



Build Connection & Trust

Use cultural ways to show respect:

- Stand up during hellos and goodbyes
- Put your hand over your heart and lower your gaze when thanking a person
- Use “jaan” (a term of respect) when addressing or acknowledging someone of the same gender
- Ask what name they would like to be called (elders don’t use first names)
- Be open to giving them a familiar name (like auntie or uncle-jaan)
- When speaking to a family, acknowledge all family members
- Do not use children as translators



Maintain & Strengthen Family Relationships

- Make sure parents are supported in making decisions about their children’s needs
- When talking to a family, respect the role of the parents
- Help parents develop knowledge and skills on how to help children in the new environment
- Normalize challenges (i.e., I know things are different here and there are many new things to learn so let me know how I can support you or support your children)
- Respect cultural parenting practices unless they are harmful
- Always center the parent as the authority in making decisions about their children’s future
- Help families develop a shared understanding of family/parent/child goals and needs



Align with Child/Family Goals & Use A Strength-Based Approach

- Use strength-based framing by asking children/families what strategies they used before to deal with an issue
- Ask about their understanding of an issue and their ideas about dealing with it before making suggestions
- Frame action as being a step towards a life goal (e.g., education, housing, employment) rather than because something is wrong with them
- Frame support as being grounded in supporting the child/family as they try to achieve their goals
- Formulate important tasks to be addressed based on what the child/family identifies as being important to them and link all activities to the achievement of that goal



Good to Know

- Be calm and compassionate
- Respect culture and diversity
- Actively listen without going into task mode too quickly
- Voice modulation is culturally bound; reflect on your biases
- Don’t assume that nonverbal communication gestures (e.g., thumbs up) have the same meaning across cultures
- Let them share stories of their home country or their previous experiences but do not probe them for more details
- Help them adjust to the new community they will be resettling into (practical matters such as how to make appointments, connect with resources, learn English)
- Provide strategies for helping cope with current stress and trauma
- For additional trauma-informed strategies, review [PFA for Displaced Children and Families](#).