

CHILDHOOD IN TRANSLATION

A documentary project about overcoming language barriers

*I translate the papers from the school, the doctor's appointment for my Dad
We translate everything, because he's our Dad and we have to help him.*

- Darely, 16



Why Now

More and more, our communities are multilingual. In New York City, for example, half of the households speak a language other than English at home, and about a quarter do not speak English well. This is not just a big city phenomenon, as many immigrants increasingly move to new destinations in the South and Midwest. For the numerous households with limited English proficient parents, basic social services – healthcare, the legal system – are often inaccessible due to language barriers. Existing translation services do not begin to meet the need and the children in immigrant families are often the only ones who can fill the gap. They are called upon to fill out government forms, interpret during parent-teacher conferences, report crimes to law enforcement, or communicate with health care providers.

A New Tool for Practitioners and Policy Shapers

Childhood in Translation covers the challenges that these barriers pose to the health and well-being of recent immigrants and their children. Taking the multiple perspectives of immigrants, service providers and advocates into consideration, this documentary project is already bringing alive the crossed signals that must be negotiated in an increasingly diverse America. Modules from the project are being used in numerous settings, from policy presentations arguing for increased funding for language services, to trainings for health care workers about the importance of truly effective communication with limited English proficient consumers.

Flexible Media – Where and when you need it

CiT comes in several versions, designed to engage targeted audiences and move them to action.

- Module # 1 – *Youth on the Edge*: This 15 minute module shares the experiences of immigrant families with language barriers through the voices of youth who interpret for their families. Separate scenes address medical settings, the court system, schools, and healthcare. Targeted audiences include policy-makers, advocates, front-line staff, and other audiences who are interested in a learning more about immigrant families' experiences with language barriers.
- Module #2 – *Providers on the Front Lines*. This 15 minute module shows how service providers at government agencies are working to serve a rapidly changing population. Separate scenes address government benefits, child welfare, social work and housing assistance. Targeted audiences include management and staff at agencies that provide services to limited English proficient clients.
- Module #3 – *Interpreting Health Care*. This 10 minute module is an introduction to the impact of language barriers in health care settings. Scenes in a community clinic with on-site interpreters, as well as a client encounter utilizing remote video interpretation, illustrate a range of approaches to deliver an appropriate quality of care to limited English proficient consumers.

For more information or to order an individual copy of the modules, please visit www.migrationpolicy.org/languageportal. For multiple copies, please contact Robert C. Winn.

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