

IMMIGRANT FAMILY MENTAL HEALTH ADVOCACY (IFMHA) PROGRAM

Immigrant Justice

There is a vast and growing research literature documenting the negative physical and mental health consequences of the sociopolitical climate on immigrants, their families, and communities. Heightened psychological distress among immigrants with undocumented status and DACA recipients is fueled by anti-immigrant policies and leads to “chilling effects” that undermine public health. This guide is designed to help create safe and welcoming spaces for all immigrants, migrants, asylum seekers and refugees.

For more information please contact IFMHA Program Director, Dana Rusch PhD (drusch1@uic.edu)

01



Data Overview

Establish a broad understanding of the Global-US-Local context of human migration.

Why is immigrant justice important?

02



Self-Reflection

We have multiple roles as providers, educators, and researchers. We have different positionality within the local, national, and global community.

What does this mean for my clinical care, teaching, and research activities?

03



Providing Care in Times of Heightened Distress

Providers play an important role in creating safe and inclusive care settings for coping during times of uncertainty.

What resources do I need to support immigrant youth and families?

04



Advocacy and Action

Youth-led, family-centered, and community-driven resistance movements are critically important.

How can health care providers and educators best advocate for equity?

Acknowledgements: UIC undergraduate student interns with the IFMHA Program, Katherine Hernandez and Aidan Muñoz-Ripley, both contributed to the creation of this guide. A special note of thanks to Katherine Hernandez for her assistance with the Spanish translation.

IFMHA Program Guide for Health Care Providers

Providing Care Amidst Post Election Stress



Reflect: Seek information and support

We live and work in a state and city that immigrants call home. Take time to reflect on your lived experiences, as well as the lived experiences of students, trainees, colleagues, and the patients you serve.

Recognize how the sociopolitical context contributes to heightened psychological distress. Seek information to increase your knowledge, be informed about trusted community resources, and acknowledge what you might need to provide care during these times.

Prepare: Identify action steps

Think about 3 specific things you can do to cultivate welcoming, safe, and inclusive spaces across teaching, research, and clinical care settings.

Take time to read this [Open Letter to Undocumented Students, Families, and Allies](#).

If you are personally impacted, what do you need right now to take care of yourself, your family, and your loved ones?



Plan: Resources you can discuss with families

[Illinois](#) has [36 centers](#) across the state to help immigrants navigate resources and access social services. The [Welcome to IL Coalition](#) has resources/information for new arrivals.

- [iAmerica](#) Know Your Rights for different enforcement situations
- Language versions provided by [Immigrant Legal Resource Center](#)
- [NILC](#) simplified cards available in Chinese, Korean, Arabic, and Spanish
- Family Action Plans/Preparedness Plans are available on the [IFMHA Google Drive](#)

Spanish KYR cards available at IJR clinic

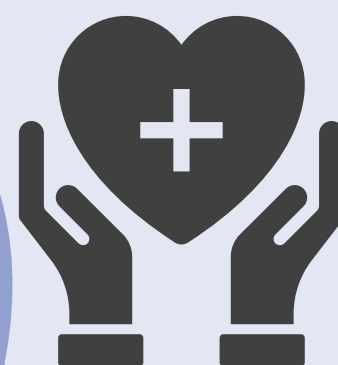


Support: Empowerment strategies

Think about 3 specific ways to incorporate empowerment strategies within your teaching, research, and clinical care activities.

Refer to "[Post-Election Support for Immigrant Youth & Families](#)" created by the Coalition for Immigrant Mental Health (CIMH) and Lurie Children's Hospital. Also, this [NLPA/United We Dream](#) resource can help you to plan and implement care strategies.

Be familiar with the coping resources on the Family and Community Wellness page. How will you use this handout to support youth and families?



Advocate: Consult with other providers and connect to advocacy networks

Health care providers, researchers, and educators are important advocates for equity. Follow local and national groups for more tips and information.

@cimhorg / <https://ourcimh.org/>
@icirr_il / <https://www.icirr.org/>
@uwdaction / <https://unitedwedream.org/>
@latinxtherapistsactionnetwork / <https://ltan.org>
@advancingjusticechicago / <https://advancingjustice-chicago.org/>
@refugeeone / <https://refugeeone.org/>



Family Coping & Community Wellness

Ways to Cope with Post Election Stress

At UIC/IJR, we support the mental health and wellness of everyone regardless of race, ethnicity, culture, immigration status, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, or intersectionality.

It is understandable to experience intense emotions and increased distress in response to racism and discrimination, xenophobia, and threats against your community. These experiences negatively impact mental health and one's sense of safety and belonging.

Many immigrant families are worried about their safety and feel uncertain about what lies ahead. Your UIC/IJR care team is here to support you. You deserve safety, health, and dignity and safe spaces to learn, play, work, and focus on your goals.

Emotional check-in

What am I feeling right now?
How does this feeling show up in my physical body?
What do I need right now?
Do I need to seek help or support?

This [IMFHA Program resource](#) will guide you through coping strategies and help in the moment ([Spanish version](#)).



"They tried to bury us, they didn't know we were seeds."

Coping with uncertainty and stress

[Immigrants Rising Undocuhealth Coping Workbook/Toolkit](#) and [United We Dream Resilience and Community Care Toolkit](#) provide mindfulness, relaxation, and grounding exercises.

[Dr. Cadenas](#) is a researcher and formerly undocumented immigrant who wrote about protecting mental health in the face of anti-immigrant discrimination and election stress.

[My Undocumented Life](#) provides resources and affirmations that can be helpful to you..

Seek support and build community

Your IJR provider is a resource you can lean on during these times. Seeking support from friends and family is an important part to building hope and coping with adversity.

Acts of resistance come in the form of finding moments of joy, silliness, hope, connection and gratitude.

You are not alone. Who can you turn to at school, work, or home? Community can be anywhere you feel empowered by the people around you fighting for similar goals.

You are not alone.

Empowerment and healing-- Your voice matters!

Youth-led and community-driven advocacy is powerful. In addition to safe spaces and support IRL, you might find it helpful to connect to information and community online or through digital & social media.

@cimhorg / <https://ourcimh.org/>
@informed_immigrant / <https://www.informedimmigrant.com/>
@immigrantsrising / <https://immigrantsrising.org/>
@unitedwedream / <https://unitedwedream.org/>
@undocublack / <https://undocublack.org/>
@defineamerican / <https://defineamerican.com/>
@icirr_il / <https://www.icirr.org>
@resurrectionproject / <https://resurrectionproject.org/>
@aafs_il / <https://www.aafsil.org/>
@hanacenterchicago / <https://hanacenter.org/>



Afrontamiento familiar y bienestar comunitario

Cómo afrontar el estrés postelectoral



En UIC/IJR, apoyamos la salud mental y el bienestar de todos, independientemente de su raza, etnia, cultura, estatus migratorio, religión, identidad de género, orientación sexual o interseccionalidad.

Es comprensible experimentar emociones intensas y un mayor angustia en respuesta al racismo y la discriminación, la xenofobia y las amenazas contra su comunidad. Estas experiencias impactan negativamente la salud mental y el sentido de seguridad y pertenencia.

Muchas familias inmigrantes están preocupadas por su seguridad y no saben lo que les espera. Su equipo de atención de UIC/IJR está aquí para ayudarlo. Merece seguridad, salud, dignidad y espacios seguros para aprender, jugar, trabajar y concentrarse en sus metas.

Breve autoevaluación emocional

- ¿Qué estoy sintiendo ahora mismo?
- ¿Cómo se manifiesta este sentimiento en mi cuerpo físico?
- ¿Qué necesito ahora?
- ¿Necesito buscar ayuda o apoyo?

Este [recurso del programa IMFHA](#) lo guiará a través de estrategias de afrontamiento y lo ayudará en el momento.



“Quisieron enterrarnos pero no sabían que que éramos semillas.”

Afrontar tiempos de incertidumbre

[Immigrants Rising](#) y [United We Dream](#) ofrecen cajas de herramientas que proporciona ejercicios de atención plena, relajación, y como sentirse centrado en el momento. Otras hojas informativas en español están disponible [aquí](#) y [aquí](#).

[Dr. Cadenas](#) es un investigador y ex-inmigrante indocumentado que escribió sobre la protección de la salud mental frente a la discriminación antiinmigrante y el estrés electoral.

[Mi Vida Indocumentada](#) proporciona recursos y afirmaciones que pueden ser útiles en tiempos de incertidumbre y miedo.

Buscar apoyo y construir comunidad

Su proveedor de IJR es un recurso en el que puede apoyarse durante estos momentos. Buscar el apoyo de amigos y familiares es una parte importante para generar esperanza y afrontar la adversidad.

Los actos de resistencia se presentan en forma de encontrar momentos de alegría, esperanza, conexión y gratitud.

Usted no está solo. ¿En quién puede confiar en la escuela, el trabajo o el hogar? La comunidad puede estar en cualquier lugar donde se siente empoderado por las personas que se rodean que luchan por objetivos similares.

Usted no está solo.

Empoderamiento y curación... ¡Su voz importa!

La promoción dirigida por jóvenes e impulsada por la comunidad es poderosa. Además de los espacios seguros y el apoyo en la vida real, puede resultarle útil conectarse a la información y a la comunidad en línea o a través de las redes sociales y digitales.

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 @defineamerican / <https://defineamerican.com/>
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