

## *Welcome to Our Schools* Curriculum

The CCSD ELL Division is grateful for the generosity of The New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance for providing us the rights to share their *Welcome to Our Schools* curriculum with our teachers. This curriculum was developed for New York Teachers of Refugee students. With this in mind, there are a few lessons that we will be offering adaptation suggestions to address the needs of Newcomer students living in Clark County.

When deciding what modules to teach, keep in mind who your students are and what they need to learn about being in a U.S. school. As they state in their materials, “Instructors should review the Modules and select the materials that would be most relevant to the refugee students (CCSD Newcomers) enrolled in their school system, and most useful when designing lesson plans and classroom activities.” Also, you may have English-speaking students who do not qualify as ELLs who could benefit from the acculturation pieces of this curriculum. A student coming from England speaks a different English and can experience culture shock as they begin living in the U.S. Please use these materials, as they seem appropriate for these students as well.

Please review pages 4-8, Background for Instructors. As you read any of these materials, remember that the authors are in New York, and programs mentioned do not align to CCSD programs. Reading considerations are also attached for you to review before reading each module. We are providing these materials as a starting point for you to be able to develop lessons to meet the acculturation needs of your Newcomer students. Thank you for looking at these materials. The CCSD ELL Division welcomes your feedback on this curriculum as we are offering it to our schools for the first time this year. If you have any questions or need additional supports for your Newcomer students please reach out to our Division at (702) 799-2137. Also, please look at the materials and links specifically provided to address newcomer needs found on our website at [ell.ccsd.net](http://ell.ccsd.net). Most schools have an ELL Student Success Advocate. These staff members receive additional training from the ELL Division and can also act as a resource for you.

## CCSD CONSIDERATIONS

### Module 12: School Safety and Security

#### In this reading...

<b>When it says ...</b>	<b>Think...</b>
refugee	newcomer
Refugee Academy	school site
academic coach	mentor

- Other Vocabulary:
  - Earthquake Drill (Nevada Shake-up)
- Zero Tolerance activity must be modified to meet the requirements and understandings of CCSD Policy 5137. Follow the link: <http://ccsd.net/students/bully/> for more information.
- Videos are not available at this time.

# WELCOME TO OUR SCHOOLS



**BUREAU OF REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT ASSISTANCE**

**NEW YORK STATE OFFICE  
OF TEMPORARY AND DISABILITY ASSISTANCE**

**REVISED 2011  
ANDREW M. CUOMO, GOVERNOR**

The Refugee School Impact Grant (RSIG) *Welcome to our Schools*, which includes Refugee Academy and Mini-Academy Curricula, Parent and Professional Development Programs, a Guide to Academic Coaches, a Guide to the Videos, and the videos *Refugee Student Interviews*, *Refugee Parent Interviews*, *A Day in Elementary School*, *A Day in Middle School* and *A Day in High School*, was developed by the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, Bureau of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance (OTDA/BRIA).

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**MODULE 12**  
**SCHOOL SAFETY**  
**AND SECURITY**

## MODULE 12: School Safety and Security

### PURPOSE

The purpose of Module 12 is to inform students about strategies for staying safe in school and in their communities.



### OBJECTIVES

*Students will:*

- Become familiar with school safety
- Understand school policies about safety and security
- Learn strategies for self-protection



### SUPPLIES

***Handout 12 – 1:  
Zero Tolerance***

***School Law  
Enforcement  
official guest  
speaker***

***Prepare for a fire  
drill***

***Video  
A Day in School  
(Elementary,  
Middle or High  
School***



## MODULE 12: School Safety and Security

### VOCABULARY

#### Elementary Vocabulary

Fire  
Safety  
Dangerous  
Fire Drill  
Lockdown  
Neighborhood  
Emergency  
Bothering  
No  
Help  
Police  
Firefighter  
Evacuate

#### Secondary Vocabulary

Zero Tolerance  
Fire  
Gun  
Weapon  
Knife  
Cigarettes  
Alcohol  
Graffiti  
“Against the Law”  
Police Officer  
Firefighter  
Safety  
Security  
Dangerous  
Fire Drill  
Lockdown  
Emergency  
Bothering  
No  
Help  
Evacuate



## Key Points – School Safety



### 1. *School is a safe place.*



Module 12 focuses on basic safety issues in school, such as fire drills and “Zero Tolerance” policies.

The topic of school safety is a difficult one to discuss with students. They need to be reassured that school is a safe place, but they may be witnessing activities that make them uncomfortable or fearful, and they may be experiencing treatment that does not make them feel very safe.

Throughout Module 12 it is important for the instructors to concentrate on the positive aspects of school safety. Emphasize what students can do to stay safe and who they can turn to for assistance.

Instructors can start by explaining that school administrators establish systems for keeping students and employees safe. Some schools may have metal detectors, locker searches, resident police officers, and “lockdown” drills. Others may have policies and disciplinary procedures in place. They are all designed to keep students safe. Reassure students the adults in uniforms are in the building to help them and keep them safe. Their past experiences may make them wary and afraid.

The students may have heard about or witnessed incidents in schools that would lead them to believe that American schools are unsafe. Emphasize that the incidents are rare. School personnel and law enforcement officials are paying close attention to possible safety concerns, and work hard every day to make schools safe and secure.

For many new students, the topic of safety can include the subject of gangs. Instructors may decide that the topic is relevant to the students in the Refugee Academy, and an expert in the topic should come to the Academy and talk to the students. There are community leaders, law enforcement officials, and counselors who are well versed in the subject and can provide the students with crucial information about avoiding gangs.



Module 12 does not address the topic of bullying and gangs in detail, because they are specific to each school and require instruction by experts. However, if the instructors of the Refugee Academy feel that students may be significantly impacted by gang activity in the neighborhoods of the schools, the subject must be addressed. Explain to the students that joining a gang may feel like being part of a “family” , but there are more positive alternatives. Invite experts on gang activity to visit the Academy and talk directly to the students. Alert students to methods that are used to recruit students into gangs, and how to handle pressures to join a gang. Above all, encourage the students in the Refugee Academy to discuss their concerns about gangs with the Academic Coaches.





## **2. Refugee students may be teased and bullied.**

Refugee students may be treated poorly by some students in school. It is necessary to warn the students in the Academy about this possibility, if they have not experienced it already. Explain the possible reasons for the teasing and bullying. Emphasize that only a few students will participate (more than likely with a group surrounding them for support) and they do not reflect the attitude of the entire school body.

Not all refugee students will be teased or bullied, but it is possible that they will be treated poorly, and it should be discussed.

Acknowledge that whenever students are “different” in the way that they speak, look, dress, or behave, they may be subject to teasing from their peers. Although they never deserve it and it should never be condoned, the refugee students can learn strategies for protecting themselves. The strategies vary from changing a schedule for walking home from school, gathering with friends, keeping valuables in a safe place and not at school, and developing humorous responses that indicate that the teasing is ineffective.

Talk about the significance of ignoring students who are teasing. Walking away and not responding can be a more powerful message than engaging. As one student explained when discussing her first few weeks in an American school, “I learned how to turn my back on the kids who were mean, and turn toward the kids who were nice to me.”



The students should be aware that if their learning is being disrupted by a student or group of students who are bullying or harassing, they need to report their concerns so that they can focus on the purpose of school. They may be hesitant to tell, but their personal safety may be at stake, and they may have difficulty concentrating on their studies. Point out that if a bully manages to disrupt the education of a refugee student, then the bully has “won.” Refugee students can succeed if they are not worrying about how they will be treated.

There are a number of resource materials for instructors on bullying and harassment in school. If the instructors of the Refugee Academy determine that the students may be victims of bullying, then it is essential that the topic be discussed openly and honestly so that students are prepared.

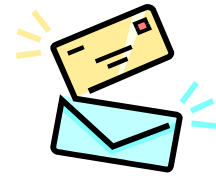


## **3. School rules, especially “Zero Tolerance” rules must be followed for school safety and security.**

Instructors should review school policies about safety and security and stress the importance of following the rules. Activity #4, to be used with middle and high school students, discusses Zero Tolerance policies in detail.

Students in the Refugee Academy may see other students ignoring the rules, or erratic enforcement of the rules. The rules may be different than in their native countries, and they may have trouble adjusting to them.

Remind students that administrators and teachers are always paying attention to safety issues. If they see a note with a dangerous message, it is not regarded as a joke, even if it was intended as such. If they hear a threat, witness suspicious behavior, or are told disconcerting information by a student, they take it seriously. They will check lockers, backpacks, coat pockets, and handbags if they are concerned about the safety of their students.



Stress to the students that they need to take the Zero Tolerance rules seriously and obey them at all times.

*Module 15: Staying Safe* addresses the topics of bullying, drugs and alcohol and gangs, and how students can avoid becoming involved in unhealthy and harmful activities.

# ACTIVITIES

## **ACTIVITY #1: PREPARE FOR EMERGENCIES**

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (90 minutes)

### **In this activity:**

Students will practice exiting the school for a fire drill, and will learn what to do during a lockdown. Many refugee students will be frightened by fire drill alarms. The sound of the alarm may trigger terrible memories. They may be accustomed to hiding inside when there is an alarm, rather than going outside.

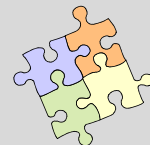


Talk about emergencies and why the alarm may ring. Explain that there are drills throughout the school year to prepare for the extremely rare possibility that there might be a fire or need for a lockdown.

Before ringing the fire alarm, explain that the class is going to talk about emergencies.



## **Discussion Questions**



### **What does “emergency” mean?**

- Define “emergency,” then explain systems for handling emergencies in schools.
- Describe the sound of fire alarms, and the different codes for lockdown. Explain when drills may occur and what students should do when there is a drill.

### **Who can help you in an emergency?**

- Explain that students may fear alarms, police in uniforms and the sounds of sirens, but they should be interpreted as indications of help on the way.
- Discuss how to call 911 and when a 911 call should be made.
- Practice asking for help in English

### **What if there is a fire in school?**

- Explain the exit systems.
- Practice fire drill procedures, including exiting from the cafeteria, halls, gym, and other classrooms.
- Take attendance at each drill so that students know the procedure.

### **What if the teachers want you to stay in your room to be safe, or what if they tell the class to evacuate?**

- The instructors will have to determine how much they want to discuss “bomb scares,” evacuations, and the reasons for school lockdowns. The students will undoubtedly hear about these issues, but it may be necessary to address them in general terms, depending upon the age and background experiences of the students in the Academy. The subject can be very upsetting to some refugee students, but necessary to at least discuss so that they are prepared should an evacuation or lockdown occur. Without going into details, explain that students will be told what to do by their teachers.

### **Why do we practice for something that will probably never happen?**

- Explain to students that it is important to know why an alarm is ringing and what they are supposed to do. A sudden alarm can cause unpredictable responses in refugee students, including flashbacks, anxiety, fear, and confusion. By practicing, the students can become familiar with the routine.
- Explain to students that they should listen to adults and follow exactly what they are told to do. If they are confused, they can ask a classmate to guide them.

### **What if there is an emergency at home or in your neighborhood?**

- Explain to students how to call 911 and have them practice asking for help.
- If students are in an emergency situation, they may need a translator. Practice what they can say to request a translator.

## **ACTIVITY #2: BE SAFE**

**Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (45 minutes)**



Show the video ***A Day in School*** (Elementary, Middle or High School).

Use the ***Guide to the Videos*** for introducing the videos and for follow-up discussion.

## **ACTIVITY #3: WHO CAN HELP?**

**Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (45 minutes)**

### **In this activity:**



Students will learn about who can help them when they do not feel safe.

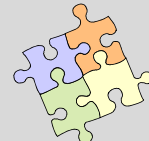
Activities related to safety and security may give students the impression that they should always be afraid for their safety. Stress throughout this activity that students just need to be prepared. The chances are slim that there will be an actual emergency, and adults stand ready to help them.

Point out that students can avoid emergencies if they play safe, obey school policies and procedures, and report concerns to parents, school officials, or law enforcement.

Remind students that they are protecting their peers if they tell adults that they have heard or witnessed something that makes them concerned or suspicious. Peer pressure and fear of reprisals will make them hesitate to tell. Reassure them that schools strive for confidentiality and many districts have established confidential hotlines, but even if it is not possible to keep the source completely confidential, students need to talk to a trusted adult if the well-being of others is at stake.



### **Discussion Questions**



**Who will you tell if you see dangerous activity, an accident, or a fire?**

**Who will you tell if you see someone hurting another person?**

**Who will you tell if someone is bothering you?**

**(Grades 6-12) Who will you tell if you see something suspicious? (Define suspicious.)**

**What if you are afraid to tell?**

## **ACTIVITY #4: ZERO TOLERANCE**

**Grades 6-8, 9-12 (30 minutes)**

### **In this activity:**

Students will discuss the specifics of rules of Zero Tolerance in schools.

As the topic is discussed, the instructors should provide students with different ways to resist peers who may try to get them to break the Zero Tolerance rules.

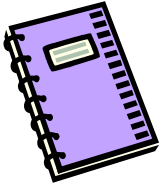


Distribute *Handout 12-1: Zero Tolerance*.

Discuss:

- The definition of the phrase “zero tolerance”
- Each item on the handout
- Reporting concerns
- Reluctance to report and the importance of telling an adult
- Student rights if there is a problem
- Translators, coaches, advocates who are resources in emergencies
- Drugs and alcohol on the school campus and in the community; New York State laws about drug and alcohol use and consumption
- School suspension policies, including suspension from athletic teams
- School records and employment and college applications
- Law enforcement personnel in school and as a resource for students and their families





## JOURNAL TOPIC

### Grades K-5

Draw a picture or write about how you would help someone who needed your help. Then draw or write about what you would do if you needed help.

### Grades 6-8

Draw or write about how you would respond if someone was bothering you or pressuring you to do something you didn't want to do. How do you choose the right friends?

### Grades 9-12

Draw or write about how exactly you would resist something that you knew was against school rules and against the law, but you didn't want to lose your friends who were pressuring you. How do you choose the right friends?



## SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Tour police and fire stations.
- Tour schools to discuss evacuation.
- Invite instructors in self-defense to talk to the Academy students about basic methods of protecting themselves. (This should be done if it is possible that students will be physically bullied on the way to school, or if they need to develop assertiveness skills to better protect themselves.)
- Invite a school counselor to facilitate discussion about worries, flashbacks, and past experiences with danger, with the intention of reassuring students that schools are safe environments.
- Invite the school police office and hall monitors to meet the students.
- Invite experts to talk to the students about gangs. (See Key Point 1.)

