

Welcoming and including refugee Ukrainian children in a school community



Preparing for bombing



Arriving at the border



Social and emotional learning in a Ukrainian school

Urgent support for schools

“Polina came to our bedroom awakened by the sound of explosions. I didn’t know and still don’t know what to tell her. Her eyes today are full of fear and terror; eyes of all of us.”

Alina, mother of two children from Kyiv on instagram. Her daughter Polina is 7 years old.

Welcoming and Including refugee Ukrainian children in a school community

Europe is facing the worst humanitarian catastrophe since the second world war. Millions of Ukrainian children who, with their families, have been severely traumatised by displacement, separation, loss and war are seeking refuge throughout Europe.

Once the physical imperative of resettlement into communities, accommodation and schools is met, attention must critically focus on restoring children's social and emotional wellbeing. Without this immediate and on-going support refugee children suffer long term disruption to their growth, development and life chances. Their child rights are denied.

Based on research into the long-term effects on children displaced during the second world war, the Including Children Affected by Migration (ICAM) Programme is available right now to help schools offer a secure and safe environment of 'convivencia' (a Spanish word meaning 'living together in harmony')

Convivencia creates a school climate in which displaced children are helped to settle and begin recovering from the disruption to their lives. Their wellbeing and ability to learn can be restored.

The business of schools is learning. Children's brains will not allow them to learn effectively if they are uncomfortable, frightened or unhappy. With help to improve their social and emotional wellbeing in school and in the home, children can recover from traumatic experiences and regain the relationships for learning that allow them to thrive.

The ICAM programme has been adapted to provide the most essential guidance, lesson materials and parent/carer support in 5 features of schools who successfully include refugee children in their community.

1. Raising staff understanding of the past and present experiences of refugee children and their possible effects.

Guidance helps school staff understand the severe effects of separation and loss on children who have been displaced.

2. Applying effective whole school strategies for the induction of displaced children into the school community

There is guidance on how to involve everyone in welcoming, befriending and settling refugee children into their new school community.

3. Providing additional support for displaced children's social and emotional learning and general wellbeing

A guide and series of mentored group sessions for displaced children helps restore their social and emotional wellbeing. There are programmes for both secondary and primary children.

4. Implementing effective strategies to ensure the safety and the wellbeing of refugee children in and around school and whenever using the internet.

ICAM applies effective whole school strategies for bullying and violence reduction and provides sessions for children on safe and responsible on-line behaviour, developing resilience to on-line abuse and to fake news.

5. Forming a supportive partnership with the parents / carers

A series of tutored workshops for parents/carers helps them form partnerships with the school and continue restoring their children's social and emotional wellbeing in the home.

The ICAM partners are available to advise and support ministries, local authorities, national or international agencies.

Resources are free, and can be found at www.icamproject.eu

Download a short guide and packs of materials for use in schools

You can also access the more extensive handbooks, training programmes and learning and teaching materials for future use.