine immediately before the invasion
  - Are a Ukrainian citizen and posses valid Ukrainian passport
  - Have a supporter that has been vetted and confirmed by USCIS
  - Clear biographic and biometric security checks
- Supporters:
  - Apply for Ukrainians – must be in lawful status in the U.S.
  - Willing and able to receive, maintain, and support applicant

# Washington's Refugee Resettlement Plan

## STABILIZE

IMMEDIATE INFUSION OF FUNDS

INCREASE BASELINE FUNDING FOR  
SERVICE PROVIDERS

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

## STRENGTHEN

ESTABLISH NEW PROGRAMS (Legal  
services, permanent housing,

PARTNER WITH OTHER STATE  
AGENCIES

HIRE ADDITIONAL ORIA STAFF

SECURE CASE MANAGEMENT  
SYSTEM

## SUPPORT

EMERGENCY TRANSITIONAL  
SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

REGIONAL WELCOME CENTERS

COORDINATED PUBLIC-PRIVATE  
PARTNERSHIPS

Welcoming Afghans to Washington State



Thank you!

For more information, check out our [website](#) and the recent Washington to Washington [episode](#) on.

# Transforming Lives

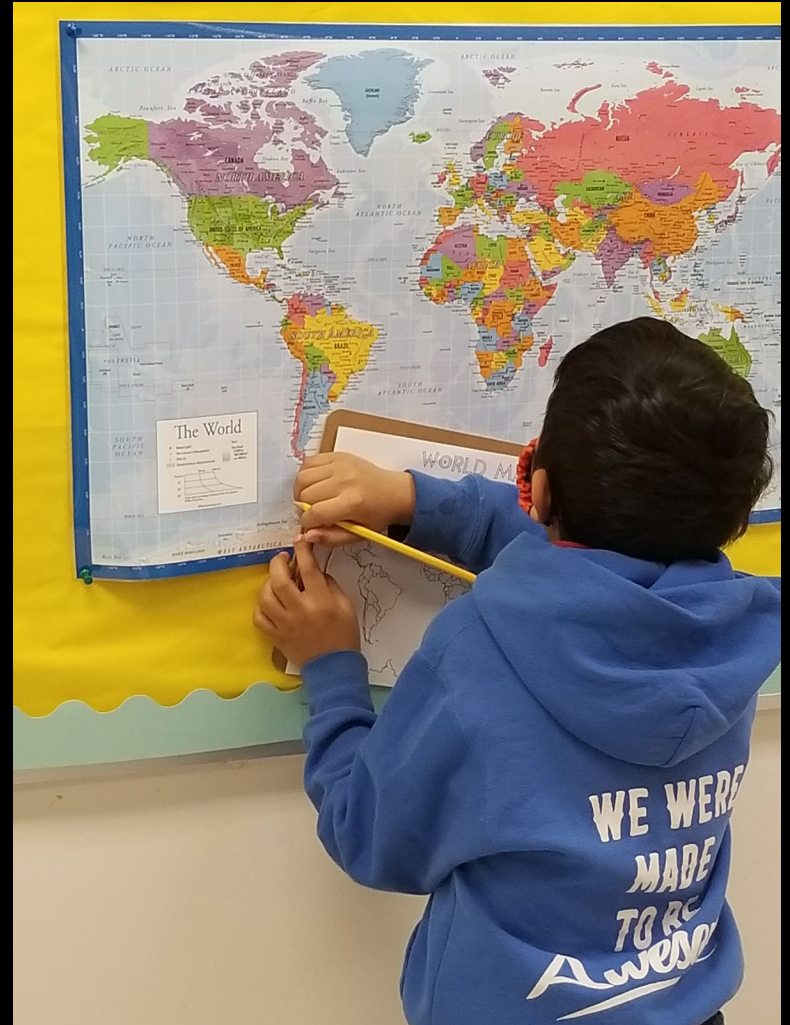
DSHS Office of Refugee and Immigrant  
Assistance

Sarah Peterson  
Washington State Refugee Advisory Council  
Office Chief, Refugee and Immigrant  
Assistance  
Community Services Division  
Economic Services Administration

[Email: sarah.peterson@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:sarah.peterson@dshs.wa.gov)



## Newness for the Newcomer: *Supporting New Afghan Students and Families*

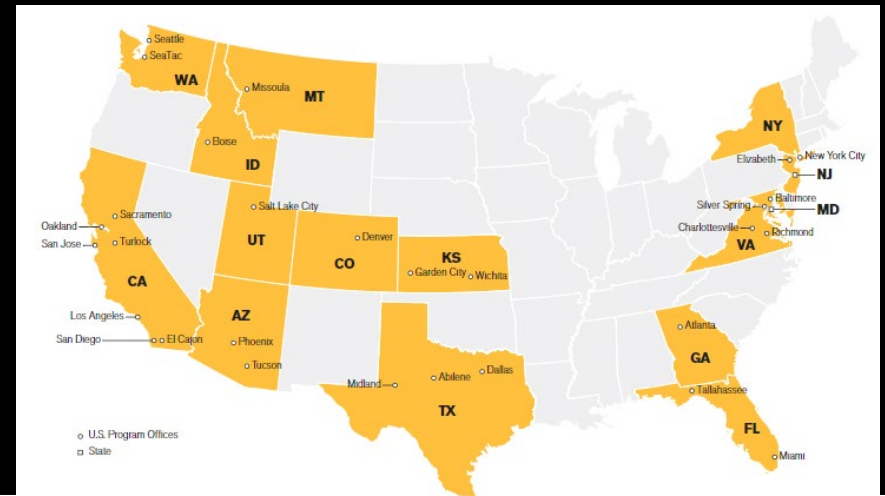
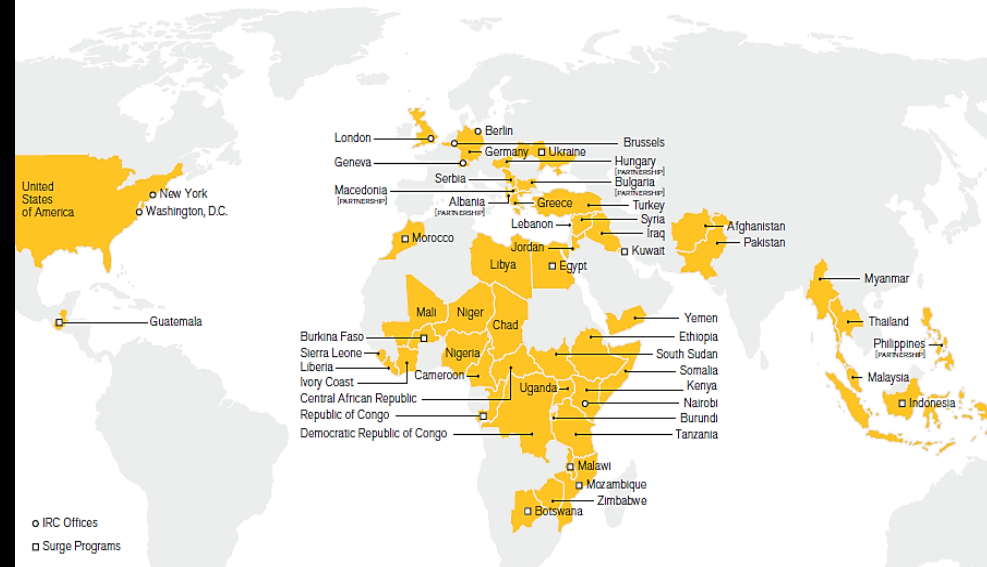


# Agenda

- Brief Overview of IRC
- Overview of Afghan Culture
- Overview of Afghan Education System
- Educational differences & challenges
- Best practices to support newcomers
- Resources

# Where We Work

- Global Work in **40+** countries
  - Providing emergency relief, protecting and assisting refugees
  - Post-conflict and disaster relief
- **25** field offices in the US (HQ in NYC, Advocacy in DC)
  - Resettlement and immigration services
  - Serving survivors of torture and trafficking
  - Providing and offering referrals to community-based programs for adults and youth



# IRC Seattle Youth Programming



## **Vision:**

**Youth from refugee and immigrant backgrounds have the skills and resources necessary to achieve academic success and pursue a future of opportunity.**

We serve an average of **400-500 students annually** and seek to accomplish our overarching vision through a large portfolio of programs



# Where We Work



# Newness for the Newcomer:

*Supporting new Afghan Students and Families*

# Afghanistan



# Afghan

- Independence
- Resilience
- Honor
- Compassion
- Loyalty
- Hospitality



# Ethnic Groups of Afghanistan

Rank	Ethnic Group	Share of Population of Afghanistan
1	Pashtun (Pashto)	42%
2	Tajik	27%
3	Uzbek	9%
4	Hazara	8%
5	Aimaq	4%
6	Turkmen	3%
7	Balochi (Baluch)	2%
	Other Groups	5%

# Languages:

According to the language factsheet by the Words of Relief published by Save the Children there are **35** languages spoken in Afghanistan.

**Dari** and **Pashto** are the two **primary** languages spoken.

# Family

One's family is the single most important aspect of life in Afghanistan. Afghan culture is very collectivistic, and people generally put their family's interests before their own.

# Extended- Patriarchal Family Structure

- Multigenerational
- Men are viewed as the main earners
- Women are viewed as the homemakers
- Children are to show reverence and deference to their parents and elders.
- Women (girls) practice Hijab when leaving the house.

# Afghan schools



# Afghan schools



# Educational Context in Afghanistan

- Primary School 1-6, Secondary School 7-12
- At the end of grade 6, students take a national examination to gain admission to lower secondary level at grade 7.
- Students are typically segregated by gender.
- Most students attend public school but there is a growing number of private schools as well as Community Based Education centers operated by NGOs
- Rote learning is common mode of instruction

# Educational Context in Afghanistan

- Estimated 3.7 million out of school children
  - 60% are girls
- Adjusted net attendance rates:
  - Primary School: 64%
  - Lower Secondary School: 38%
  - Upper Secondary School: 28%
- Youth Literacy Rate: 65%

\*[UNICEF: Education: Providing Quality Education for All](#)

\* [UNICEF: Afghanistan Country Profile](#)

# Newness for the Newcomer

## Adjustment forecast



Cultural

Education

Social

Economic

# Newness for the Newcomer:

- Student's Freedom of Expression in class
- Use of Technology in the class ( Projector/ other Digital content )
- Individual digital literacy and access to personal Tech
- Extra Curricular Activities ( Joining a sports/ Academic Club )
- Use of Library
- Counselor/ Career Counselor
- The availability of Financial Aids/ Scholarships ( FAFSA)
- The concept of "Credit System"

# Newness for the Newcomer:

- Wearing or not wearing a uniform
- Co-ed classes
- Using a locker
- Discipline in the school context
- Following a schedule and rotating classrooms or teachers
- Using a planner
- How students and teachers relate to, and address, one another
- The role of school personnel and who to go to with specific concerns
- What to do in emergency drills

# How can we Help?

# Best Practices:

- Sessions for newcomers where they can learn about college planning, why and how to get involved in service-learning projects, or other topics related to college applications
- Formal extended-day programs that provide opportunities (e.g., clubs, sports, service learning) to learn in interactive, interest-driven environments
- Parent and family workshops in home languages on topics such as school expectation, college planning; tax preparation; immigration assistance and computer and internet skills

# Best Practices:

- Organize field trips places (College/university) to minimize future shock and unhealthy-newness.
- Sessions that helps the newcomers understand/discover their personal assets, short-term and long-term goals.



# Benefits:

- Offers a sense of stability, minimizes fear of cultural adjustment, provides companionship to boost student's sense of belonging and contribution to the school and community
- Helps student focus their efforts to achieve social emotional and academic success
- Offers consistent communication to help strengthen relations among families, students, schools, and the community

## Information that needs to reach the newcomer:

- Course schedules (e.g., child will have more than one teacher and more than one classroom)
- Physical layout of the school
- Homework policy and purpose
- Attendance policy (e.g., mandatory phone call and note when child is sick)
- Dress code, winter clothing, physical education uniforms
- Transportation options to and from school

## Information that needs to reach the newcomer:

- Progress report and report card descriptions
- Parent-teacher conference dates and purpose
- After-school clubs and sports options
- Summer school availability
- The role of guidance counselors and other non-teaching staff

Refugee youth go through unimaginable circumstances when they leave their homeland due to crisis or violence.

According to the American Psychological Association, studies suggest that displaced children experience a multitude of stress factors connected to mental health issues, such as PTSD, anxiety, somatization, and traumatic grief. This can in turn lead to external problems like difficulty with their studies or behavioral problems at school, which is why it is important for refugee youth to receive support beyond just assistance with learning English.

# Educators need to practice (Emphasized):

Patience

Compassion

Proactiveness

A Welcoming tone of communication

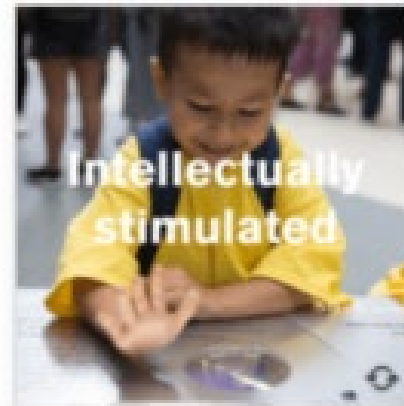
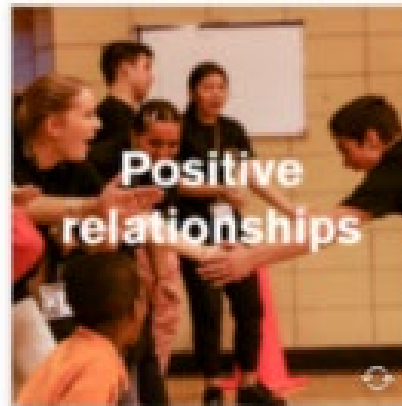
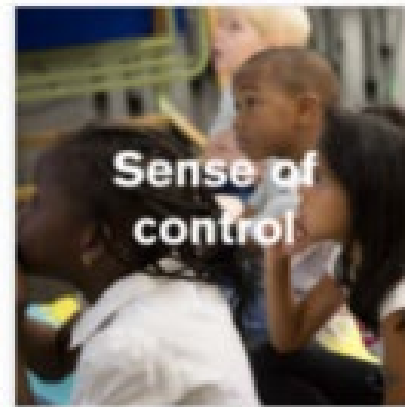
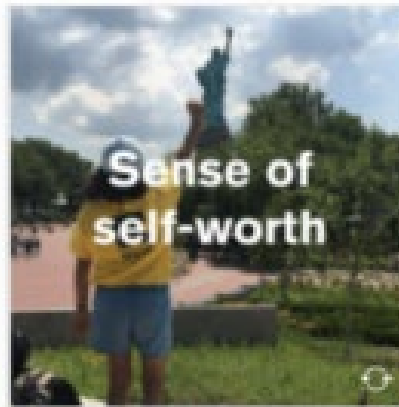
# How can we Help?

Start by saying “Hello” to them in their Language!  
Hello! Pashto/Dari ( Salam-Ma-Lai-Kum)

*“SALAM”*

This shows your energy and will tell the student how excited you are to get to know them and connect with them.

# Five Elements of Healing Learning Spaces



# Resources

# Resources

- [Afghan Backgrounder – updated December 2021](#)
- IRC's self-paced e-course: [Toxic Stress & Student Well-Being among Students Affected by Forced Migration](#)
- [Psychological First Aid \(PFA\) for Children](#): This course introduces the concepts and steps involved in providing support to children following a distressing event. It includes activities that focus on the core elements of PFA and how to apply them.

# Resources

- [Switchboard Technical Assistance Hub](#): A variety of trainings on refugee children, youth, and family services and education.
- [Refugee Educator Academy](#) courses, community of practice, and other learning opportunities through the Carey Institute for Global Good Center for Learning and Practice

# Thank you!

For more information:

Afzal Zurmati, Dari/Pashto ELL Support Educator

Email: [afzal.zurmati@rescue.org](mailto:afzal.zurmati@rescue.org)

Rachel Kurz, Youth & Education Program Manager

Email: [Rachel.Kurz@rescue.org](mailto:Rachel.Kurz@rescue.org)

# Mental Health & Psychosocial Considerations in Refugee Students



A PARTNER IN  
**NCTSN**

The National Child  
Traumatic Stress Network



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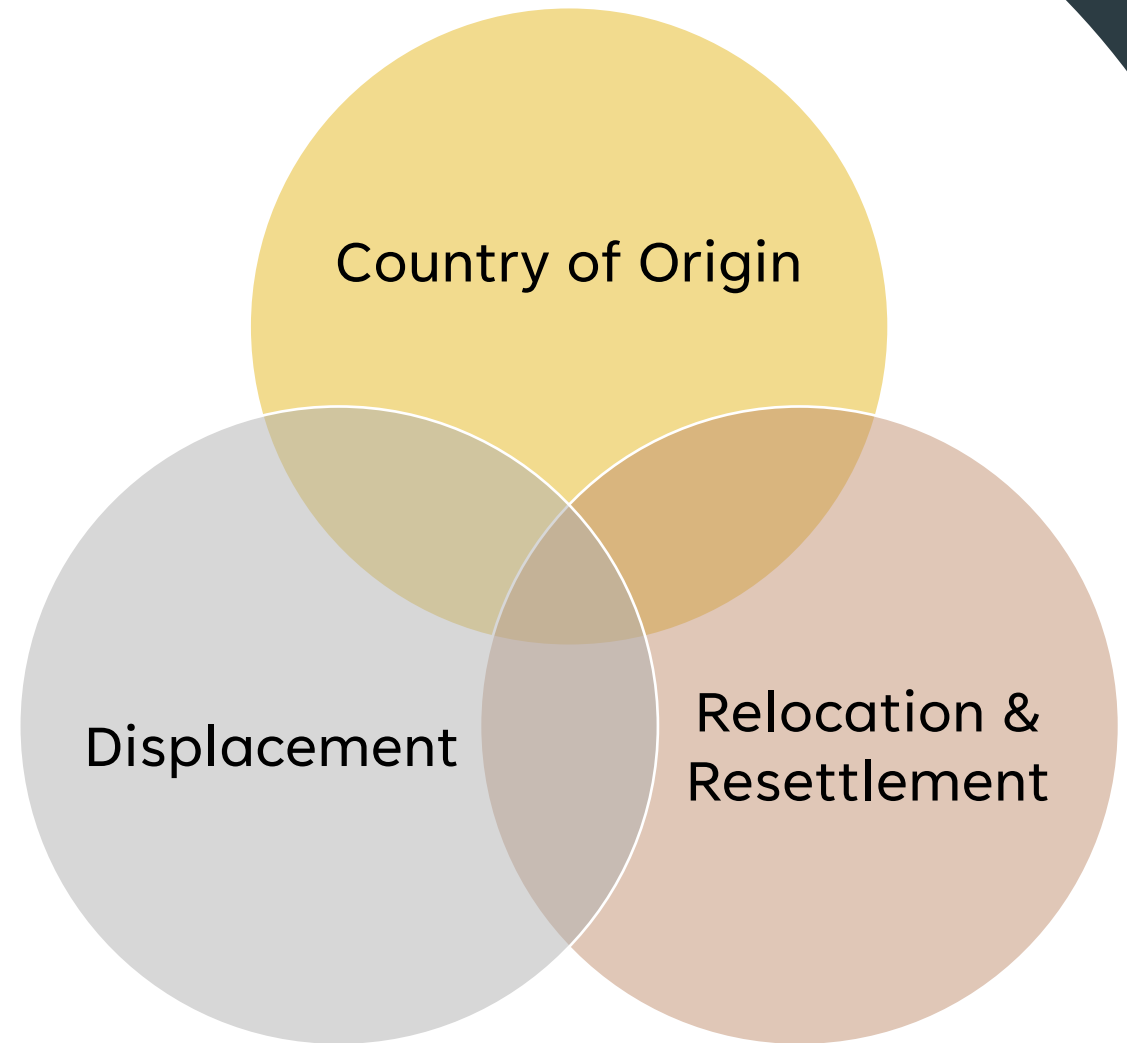
**>85 million**

**>26 million**

**<.05 %**

# Triple Trauma Paradigm

**Traumatic  
events  
≠  
Traumatized**



# Relocation & Resettlement

Separation from  
support systems

Marginalization  
due to language  
and culture

Poverty

Remaking of  
identity

Sense of  
belonging

# For Students

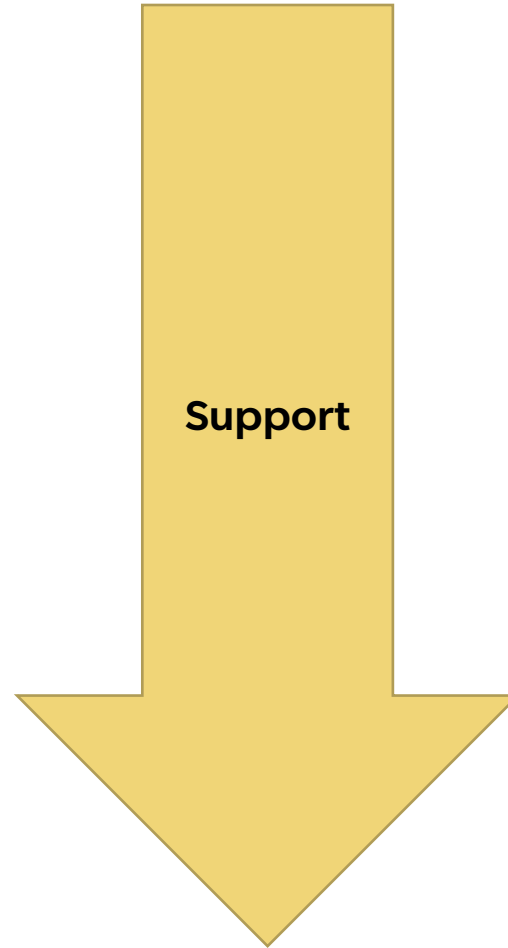
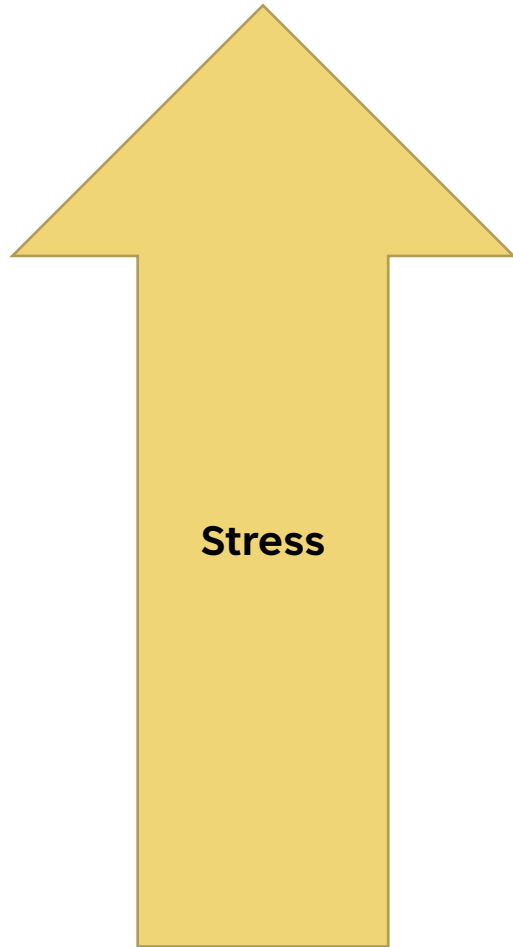
Interrupted  
education

Differing  
school  
expectations

American  
culture vs.  
home culture

Shift in  
child/adult  
roles

# Landscape



Think about a time when you experienced a significant negative experience.

How did it affect your thoughts, mood, behaviors?

How long did it last?

What made it better?



# Impacts

**Isolation**

**Difficulty  
focusing**

**Separation  
anxiety**

**Body Sx**

**Regression**

**Poor  
Concen-  
ation**

**Increased  
aggression**

**Worries**

**Sadness**

**Poor  
sleep**

**Difficulty with  
emotional  
regulation**



# Role of Schools & After School Programs

Routine

Positive  
Activity

Social  
Connections



# Enhance Routine

- Feeling safe and secure
- Knowing what will happen
- Understanding what is expected from you
- Feeling you can influence what happens to you



# Maximize Positivity of Activities

## **Sense of Self Worth**

- Feeling capable and confident
- Liking yourself
- Feeling you can achieve what you set out to do

## **Intellectual stimulation**

- Understanding the learning goals; feeling they are relevant to your life
- Connecting new material to existing knowledge and experience
- Feeling agency in how to achieve learning goals
- Feeling challenged and that you are making progress
- Having opportunities to learn in a variety of ways

# Facilitate Healthy Social Connections

## **Sense of belonging**

- Feeling included, cared for, and accepted
- Feeling part of a group and valued by the community

## **Positive relationships**

- Safe, stable connections with educators, staff, and other students
- Feeling seen, heard, understood, and valued



**What are the things you have done to enhance routine, maximize positive activity, or facilitate healthy social connections?**



# When Might Someone Need More Support

Intensity

Frequency

Duration

# Approaching the Conversation

## **Describe**

- Concrete terms
- Avoid words like like depression, mental health, etc.

## **Express care and concern**

- Ensure the strengths and the assets of the child/youth are centered

## **Inquire**

- Inquire what parents have observed, level of concern, what they ascribe it to
- Ask what they have already been doing
- Make them the expert in their child



# Approaching the Conversation

## Offer Information

- Normalize
- Bridge to US supports and services
- Provide anticipatory guidance

## Create touchpoint

- If they don't want services
- If they don't get connected
- If services aren't' helpful





**Trust**

**Rapport**

**Shared  
Goal**



**Questions?**



# Powerful Partnerships: Families, Communities, and Educators



Washington State  
Governor's Office of the  
**Ombuds** Education

*We listen. We inform. We help solve problems.*



# What is OEO?

The *Office of the Education Ombuds (OEO)* is an agency within the Governor's Office created in 2006 by the Washington State Legislature to *address barriers to student achievement and reduce the opportunity gap*.



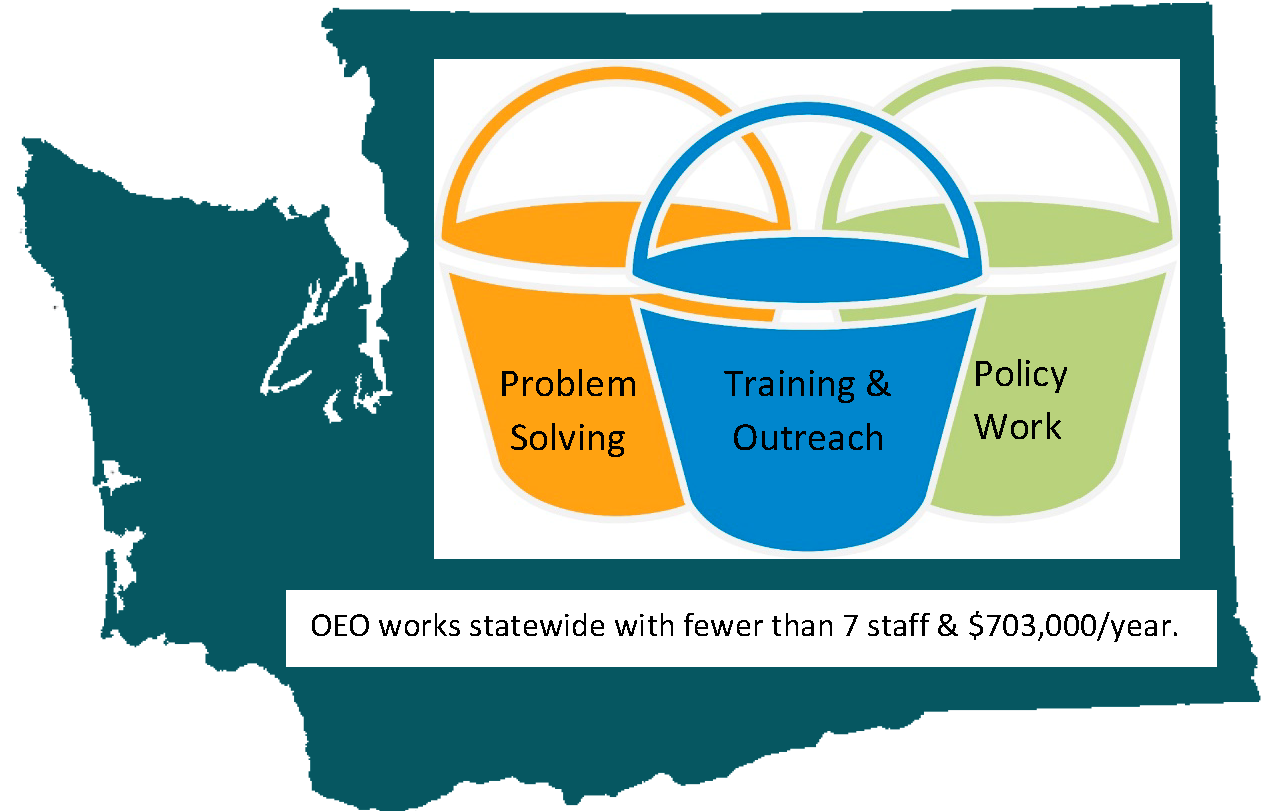
# Our Work: Free, Impartial, Collaborative

- Ensure **fair & equitable processes**
- Focus on **removing barriers** to student achievement
- **Provide information** about public education system
- Help **resolve disputes** between families and schools, collaboratively through informal facilitation and mediation
- Make **annual recommendations** to improve outcomes for all students

# Three Areas of Work

We work statewide in our three roles (casework, training, and policy) to support students and families:

- we work with one family at a time over weeks or even months to address questions and concerns about their student's education
- We provide training for groups of families
- We work to improve the system for families in areas like language access through state level meetings



We listen. We inform. We help solve problems.

[WELCOME](#)[GET OUR HELP](#)[EDUCATION ISSUES](#)[ABOUT US](#)[English](#)

[Home](#) / [Get Our Help](#) / A Question or Concern Affecting a Student in Washington's K-12 Public Schools

## Main navigation

A Question or Concern Affecting a  
Student in Washington's K-12 Public  
Schools ▾

A Question or Concern affecting a  
student in WA K-12 Public Schools

Permission Forms

Request a Training, Outreach Event, or  
Community Clinic

## A Question or Concern Affecting a Student in Washington's K-12 Public Schools

### Get Our Help:



**Online** – We encourage you to use our new [Online Intake Process](#). You will need to create an account with your name and a valid email address. After you create an account and complete the online intake process, someone will follow up with you as soon as possible to either provide information or schedule an appointment. Our online intake is available at all times, but someone will follow up during normal business hours.

### Business Hours

- Monday: 9:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
- Tuesday: 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
- Wednesday 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
- Thursday 9:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.



**By Phone** – If you prefer to talk to someone in person, or need assistance completing the online intake process, please call us toll free at **1-866-297-2597** during our business hours. Our staff can access phone interpretation for more than 150 languages.



**By Fax or Mail** – Download a [Request for Ombuds Services](#) form and submit the completed form by fax, mail or email (contact information is printed on the forms) to OEO. **Fax:** [1-844-886-5196](#).

# Casework

# The Washington State Governor's Office of the Education Ombuds: Strategic Plan

(August 2020-2023)

**VISION:** We envision a public education system that dismantles racism, ableism, and other marginalization to support every student's dreams for the future.

We value our independence, anti-racist values, and responsiveness to communities. We will learn as a team from families, students, and communities and promote this vision.

## MISSION

We work with families, communities, and schools to address problems together so that every student can fully participate and thrive in Washington's K-12 public schools.

## OUR ROLES

Listen to concerns and address questions about the K-12 public education system

Use informal conflict resolution tools to support collaborative problem-solving and promote education justice

Provide coaching, facilitation, and training about family and community engagement and systems advocacy



## Strategic Priorities

### Informal Conflict Resolution

OEO assists anyone with questions or concerns about Washington's K-12 public schools. We can provide you with information, referrals, toolkits, and other resources.

OEO's legislative mission is to reduce opportunity gaps. Our strategic plan priorities concentrate on education justice, especially for communities most affected by COVID-19. We are focusing our limited conflict resolution resources, such as informal mediation and coaching, on K-12 students who are:

- Out of school, including students with disabilities receiving partial school days
- People of color, Black, or indigenous
- Experiencing homelessness
- In kinship or foster care
- Involved with the juvenile justice or juvenile rehabilitation systems
- Immigrant, refugee, asylee, or migrant, or students or families whose primary language(s) is not English, or
- Receiving Wraparound with Intensive Services (WiSe) or Children's Long Term Inpatient Programs (CLIP) supports

### Strategies:

*Proactively build relationships with families, students, and communities seeking education justice in schools to listen and learn from their experiences and strengths*

*Create more online tools to answer common questions outside our direct intervention priorities*

*Identify opportunities to create systemic change through the individual concerns brought to us*

### Outreach

Our outreach priorities reflect the communities prioritized in our conflict resolution. We will also create materials and tools for issues outside our strategic plan to empower families, students, and educators in collaborating.

# OEO's Strategic Plan

# Outreach

Organizations serving:

- Immigrant, refugee, asylee or migrant families
- people of color, black or indigenous
- People experiencing homelessness
- Juvenile justice involved youth and their families
- Kinship families
- Families involved in foster care
- Families and students involved with mental health supports

# Clinics

- Clinic casework vs. Typical casework
- Pre-Covid vs. Now
- Collective concerns vs. Individual concerns

# Working with OEO on behalf of students:

- Student or Parent/Guardian contacts OEO directly
- Community professional contacts OEO on behalf of a student/family
- In either case, with a signed permission form, a Senior Ombuds can contact school/ district on behalf of the student

# Education Issues

[WELCOME](#)[GET OUR HELP](#)[EDUCATION ISSUES](#)[ABOUT US](#)[English](#)[Home](#) / [Education Issues](#)

## Education Issues

[Athletics and Activities](#)[Attendance and Truancy](#)[Bullying, Harassment, and Intimidation](#)[COVID-19 Novel Coronavirus  
Information and Resources for Families](#)[Discipline, Suspensions and Expulsions](#)[Discrimination](#)[Enrollment](#)[Family and Community Engagement](#)[Incarcerated Parents](#)[Language Access](#)[One Out of Five: Disability History and  
Pride Project](#)[Opportunity Gap](#)[Restraint and Isolation of Students](#)[School Choice / Transfers](#)[Supports for Students Experiencing  
Homelessness](#)[Supports for Students with Disabilities](#)

## Education Issues

### Have Questions About a Topic?

Take a look at our [main one-stop publications page](#), as well as these subject matter pages that are designed to help give you some basic information about educational issues:

- [Athletics and Activities](#)
- [Attendance and Truancy](#)
- [Bullying, Harassment, and Intimidation](#)
- [Family and Community Engagement](#)
- [Language Access](#)
- [Listening Sessions and Co-Design Full Report Quick-Start Guide](#)
- [One Out of Five: Disability History and Pride Project](#) Learning Resource for Disability History Month
- [Opportunity Gap](#)
- [Restraint and Isolation of Students](#)
- [School Choice / Transfers](#)
- [Supports for Students Experiencing Homelessness](#)
- [Supports for Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Suspensions, Expulsions, and Discipline](#)
- [World Language Credit Program](#)

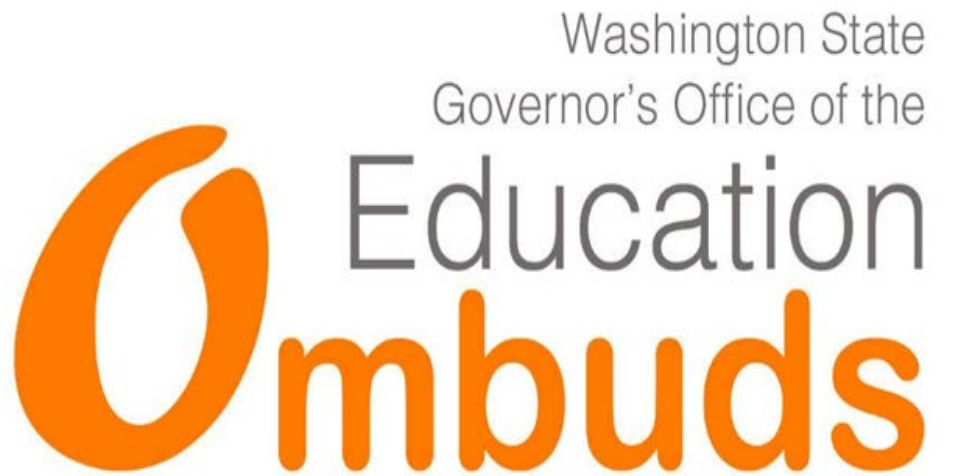
Explore [other community and government resources](#).



## Q & A

- What kinds of concerns do you have/ have you heard from those you serve about the education system?
- What are the ways Ombuds will work to address these kinds of concerns?
- What examples can we share?

# Thank You for Participating!



.....  
*We listen. We inform. We help solve problems.*

What new ideas  
will you be taking  
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