

parents in healthy marriages are more likely to have a higher sense of self-esteem, form healthy marriages when they marry, attend college and are physically healthier.

In summary, ORR seeks to use this announcement to provide opportunities for refugees to strengthen marital and parenting skills within healthy and supportive relationships. ORR also seeks to expand understanding of the refugees' marriage and family difficulties in the resettlement experience and the factors that contribute to successfully meeting the challenges to the marriage relationship. Despite difficult hurdles such as trauma, cultural adjustment and low wage jobs, refugee families are resilient. Once in the U.S., most envision a bright future for themselves and their children. If the issues faced by refugee families are addressed early through marriage education, the problems they encounter may be reduced or prevented and refugee families can achieve the bright future they seek.

Other Vulnerable Refugee Family Members: Elderly and Youth

ORR is also interested in programs that support services for the elderly and youth, who may be the more vulnerable family members. Refugee elderly and youth have also experienced or witnessed persecution. They also face hardships while resettling and pose unique challenges to their families, communities and the agencies that seek to serve them.

Older refugees face various issues that make them particularly vulnerable: chronic health and emotional problems stemming from the conditions of refugee flight; family loss or separation; an inability to advocate for themselves because of cultural, linguistic, or educational barriers; limited access to appropriate health and social service agencies; limited income due to lack of work history; and barriers to meeting the requirements for naturalization. Many older refugees in the United States, particularly women, live in difficult circumstances in which they may live alone without a caregiver, have low incomes, or may be abused, neglected or exploited. Additionally, some elderly refugees have lost Supplementary Security Income and Medicaid due to expiration of eligibility.

Refugee youth also confront a number of challenges as they integrate into American society. Because youth usually adapt more quickly to their new surroundings than adult refugees, relationships with parents often undergo stress and change. Youth often learn English more quickly and become

translators for their parents. This shifts power to the young, disrupting traditional relationships within the family. Refugee youth often face problems in the United States that did not exist in their home countries, depriving them of the wisdom and experience of their parents who never dealt with these problems. Youth also face dilemmas surrounding relationships with the opposite sex, as male/female relationships in the U.S. may differ significantly from those of their home country. In addition, the stress of working while attending school, along with conflicts with students, teachers and school administrators over conduct, dress or diet may impede success at school. Refugee youth may also reject their home culture and desire acceptance from peers in the U.S. This desire for acceptance can lead to discipline problems in school and at home and to problems with local law enforcement agencies.

Through category 3 of this announcement ORR seeks to fund programs that address the particular challenges faced by refugee elderly and youth so that they can meet the challenges in their resettlement experiences.

Category 1—Marriage Enrichment Projects

Category 1 Purposes and Objectives

ORR intends to award funds, under one cooperative agreement, to a public or private non-profit agency with extensive knowledge of and comprehensive experience in working with refugees through (1) reception and placement services and (2) ongoing resettlement activities. Through this cooperative agreement, the grantee will meet the needs of a wide variety of ethnicities among recently arrived refugee populations. To reach these populations and to ensure that the services provided are culturally and linguistically appropriate, the applicant should have local offices or affiliated organizations with an ongoing relationship to, and the trust and respect of each group of refugees. The family enrichment activities proposed in this announcement may be outside the experience of many refugees and may be difficult to implement without a well-established relationship between the refugees and the applicant.

Applicants should describe their efforts to create collaborations, with both national and local marriage education providers who have knowledge or expertise in family strengthening activities. Information

about organizations providing marriage enrichment activities can be found on the ORR web site at: <http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/orr/programs/>, or applicants may contact Irving Jones, Division of Community Resettlement, ORR, Administration for Children and Families (ACF), (202) 401-6533; E-mail: ijones@acf.hhs.gov.

ORR expects that approximately 90 percent of the funding will be expended at the local level, and that the applicant should budget for no more than one full-time staff person at the national level. Through this cooperative agreement, ORR intends to review and approve: (1) A plan for sub-grants, including plans for geographical distribution and technical assistance; (2) a plan for implementation, which should include the building of coalitions and client outreach; (3) all written materials developed and proposed for dissemination; (4) timelines and major program outcomes; and (5) a reporting format that outlines the difficulties refugee couples face, a description of the proposed intervention and the impact of the intervention on the refugee family.

Category 1—Allowable Activities— Projects may be designed to translate and adapt contemporary American approaches to traditional refugee practices and cultural settings, in coalition with marriage enrichment organizations, at both the national and local levels. ORR supports creative and unique approaches that address the needs of refugee families as well as the development of strategies for partnerships with marriage enrichment organizations. Applicants may propose activities that include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Award 10–20 sub-grants to local organizations to conduct marriage enrichment activities with refugees.
- Develop culturally and linguistically appropriate marriage enrichment and family strengthening materials to be used in training local refugee communities.
- Assist sub-grantees, in coalition with marriage enrichment organizations, to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate communication and conflict resolution skills training to refugee couples to help them improve their relationships and enrich their marriages.
- Assist sub-grantees to train refugee couples to act as mentors in their ethnic community. Newly married refugee couples should be considered a priority group for mentoring.
- Conduct local workshops on marriage and relationship skills for refugees that may include coping with the customs of a new community,