



Trauma Systems Therapy for Refugees (TST-R)

Since 2003, our team at **Boston Children's Hospital, Trauma and Community Resilience Center (TCRC)** has partnered with refugee and immigrant communities and agencies to develop evidence-based programs and resources to support the healthy adjustment of refugee and immigrant youth and families in the United States. Through innovative research and program evaluation, resource development, intervention development, advisory boards, and training and consultation, we support providers in delivering exceptional care to refugee and immigrant youth and their families. We are a site within the National Child Traumatic Stress Network and funded by, *Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)*, under the *U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*.

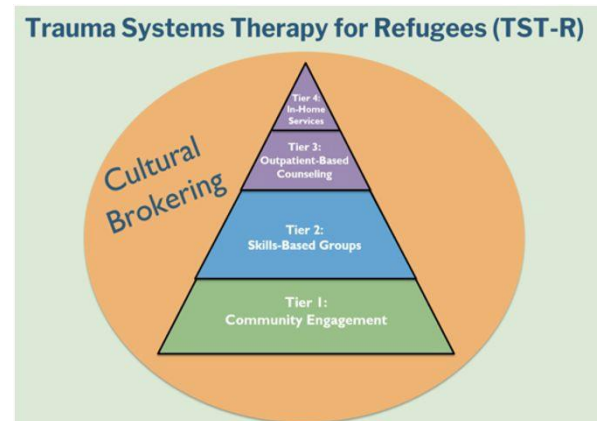
Our flagship intervention model, **Trauma Systems Therapy for Refugees (TST-R)**, embeds mental health services for refugee and immigrant youth in their communities, schools, and homes. TST-R is an adaptation of Trauma Systems Therapy (TST) for refugee and immigrant children/adolescents and their families that takes into account the migration experience in addition to cultural, social and logistical barriers (e.g., stigma, language, distrust) to engaging in mental health services. TST-R was specifically designed to increase engagement in mental health services, and to promote culturally responsive, linguistically appropriate care by pairing clinicians with cultural brokers across each tier of the model. **Cultural brokers** are members of the refugee/immigrant community who speak the language and are from the same cultural background organizations are hoping to serve. Our TST-R consultants at the TCRC provide training and consultation to organizations throughout the United States on our multi-tiered prevention and intervention model.

TST-R is a multi-tier prevention and intervention program serviced dyadically by mental health clinicians and cultural brokers:

Tier One: Community Engagement: The broadest level of care involves developing trust between communities and mental health systems; cultural brokers provide information on health and wellness, including mental health, and efforts are made to destigmatize seeking care.

Tier Two: Skills-based Groups: The second level of care focuses on social skills groups led by clinicians and cultural brokers, typically in schools, focused on teaching youth skills needed to be successful in school, increasing social belonging, and decreasing acculturative stress.

Tier Three and Four: The highest level of care includes individual therapy and home-based therapy, available to youth and families who demonstrate significant mental health needs. Families receive case management support focused on meeting basic needs and linguistically and culturally appropriate mental health care delivered dyadically by a clinician and cultural broker.



Dissemination: We have disseminated TST-R in states across the nation, including **Massachusetts, Vermont, Minnesota, Colorado, New York, Ohio, California, Washington, Michigan, and Maine**. TST-R has been disseminated with many different cultural groups resettled in the United States including **Somali, Bhutanese, Afghans, Congolese, Central American, Iraqi** communities.

For more information about Trauma and Community Resilience Center initiatives and resources, please contact:

TCRC@childrens.harvard.edu | 617-919-4630



1 Ellis, B. H., Miller, A. B., Abdi, S., Barrett, C., Blood, E. A., & Betancourt, T. S. (2012). Multi-tier mental health program for refugee youth. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 81(1), 129-140. doi: 10.1037/a0029844

2 The TCRC at Boston Children's Hospital is a Category II Treatment and Services Adaptation Center under the National Child Traumatic Stress Network