



# THERAPUTIC TECHNIQUES TO ADDRESS TRAUMA IN REFUGEE YOUTH



## 1 WHO ARE REFUGEES

Refugees are individuals who have been forcefully displaced from their home countries and are fleeing human rights violations, natural disasters, or political/ civil unrest.

## 2 NEEDS OF REFUGEE YOUTH

Many refugees experience challenges in their home and host cultures. Refugee youth generally experience prolonged trauma during and after resettlement. These experiences often lead to PTSD, depression, and anxiety diagnoses. However trauma-informed techniques have been developed and adjusted to address these concerns.

Rates of Diagnosis in Refugee Youth

PTSD 53%

Depression 33%

Anxiety 32%

(Kien et al., 2019)

## 3 NET & KIDNET

Narrative Exposure Therapy (NET) and Child appropriate NET (KidNET) are therapeutic techniques focused on healing through narrative/ testimonial processes.



Through the construction of autobiographical narratives clients are meant to confront their trauma and facilitate the emotional processing of traumatic events they have experienced.

Participant Symptom Score Reduction Post Treatment with TF-CBT

90%

Reduction in PTSD score

67%

Reduction in Depression Score

75%

Reduction in Anxiety Score

(Unterhitzberger & Rosner, 2016)

## 4 TF- CBT

Trauma Focused CBT (TF-CBT) is a specialized form of CBT focused on establishing safety and trust, relaxation skills, and reintegration.



## Mental Health Outcomes for Unaccompanied Refugee Minors (URM) and Accompanied Refugee Minors (ARM)

64%

URM met criteria for  
PTSS

36%

ARM met criteria for  
PTSS

(Müller et al., 2019)

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### EMDR

Eye-Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) is designed to desensitize clients to their traumatic memories, thoughts, and emotions and to replace them with positive ones.

EMDR utilizes visual stimulation to assist clients as they envision traumatic memories and related thoughts and feelings.

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### OTHER EFFECTIVE TREATMENTS

The techniques above have been found to effectively address PTSD and related disorders in refugee children and adolescents.

Additional techniques include:

- Child Center Play Therapy (CCPT)
- Art and Expressive Therapy
- Mein Weg (My Way)
- Multimodal Trauma-Focused Treatments



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### WRAPPING IT UP

Trauma-informed interventions have been shown to improve the mental health and well-being of refugee youth. However, more empirical evidence would help to showcase the full extent of these treatments effects.



References:

