



# Administration for Children and Families Office of Refugee Resettlement Unaccompanied Children Program

Expanding Licensed Provider Beds



ADMINISTRATION FOR  
**CHILDREN & FAMILIES**

# HHS Effort to Support Unaccompanied Children



ADMINISTRATION FOR  
**CHILDREN & FAMILIES**



The US Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is calling on partners across the country to ***support a broad-sweeping humanitarian effort to swiftly place thousands of unaccompanied children into safe, licensed community-based providers that have open shelter beds.***

We are ***working across federal partners in a unified and coordinated effort to align resources and remove barriers*** to support providers to join us in this effort as aligned with their capabilities and ability. Federal partners are working to streamline application and contracting processes, facilitate staff hiring resources, and increasing allowances to address resource needs.

The effort seeks to ***ensure unaccompanied children are supported in the same way we want our own children to be treated*** – with care, dignity and respect.

This means taking a different approach and intentionally shifting from larger facilities ***to smaller, community-based provider settings that use child development and trauma-informed approaches to provide care.*** This shift is critical for the existing response of the Unaccompanied Children (UC) program and the long-term shift to build a UC system that employs a child wellbeing framework through a strong and broad provider network.

The great majority, ***90%, of children are reunified with their families or sponsors who reside in the United States as quickly as possible.*** This means that children typically stay in a temporary licensed shelter placement for 35 day or less.



# Paths to Engage in Expanding UC Licensed Provider Beds



Key Dimensions	Path 1: Become a Direct UC Provider	Path 2: Become a Subrecipient to a UC Provider	Path 3: Provide Key Support Resources
Who is eligible?	State licensed shelter and child/youth residential care providers or state or county governments interested in becoming a direct UC provider.  <i>Providers can pursue Path 1 &amp; 2 concurrently.</i>	State licensed shelter and child/youth residential care providers who are interested in providing services for a temporary period as a subrecipient to a current UC provider that is a direct grantee.  <i>Providers can pursue Path 1 &amp; 2 concurrently.</i>	Businesses, organizations, and associations with support resources that UC providers need to be able to expand bed capacity ( <i>buildings; bi-lingual staff; licensed child care workers; case management</i> ).
What would this mean?	A state licensed shelter or foster care provider establishes a direct grantee relationship with the ACF Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR).	A state licensed shelter or foster care provider establishes a time limited subrecipient / subcontractor relationship directly with a current UC provider to provide beds for UC to respond to the current influx.  <i>Note that providers may be interested in joining a umbrella contractor as a subrecipient (see Path 1 option b).</i>	Entities/organizations identify resources they have available in need to enable expanding bed capacity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Licensed child / youth care workers</li><li>• Bi-lingual child / youth care workers</li><li>• Case management (virtual, in person)</li></ul>
Who is this best suited for?	State licensed shelter or foster care providers who would like to establish a direct relationship <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(a) grant (multi-year) OR</li><li>(b) contract (up to one year)</li></ul>	State licensed shelter or foster care providers who would like to establish a time limited subrecipient / subcontractor relationship AND who have capacity, staff, and/or support resources available to bring beds online safely and quickly.	National or locally focused businesses, organizations, and associations with support resources that align with the identified needs. Entities open to partnering or contracting with existing UC providers or subrecipients to enable additional staffed UC beds to become available.
What are the next steps?	Interested eligible providers review and submit an application based on best fit to the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR): <b>(a) grant (multi-year) using the single source application materials (provided in association documents)</b> <b>(b) contract (up to one year) using link to application materials provided below</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Interested eligible providers will be included on a list of interested subrecipients shared with current UC direct grantee providers</li><li>• Existing UC providers will seek out interested providers to engage in subrecipient or subcontract agreements and submit a proposal for ORR review</li></ul> <i>Core eligibility will be assessed by completing linked form and provided to current UC grantees.</i>	Entities with resources in need will be routed to the right party for review and next steps. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>For staffing and other resources:</b> providers will be directed to the ACF contracting process for consideration</li><li>• There are existing open contract solicitations for a key group of required services:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Direct Care Services</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Child Advocate Services</a></li></ul></li></ul>
Action to take	<b>(a) grant</b> - Complete single source application and submit to ORR. Application materials provided in associated documentation. <b>(b) contract</b> - <a href="#">ORR-UC-Shelter and Foster care services</a>	Complete <b>Interested Provider Survey</b> : <a href="https://orrresponse.force.com/s/">https://orrresponse.force.com/s/</a>	Complete <b>Interested Provider Survey</b> for staffing and other services that do not fit within the current open contract solicitations: <a href="https://orrresponse.force.com/s/">https://orrresponse.force.com/s/</a>

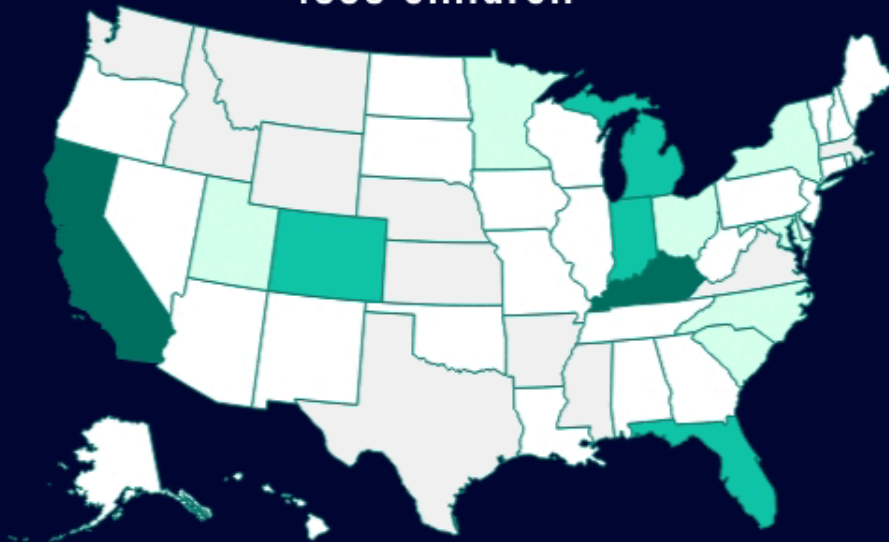
# New Capacity to Serve Unaccompanied Children - Providers Answer the Call



115 Community-Based Orgs



Potential to serve about 4000 Children



SOURCE:  
National list compiled and maintained by ACRC in partnership with state association leaders

Last Updated: April 7, 2021

## What is ACRC's role?

- Support providers of high-quality care and services to children and families
- Partner and collaborate with other national and state associations
- Connect capacity to need
- Share policy and practice expertise
- Facilitate conversations and information sharing

[www.togetherthevoice.org/supportinguc](http://www.togetherthevoice.org/supportinguc)



**LIRS**

BOARD OF CHILD CARE



**Bethany**<sup>®</sup>

# **Building a Foundation: An Overview for Providers Interested in Contracting with ORR to Serve Unaccompanied Children**

**April 23, 2021**

**Dana Anderson, VP, Refugee and Immigrant Children's Services**

**Kelly Berger, VP of Special Operations**

**Lorie Davidson, Director of Children & Family Services**

# Programming Locations

**Post Release Services:**

All states covered

**Shelter:**

California  
Florida  
Georgia  
Illinois  
Maryland  
Michigan  
Pennsylvania  
West Virginia

**Long Term Foster Care:**

California  
Maryland  
Massachusetts  
Michigan

**Safe Release Support:**

California  
Colorado  
Delaware  
Florida  
Georgia  
Iowa  
Kansas  
Kentucky  
Louisiana  
Maryland  
Massachusetts  
Missouri  
Minnesota  
Nebraska  
New Jersey  
New York  
North Carolina  
Ohio  
Pennsylvania  
Michigan  
Tennessee  
Texas  
Utah  
Virginia  
Washington

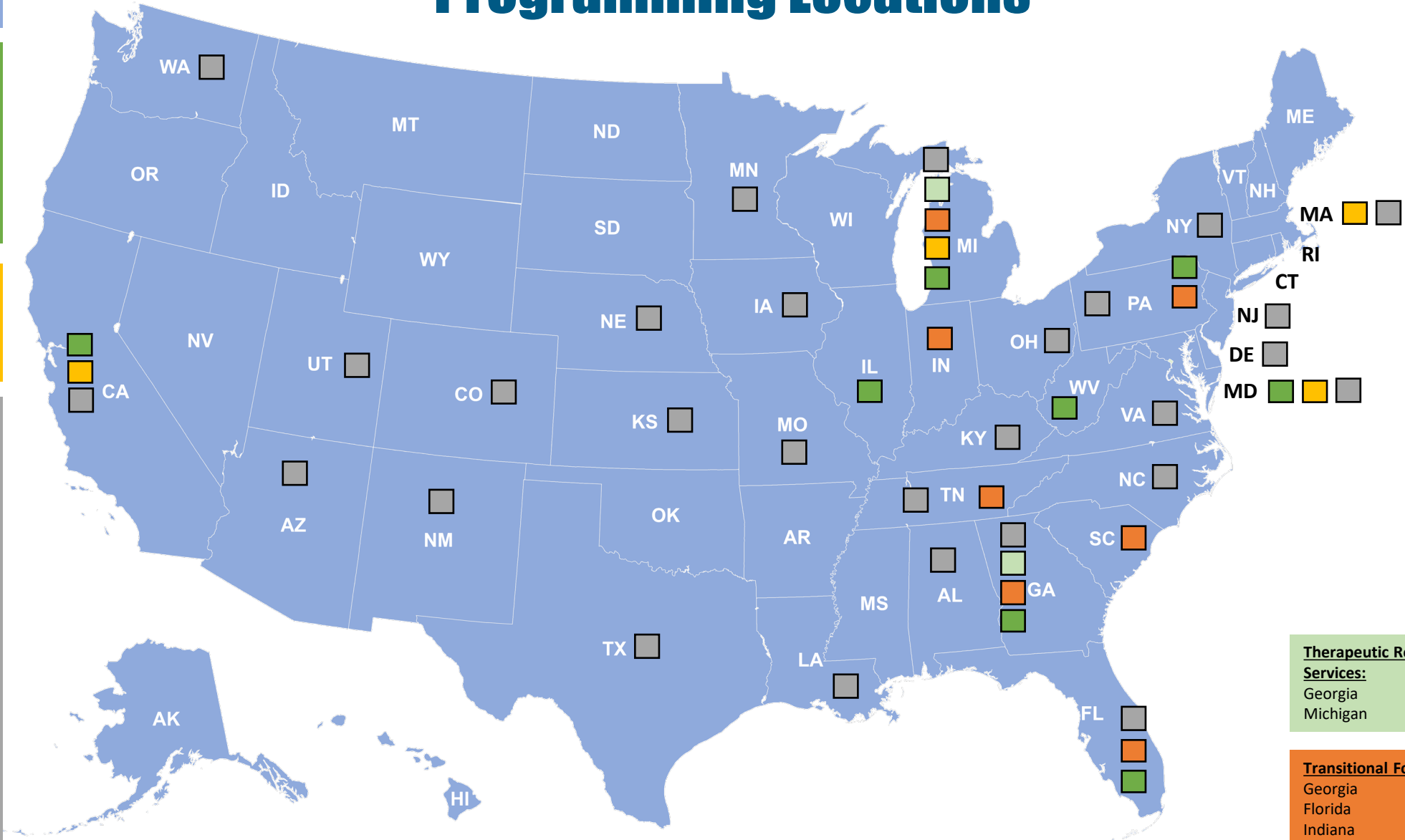
**Therapeutic Residential**

**Services:**

Georgia  
Michigan

**Transitional Foster Care:**

Georgia  
Florida  
Indiana  
Maryland  
Michigan  
Tennessee  
Pennsylvania  
South Carolina





# Who are unaccompanied children

Unaccompanied children (UC) are children under the age of 18 who have no lawful immigration status in the United States, and who, at the time of their apprehension, had no lawful parent(s) or caregiver in the United States to provide physical care and custody.



## UC STATISTICS

Number of children/youth referred to Office of Refugee Resettlement care

YEAR	REFERRALS
FY2020*	15,381
FY2019	69,488
FY2018	49,100
FY2017	40,810
FY2016	59,170
FY2015	33, 726
FY2014	57, 496
FY2013	24, 668
FY2012	13, 625

Number of home studies conducted by ORR and number of unaccompanied children served by post-release services (PRS)

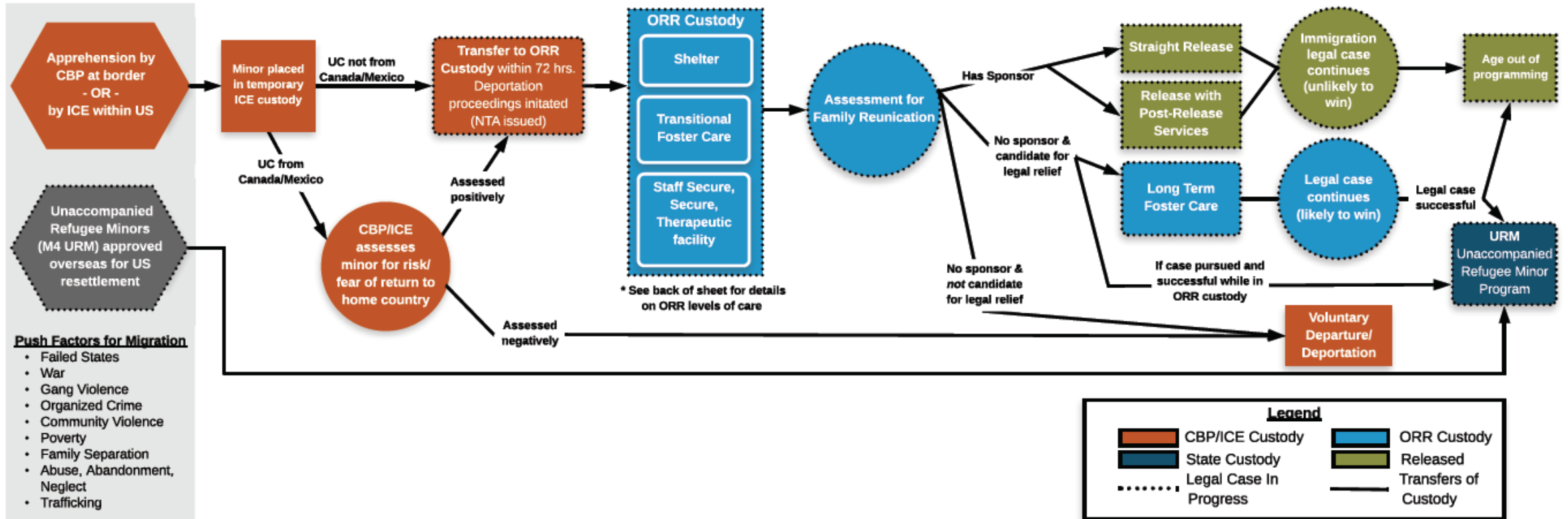
YEAR	HOME STUDIES	UC SERVED BY PRS
FY2020*	1,913	15,160
FY2019	4,875	14,518
FY2018	3,641	14,088
FY2017	3,173	13,381
FY2016	3,540	10,546
FY2015	1,895	8,618

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/orr/about/ucs/facts-and-data>

\*FY20 is an anomaly due to border closure resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic



# UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN FLOWCHART



# Vulnerabilities of Unaccompanied Children

prolonged family separation

acculturation struggles

trauma exposure

education gaps

pandemic pressure on economic survival

# Vulnerabilities of Unaccompanied Children

lack of legal guardianship in  
U.S.

caregivers predominantly  
lack legal status

children/youth are actively  
in immigration proceedings

# HOME STUDIES

Home studies (HS) are a short (10 day) exhaustive investigation of a potential sponsor's home environment, meant to inform ORR shelter staff as to if a potential placement is safe and appropriate. Reasons to conduct a home study can include:

- The minor is a victim of trafficking or abuse
- The sponsor is not related to the minor, or has sponsored other children before
- The minor or sponsor have other risk factors that need to be addressed

Home study workers:

- Interview all parties
- Inspect home environments
- Make recommendations for potential release



# POST RELEASE SERVICES

Post-release services (PRS) is a service that offers in-home case management to minors and their family upon reunification. The role of the PRS case worker is to help facilitate the reunification process and connect the family to community resources to assist them during the transition.

PRS is:

- Voluntary
- Client-driven
- Child-centered

PRS providers help families to:

- Cope with trauma children may have endured
- Access medical, legal, and parenting resources
- Navigate the complexities of the EOIR system



# SHELTER CARE

**Shelter Care** focuses on safe and timely release of Unaccompanied Children (UC) to sponsors. Shelter provider staff, including Case Managers and Clinicians, work closely with sponsors from across the country to ensure that reunification is safe and appropriate, and that the sponsors are prepared to become caregivers for the UC's.

Shelter programs are congregate care settings that ensure the safety and well-being of the UC's while providing program services on-site for the duration of time that the UC is in Office of Refugee Resettlement custody.

## **Shelter Care includes:**

- Majority of UC placements
- Youth ages 14 and older
- Typically youth that do not have special needs or other special circumstances
- Small group homes or larger congregate care settings





# SHELTER CARE



## Shelter services include:

- 24 / 7 staff supported living environment
- Trauma informed care
- On site case management and clinical services
- Medical services provided both on site and in partnership with community medical providers
- 30 hours a week of on site educational programming in a structured classroom setting by bilingual teaching staff
- Individualized assessments, individual, group and family counseling
- Daily recreation and leisure programming
- Access to spiritual life programming
- Acculturation opportunities that include psychoeducation in cultural history, legal issues and age of consent, racism and discrimination, and skill building aimed at preparing UC for life in the United States
- Vocational programming
- On site crisis supports
- Safe and timely reunification with identified sponsors following a thorough assessment of prospective caregivers

# The Role of Case Management in ORR Programs

With family reunification as the goal for all youth entering our programs, the **Case Manager** is a key member of the team responsible for driving the family reunification process.

Case Managers are responsible for:

- Interviewing the UC about life in home country, reasons for coming to the U.S, relationship with potential sponsors and other important information
- Thoroughly assessing the identified sponsor for safety and their ability to care for the UC
- Assisting sponsor to identify resources and services that will be needed for the UC once released to their care
- Meeting weekly with the UC to provide case updates
- Communicating with external partners related to case collaboration and recommendations



# TRANSITIONAL FOSTER CARE

**Transitional Foster Care (TFC)** focuses on safe and timely release of Unaccompanied Children (UC) to sponsors. LIRS works with partners across the country to ensure that reunification is appropriate, and caregivers are prepared.

The TFC program addresses the safety, well-being, and community integration needs of UC while they are in Office of Refugee Resettlement custody.

## **TFC includes:**

- Minors under the age of 12
- Pregnant/parenting youth
- Sibling groups
- Minors with specialized developmental, mental health, or medical needs.





# TRANSITIONAL FOSTER CARE



## TFC services include:

- Access to high-quality legal, educational, medical and mental health services.
- 30 hours a week of educational programming in a structured classroom setting by bilingual teaching staff.
- Safe and timely reunification of UC with sponsors following a thorough assessment of prospective caregivers
- Individualized assessments, acculturation and adaptation services, case management, education, group and individual counseling, legal support, mental and medical health care, and access to religious services.
- Adaptation services including educational programming in cultural history, legal issues and age of consent, racism and discrimination, and life skills.

# LONG TERM FOSTER CARE

In **Long Term Foster Care (LTFC)**, unaccompanied children without family reunification options who have been screened eligible for immigration relief are provided ongoing support as they integrate into their new communities.

**Through LTFC, unaccompanied children receive:**

- Case management services to ensure needs are met
- Legal services for immigration protection
- Access to medical and mental health services
- Educational services including English as a Second Language classes
- Opportunities to develop independent living skills
- The ability to transfer into LIRS's Unaccompanied Refugee Minor program



# LONG TERM FOSTER CARE

LIRS and its four long term foster care partners have served 474 unaccompanied children in three different states.

## UC in the LTFC program:

- Are typically between 10 and 17 years of age
- Are most often from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico
- Do not have a viable sponsor with whom to reunify
- Are pursuing or have attained some level of legal relief
- Have the option of being placed in a group home or with a foster family
- Will stay in the program for an average of 271 days





# Questions

Q & A