

Introduction for Staff/Volunteers

This Toolkit was developed to support the psychosocial wellbeing¹ of migrant and refugee families who are newly arrived to new and/or temporary spaces and largely on their own. Many migrant and refugee children and families have faced overwhelming and challenging experiences in their home countries and on their journeys, which are compounded by the uncertainty and stresses related of their new environment. While the toolkit is ideally used as a part of a broader programmatic response to support children and families' mental health and wellbeing, it provides some concrete ideas for families to find comfort and support during challenging times.

Activities in the kit are varied to support the “whole person” and to strengthen the relationships between children and their caregivers while being together. Families and older children can do most of the activities from the kit independently. Staff and volunteers can also use the toolkit for activity ideas to do together with families for further support; Just be sure to use a ‘Do No Harm’ approach.²

So, what should you do from here? If you simply hand this to a caregiver, they might be too overwhelmed at everything going on around them to use it. A good first step is to explain what it is and how families can use it. The toolkit is structured as follows:

Section 1: Overview for families explains what the toolkit is and how to use it.

Section 2: Creating rhythm and routine with semi-structured schedules. Having a consistent schedule for children is extremely important for their wellbeing. It helps them feel safe and secure, keeps them engaged and learning, and helps reduce family stress.

Section 3: Activities for families and children, divided by the types of activities as follows:

- Creative Activities
- Physical Activities
- Educational Activities
- Online Resources of activities for children and families, including free English language lessons, parenting during challenging times, and cultural orientation resources.

In order for families to use the Toolkit, they will need the following **supplies**:

- hard copy of this toolkit
- pencils
- colored pencils or crayons (washable)
- paper (blank or lined paper or journals)
- printed copies of the emotions and coloring pages, attached to their packet.
- Tablet, computer or internet connected monitor for online activities.

For additional help understanding how to use this toolkit, please contact migration@unicef.org.

¹ ‘Psychosocial wellbeing’ refers to a positive state of being where someone thrives as a result of their psychological and social needs being met.

² ‘Do No Harm’ is a basic humanitarian principle that cautions against the unintentional harm that may be caused to those who are supposed to benefit from any intervention.