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Ukrainian Crisis Impact on Refugee Youth

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- Different historical experiences for children between the East and West
- Since 2014 over 750 schools have been affected by conflict in the East
- According to a 2020 Humanitarian Needs Overview, there were 461,000 children in need of protection in Ukraine (Save the Children)
- UNHCR estimates 1.6 million children have left Ukraine and 2/3 of all children have been displaced
- Many children separated from families, unaccompanied and highly vulnerable to exploitation and trafficking
- Many children have witnessed and experienced acts of violence and gender-based violence
- Children need immediate access to basic resources like health care, psychosocial supports, and education

[UNHCR - Ukraine emergency](#)



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Insights From Ukrainian Refugee Women and Mothers



- Inesa, 41, from Mykolaiv, mother of 2 teenagers, former director of ESL programs in southern Oblasts
- Lena, 36, from Odessa, mother of 3, marketing director
- Both sheltered in accommodation sites outside of Chisineau, capital of Moldova
- Working as English Translators for humanitarian organizations
- Lena started her own organization called “Bad Moms” to support fellow refugee women
- Informal interview to discuss important themes to be aware of about the experience of Ukrainian Refugee Children

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Insights From Ukrainian Refugee Women and Mothers Con't



Serguei, Moldova

- Encourage open communication, never force decisions ex. Inesa son decision to leave Ukraine
- Children are experiencing terrible conditions ex. GBV, 15 days with no water in Mykolaiv
- Ukrainian children are taught from an early age resilience
- Ukrainian children will often not complain or ask for what they need ex. daughter wants “Dad Alive” for her birthday
- Allow children safe spaces to have their emotional reactions ex. anger, tears but do not push them
- Children are becoming adults too early ex. Inesa son feels he must protect his mother and sister
- Create spaces for them to be safe and be children
- Children with disabilities will have many setbacks from education delays ex. Lena son’s ASD

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Insights From Ukrainian Refugee Women and Mothers Con't



Two Orphans,
Moldova

School for Orphans,
Moldova



- Difficulty trusting new environments and normal objects ex. buckets in Bucha
- Survivor's guilt is a major issue among the refugee community particularly children with parents remaining in Ukraine "How can we be in safety when others are dying"
- "It took 2-3 weeks not to feel panic and reactive" ex. loud noises. Need to create calm environments
- "Need to create total silence for our bodies to recover"
- Once they recover, they want to feel busy and productive and have meaningful work and activity
- Will move from a place of avoidance to acceptance ex. 24 hours of news
- "can't bear the news" "can't feel compassion" children will need help to process

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Thank you!!

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