

INTERCULTURAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS IN SOCIAL SERVICE WORK WITH REFUGEES

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This grounded theory study examined how social service providers and refugee service recipients in a city in the upper Midwestern United States described the intercultural knowledge and skills necessary for effective work with refugees. Ten refugee service recipients, 28 county service providers, and 9 “stakeholders,” or noncounty service providers, were interviewed. A research consultation team, comprised of representatives from each group, assisted with the research study. Findings juxtaposed refugee emphasis on the need for providers to “be human” with county providers’ reliance on program rules, personal values, and the expectation of refugees to “become American.” Stakeholders stressed a praxis of self-awareness, cultural learning, and advocacy, which enabled them to “be in relationship.”