

Learning Series

A Humanitarian Approach to Working with Migrant Children and Adolescents

Fall/Winter 2021



UNICEF's learning series aims to equip organizational staff and volunteers to support the wellbeing of migrant and displaced children in humanitarian contexts, such as those experienced in reception sites or border shelters during a surge of arrivals. The learning series consists of live, interactive workshops, delivered remotely. The workshops draw from global guidance, programmatic interventions, and key skills, which have been applied in diverse humanitarian contexts around the world, including those with limited resources and staff capacity. The interventions can be implemented by staff and volunteers at a variety of levels and prior experience.

Objectives of the Series:

- Strengthen programmatic approaches that promote the safety and wellbeing of children.
- Increase knowledge, skills and confidence of staff and volunteers for engaging and communicating with children and families in a way that supports their dignity, resilience and wellbeing and minimizes harm.
- Promote the wellbeing of staff and volunteers working with children by preparing them for their assignments, clarifying their roles, and increasing self-care strategies.

Pre-registration is required, and participation is limited to 25 people per workshop. All workshops are free.

Participants can register for one or more of the workshops listed below. Several date and time options are offered for each workshop. Completion of the *Best Practices for Working with Migrant Children* workshop is a pre-requisite for the *Psychological First Aid* or *Psychosocial Support Circles for Adolescents* trainings.

Workshop Title	Duration	Date and Time Options All times listed are in Pacific Time
Best Practices for Working with Migrant Children in Humanitarian Contexts	1.5 hour session	<u>Choose one:</u> Friday, November 12, 9-10:30am Monday, November 15, 12-1:30pm Tuesday, November 16, 3:30-5pm Wednesday, November 17, 9-10:30am Sunday, November 21, 4-5:30pm
Psychological First Aid with Migrant Children (unaccompanied and with families)	Two 2-hour sessions plus a 1.5-hour booster session (total of 5.5 hours)	<u>Choose one two-part workshop:</u> Thurs & Fri, November 18 & 19, 8-10am Mon & Tues, November 29 & 30, 2:30-4:30pm Wednesdays, December 1 & 8, 8-10am <u>Plus one booster session:</u> Friday, December 17, 8-9:30am Monday, December 20, 12-1:30pm Wednesday, December 22, 8-9:30am
Psychosocial Support Circles for Adolescents: Facilitator Training	Two 2-hour sessions plus a 1.5-hour booster session (total of 5.5 hours)	<u>Choose one two-part workshop:</u> Wed & Thurs, December 8 & 9, 12-2pm Mon & Tues, December 13 & 14, 12-2pm <u>Plus one booster session:</u> Wednesday, January 12, 12-1:30pm Tuesday, January 18, 12-1:30pm
Staff Wellness Chats	Four themed 1-hour peer support sessions, which can be taken as a series or as stand-alone sessions.	<u>Choose one or more:</u> Monday, January 10, 1-2pm Monday, January 17, 1-2pm Monday, January 24, 1-2pm Monday, January 31, 1-2pm



Register for one or more workshops [here](#)

Workshop Descriptions

Best Practices for Working with Migrant Children in Humanitarian Contexts

Description: This orientation is designed to increase awareness of best practices for working with migrant children in humanitarian contexts, including the Mental Health Psychosocial Support framework: an internationally-recognized humanitarian approach to supporting the wellbeing, coping, and recovery of migrant children and families. Participants will come away with greater knowledge and skills for assisting children – whether they are unaccompanied or with their families - by supporting their mental health and psychosocial wellbeing, coping, and recovery. Breakout groups will allow practitioners to focus on the needs of unaccompanied children or children who arrive with families, according to organizational focus.

Note: Completion of this workshop is a pre-requisite for the two subsequent trainings, Psychological First Aid and Psychosocial Support Circles for Adolescents.

Psychological First Aid with Migrant Children

Description

This 3-part workshop is an interactive, skill-building training on Psychological First Aid, a Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) intervention for providing humane, supportive, and practical assistance to acutely distressed children in a way that promotes the recipient's safety, dignity, and rights. Psychological First Aid (PFA) is used extensively around the world in contexts with helpers who have had minimal prior experience. The PFA model presented is based on WHO guidelines but adapted for those who work with children in the U.S. migration context. This is a more intensive skill-building training for frontline staff who should be prepared to provide immediate support to children in distress. Case examples will include a variety of scenarios so that it is relevant for those working with families as well as those working with unaccompanied children. *Completion of the Best Practices Workshop is a pre-requisite for this training. Certificates of completion will be provided.*

Objective: Increase participants' knowledge, skills, and confidence on how to support migrant children (and families) in distress by understanding their needs, helping them to cope, and connecting them to resources.

Psychosocial Support Circles for Adolescents: Facilitator Training

Description: [Adolescent Circles](#) are structured arts-based activity sequences developed by UNICEF to promote the psychosocial wellbeing of adolescents in humanitarian contexts. This training provides an overview of relevant activity guides and resources, organized specifically for the context of migrant children in the United States. It prepares participants for all the technical aspects of coordinating Adolescent Circles. Participants will learn how to plan and set up Adolescent Circles, how to conduct them, how to assess their progress, and how to transition adolescents out of the circles and into other activities for psychosocial wellbeing. *Completion of the Best Practices Workshop is a pre-requisite for this training. Certificates of completion will be provided.*

Objective: Participants will be able to set up and carry out structured, arts-based programming to promote the psychosocial wellbeing of migrant adolescents.

Wellness Chats

These 1-hour workshops offer staff and volunteers a participatory opportunity to find peer support, engage in facilitated discussion, and explore practices that protect and promote their wellbeing while working within challenging humanitarian contexts. Participants can take any one of the four workshops as a standalone session or join the whole series.

Workshop #1: The Impact of Client Stories

In our work, we may hear difficult stories about traumatic and stressful experiences that others have gone through. These stories can motivate us, but may also leave us feeling drained. Understanding the relationship between the context we work in and our risk for secondary exposure can help protect ourselves from the effects of listening to client stories and our tendency to “take them home.” Discussion will focus on how to relieve the stress of difficult stories, find strength in the people we work with, and maintain our compassion while protecting our wellbeing.

Workshop #2: Boundaries & Borders

Understanding our role in our work is essential to our own wellbeing. As professionals, whether we are staff or volunteers, respecting our agreement with our organization, the community of guests we serve, and ourselves is a protective factor for mitigating the risk of burnout. Discussion will focus on identifying our boundaries, ways of protecting our role/boundaries, understanding our limitations, and reaching out to others for additional support.

Workshop #3: Navigating a Dynamic World

Like the world we live in, the context we work in is a dynamic, fluid environment. The best planning and preparation can be thwarted by the ever-changing landscape of policies affecting asylum seeking and resettlement in the United States. The work we do, as well as how we feel about the work we do, will be influenced by outside factors such as government policies, news and media reports, and also reactions of friends, family, and community around us. Discussion will explore how we navigate through negative environments in order to stay positive about the work we do. It will also address how to work through stress to aid building resilience.

Workshop #4: Meaning Making - What Sustains Us in Our Work?

In this work, we encounter a diverse community of people and circumstances. Knowing what motivates us to keep going is essential to efficiency and longevity in our work. Discussion will focus on what brings us meaning in our work, how we can find new meaning if we have lost it, and encouraging one another.

Register for one or more workshops [here](#)

For additional information contact:

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