

We are called to strengthen communities by empowering people to respond to life's challenges.



If you wish to become a foster parent or mentor to a refugee child, or if you wish to volunteer to help these children in any way, please contact:

Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program
11 Shattuck Street
Worcester, MA 01605
774.243.3068 phone
508.519.8310 e-fax

230 Second Avenue, Suite 125
Waltham, MA 02451
781.373.9152 phone
781.373.9157 fax

URM-info@ascentria.org
ascentria.org/urm

In partnership with:
Massachusetts Office of Refugees and Immigrants
Massachusetts Department of Children and Families



Unaccompanied Refugee Minors



Ascentria Services
for Children and Families
A member of Ascentria Care Alliance

Formerly Lutheran Social Services of New England

Unaccompanied Refugee Minors
in need of safety, care and support.



These children are:

- Separated from parent or any adult to protect and care for them
- Seeking protection from persecution or captivity
- Fleeing violence, war and poverty
- In flight, alone and abandoned
- Seeking safety and hope
- Seeking a home

There are thousands of refugee children. You can help them.

Refugee Children

Ascentria Care Alliance is the only organization in New England that serves refugee children and adolescents (up to age 22) who come to this country without parents or guardians to care for them.



Ascentria helps refugee children:

- by placing them with stable, loving foster families; or
- by placing them in residential settings, where they receive all the necessary support services.

Both settings offer these children safety and personal care within a supportive structure, under the guidance of adults who are devoted to their wellbeing.

Basel

Basel was a refugee from Sudan. At age 10, he was made the group leader for 36 children at his refugee camp. All of his charges were younger than he was. Basel worked from 6 pm to 6 am. After work, he rested for three hours before going to school. The money he received from his work purchased food and clothing for his group. Eventually, Basel trained some in his group to make and sell bread. Basel was eventually granted refugee status in the U.S. He lives with a foster family and attends school. He still worries about the fate of his group.

Maria

Maria's mother left her abusive husband when Maria was only five. Maria went from relative to relative for five years. At 10, she was on her own, selling tortillas on the street. At 14, she paid smugglers to help her enter the U.S. After crossing the border, the smugglers forced her to work in a brothel to pay the \$3,000 she owed. Maria managed to contact authorities and the smugglers were arrested. She was declared a "Victim of Trafficking" and became eligible to be cared for through Ascentria foster care. She is now safe in her bilingual foster home. Maria goes to school and receives counseling to help her heal from her traumatic past.

Khan

After his father died, Khan, 14, fled his native Burma, hoping to find work in India to help his family. Rebel forces captured him and forced him into hard labor. He escaped into the Malaysian jungle, where he joined other refugees in a makeshift tent village. Khan applied for refugee status to enter the U.S., since he knew that if he returned home, the rebel forces would arrest him.

Ahmed

When Ahmed was 11, his father was killed by the Somali militia. At 16, he was attacked on the street by the same faction. He fled to a country where he had no legal protection or hope of settlement. Eventually he was granted refugee status to enter the U.S. where he went to school, joined the school soccer team, got a job, and began saving money to send to his family in Somalia.



Foster Care

Adults who wish to become foster parents to a refugee child must complete a home study conducted by Ascentria professional social work staff. Parents receive ongoing training and support from Ascentria and other experienced foster parents. Together, they build communities of care that support the refugee children's mental and physical health and meet their academic and social needs.

In 1979, Ascentria opened the first program in New England for unaccompanied children who have a history of suffering from violence, abuse or human trafficking. Our staff focuses on meeting the children's psychological, social, medical and educational needs.

Whether in foster care or residential care, Ascentria prepares the children for transition to independent living or further schooling. Ascentria works with the families and other concerned adults to create a continuum of support for the children. Many alumni of the Ascentria programs maintain lifelong contact with their foster families, returning 'home' for frequent visits.



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