



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY

## YMCA Immigrant Integration Services

At the Y, we believe communities are at their strongest when everyone feels valued, has support to reach their potential and can fully participate in society. For more than 170 years, the Y has helped immigrants integrate into their new neighborhoods and prepared receiving communities to be welcoming and inclusive. Today, with more than 42 million foreign-born individuals living in the U.S., the Y is committed to offering immigrants the integration services and opportunities needed to be self-reliant, connected, and contributing members of their new communities.

### Building stronger communities

The strength of our communities is linked to the overall prosperity of the nation. Successful immigrant integration builds communities that are:

- **Cohesive:** A vibrant society shared and valued by established and newcomer residents of different experiences, histories, ethnicities and backgrounds.
- **Revitalized:** A revitalization of declining communities through the contributions of immigrant families working in tandem with their U.S.-born neighbors.
- **Inclusive:** Communities welcome and embrace all dimensions of diversity and celebrate the rich cultural fabric of our society.
- **Globally connected:** Increased productivity and a robust global economy through an expanded base of multi-lingual and multicultural workers, consumers, taxpayers and entrepreneurs.
- **Vibrant democracies:** A social and cultural environment in which all groups are accepted as equal members of society with the opportunity—and responsibility—to engage and contribute to the common good.
- **Secure:** A more secure nation where all members of society—regardless of race, national origin, or socio-economic status—live in dignity and equality.



### The Y's support for immigrants and receiving communities

In communities of all sizes, Ys offer integration services and prepare communities to effectively receive their newest neighbors. Y integration programs and services are focused on key areas of immigrant and community need:

- Language and Education
- Health and Well-being
- Citizenship and Civic Engagement
- Economic Integration and Employment
- Community Development

For more information on the Y's IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION SERVICES, contact YMCA of the USA at 800 872 9622 or [DIG@ymca.net](mailto:DIG@ymca.net).

# THE Y MAKES A DIFFERENCE

The Y is the nation's leading nonprofit organization committed to strengthening communities through a focus on youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. We have the expertise and reach in 10,000 communities nationwide to address critical issues and create meaningful change. In addition, as part of the global Y Movement with a presence in 119 countries, Ys across the U.S. leverage the cultural and technical expertise of our network to better understand and serve the needs of immigrant populations. While services may vary from Y to Y, our shared goal is to help people overcome barriers and access the opportunities to reach their full potential. Here are a few examples of how Ys nationwide are serving immigrants through our three areas of focus.



## IMPACT THROUGH YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

### The Need

- In 2015, more than 17.9 million children under age 18 lived with at least one immigrant parent<sup>1</sup>
- From 2009-13, 5.1 million children under age 18 lived with an unauthorized immigrant parent, representing 7% of the U.S. child population; more than four million of these children were U.S. citizens<sup>1</sup>
- Of the 29.4 million children (under age 18) living in poverty, almost 32% are children of immigrants<sup>1</sup>
- Immigrant children make up nearly 30% of middle and high school drop outs<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup><http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/frequently-requested-statistics-immigrants-and-immigration-united-states#Children>

<sup>2</sup><https://www.childtrends.org/indicators/high-school-dropout-rates/>

### Our Response

- The **YMCA of Greater Charlotte's** (NC) on-staff community nurse provides annual health screenings for children enrolled in the Y's Parents as Teachers program
- **YMCA of Silicon Valley's** (CA) Reach & Rise program matches youth from immigrant families with adult mentors to build self-esteem and skills to enhance their personal and professional prospects into adulthood
- The **YMCA of Greater Louisville** (KY) Newcomer Academy program engages middle and high school refugee youth in goal setting, job readiness training and academic mentoring
- The **YMCA of the Twin Cities** Multicultural Achievers program prepares immigrant youth with key skills to enhance their college and career

## IMPACT THROUGH HEALTHY LIVING

### The Need

- In 2015, Hispanics were about 50% more likely to die from diabetes or liver disease than whites<sup>1</sup>
- Children of immigrants were 64% more likely to drown than children from non-immigrant families<sup>2</sup>
- Mexican-American children, between 6-17, are nearly 50% more likely to be overweight than non-Hispanic white children<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup><https://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/hispanic-health/>

<sup>2</sup><https://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2016/08/04/danger-water-immigrants-and-their-children-higher-risk-drowning/sReKaBeXHmVHYxUFAz10bO/story.html>

<sup>3</sup><https://www.childstats.gov/americaschildren/tables/health7.asp>

### Our Response

- The **YMCA of Greater Charlotte** (NC) hired and trained a Spanish Diabetes Prevention Lifestyle Coach to deliver the Y's Diabetes Prevention program to Spanish-speaking adults
- In 2016, the **YMCA of Boulder Valley** (CO) gave away more than 8,000 pounds of fresh fruit and vegetables to communities in "food deserts" with limited access to healthy options
- The **Gateway Region YMCA** (MO) connected with Christian Friends of New Americans to coordinate drowning prevention classes for Muslim youth
- The **YMCA of Greater Richmond** (VA) partners with a free clinic called Crossover Ministries to offer immigrants access to health education and free, one-month passes to the YMCA

## IMPACT THROUGH SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

### The Need

- There are 7.6 million college-educated immigrants in the U.S., of which 1.9 million are unemployed or underemployed in low-skill jobs<sup>1</sup>
- Of the two million immigrants that arrive in the U.S. each year, 50% lack a high school education and proficient English language skills<sup>2</sup>
- More than 96,000 refugees were admitted into the U.S. in 2016<sup>3</sup>
- Seventy-one percent of English language learners aged 5-18 speak Spanish as their first language<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup><http://www.renewoureconomy.org/issues/untapped-talent-the-costs-of-brain-waste-among-highly-skilled-immigrants-in-the-united-states>

<sup>2</sup><https://proliferacy.org/Resources/Adult-Literacy-Facts>

<sup>3</sup><http://ireports.wrapsnet.org/>

<sup>4</sup><http://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/top-languages-spoken-english-language-learners-nationally-and-state>

### Our Response

- In 2016, the **YMCA of Central Massachusetts** (MA) helped 60 newcomers find jobs through a collaboration with Operon Employment Agency
- **YMCA of Greater Boston's** (MA) Education and Training branch helps more than 700 newcomers annually build language skills and access job training and placement services
- Annually, the **YMCA of Greater Long Beach** (CA) provides social and immigration services to 700 newcomers through its New American Welcome Centers
- The **YMCA of Greater Houston** (TX) helps thousands of refugees and trafficking victims resettle and become self-sufficient in coordination with U.S. Departments of State and Health and Human Services
- In 2016, **YMCAs nationwide** held 115 Welcoming Week events to celebrate newcomer contributions to society and build community cohesion