



# Refugee Family Mental Health: Interventions, Programs and Social Connection

## Elizabeth Henninger

Advisor: Laura M. Leming, FMI, Ph.D.

Objective: To assess refugee family mental health, as well as effective programs and interventions to intercept the breakdown of social capital and connection due to mental health disparities.

### Importance of Research:

- Millions of refugees are displaced yearly → Violence, trauma & persecution indirectly & directly affect mental health
- Social Determinants of health & social adjustment → Social adjustment is defined as “a psychological or mental-health variable that relates to functioning in interpersonal settings such as peer, marital or family relationships” (Foroshani, Izadikah, Renzaho and O’Connor, 2019).

### Previous Studies:

- Hjern, A., Angel, B., & Jeppson, O (1998) → Assessed 63 refugee children between the ages of 5-9 with reports of poor mental health following resettlement.
- Political violence experience before resettlement & familial stress = biggest determinants of poor mental health.

### Going Forward:

- Early psychological intervention is crucial → Specifically among children & young adults
- Early interventions will lead to quicker & more effective assimilation, aids in formation of social capital & encourages social connection and cohesion
- EX. community centers, mental health support groups or organized activities.