



# Rain Barrel Communications

Speaking the Language of Development & Social Justice

## Social and Emotional First Aid for Immigrant Families and Children: From Trauma and Stress to Resilience

*Communication materials and workshops for immigrants and practitioners focused on increasing resilience during stressful times, tailored to your needs.*

Migration to another country is stressful in the best of times. But in today's current political climate, being an immigrant or refugee can be particularly traumatic, especially if one's legal status, or that of a family member, is an issue. Possible deportation and family separation... xenophobia and racism... loss of support networks... increased economic hardship and prolonged uncertainty... all contribute to toxic stress, with potentially devastating impact on cognitive thinking, risk assessment and family relationships. Traditional coping mechanisms rooted in culture and accustomed hardship often kick in, providing a measure of protection and triggering spirited resistance. For many people, however, fear, depression, anxiety, confusion and anger may result. Regressive behaviors often occur in children of all ages. Disruption in the home leads frequently to social, emotional and physical abuse of children, which suppresses further healthy development.

In addition to legal, economic and logistical help, families also need social and emotional "first aid" – psychosocial support – in order to cope more effectively and make the right decisions when choices are few and the stakes are high. Research shows the benefits of short-term, low-cost support, delivered in a variety of virtual and face-to-face formats. But this kind of emergency support is generally lacking, even among the diverse and excellent services offered by practitioners and organizations that help immigrants.

### What Rain Barrel can do for you

Our Associates have successfully trained professionals and community members to help build resilience, confidence and new skills in families and children traumatized by natural and manmade disasters in many countries.

- **Workshops:** Based on approaches we helped UNICEF to develop (see: [www.unicef.org/cwc](http://www.unicef.org/cwc)), our Associates can work with immigrants and service providers to develop written and audio-visual "first aid" materials in 1- to 6-day long workshops (in English or Spanish) to strengthen the resilience of children and adults alike.
- **Webinars:** We offer 1- to 2-hour long webinars for service providers and other professionals on science-based communication strategies for supporting children and families in crisis.
- **Writing and editing:** We can produce materials for communicating with children and families in traumatic or stressful situations, based on science and lessons learned consulting with UN agencies and governments around the world.

215 West 98<sup>th</sup> Street, #6D • New York, NY 10025 • 646 509 8712

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- **Campaign and strategy design:** We can help you design and produce media campaigns and storytelling strategies to reach your target audiences with positive messages and practical advice in times of crisis.
- **Videos:** Our Entertainment-Education creatives and videographers will work with you to develop live-action or animated shorts illustrating positive strategies for adults, teenagers and young children facing stress and trauma.

We never use one-size-fits all approaches; we work with you to meet the specific needs of your organization and audiences. With several Spanish-speakers on our roster, we can work fluently in written and spoken Spanish.

Contact: Robert David Cohen, Director  
[robert@rainbarrelcommunications.com](mailto:robert@rainbarrelcommunications.com)  
+1 646 509 8712