



LIRS

Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) welcomes newcomers who seek safety, support, and a share in the American dream. In collaboration with partners across the country, we run programs in two core areas: Children and Family Services and Refugee and Migrant Services.

HOW WE WELCOME

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

At LIRS, we believe compassion is the best policy. Our programs for vulnerable children emphasize safety and trauma-centered care. Our depth of experience and expertise have made us a trusted partner of the U.S. government, and we are honored to play a leading role in uniting unaccompanied immigrant children with their families.

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WE ENSURE CHILDREN ARE SAFELY UNITED WITH TRUSTED FAMILY MEMBERS.

SAFE RELEASE SUPPORT staff are dedicated to the protection of migrant children. They start with background checks of potential guardians. From there, they work with guardians to identify their needs and connect them with necessary services, such as pro bono legal counsel, English language classes, job training, and health care.

WE PROVIDE THE COMFORT AND SAFETY OF HOME ENVIRONMENTS WHERE CHILDREN CAN LEARN AND GROW.

TRANSITIONAL FOSTER CARE (TFC) nurtures particularly vulnerable children who will be united with their families. All children in the program — including minors under the age of 12, pregnant or parenting youth, young people with disabilities, and sibling groups — receive one-on-one assessment and counseling, holistic support ranging from education to legal services to health care, and access to religious services.

For unaccompanied children who have no identified caregiver and who are eligible for legal immigration protections, LIRS provides **LONG TERM FOSTER CARE (LTFC)**. These children stay in the program until their immigration case is resolved. Then they typically transition into the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors program.

In the name of protection and empowerment, LIRS places **UNACCOMPANIED REFUGEE MINORS (URM)** from all over the world in foster care, group homes, and semi-independent living settings. LIRS gives URM, most of whom enter the program between the ages of 15 and 17, the option of receiving the support of a foster family or working toward independence in a group-home setting.

WE FOLLOW UP WITH CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN THEIR COMMUNITIES.

For particularly vulnerable unaccompanied children, LIRS offers community-based case management services. Our **HOME STUDY AND POST-RELEASE SERVICES PROGRAM** includes connecting families to community resources and empowering families with the resources and knowledge they need to make informed decisions about schooling, legal representation, health care, and recreational and religious services.

WE PRIORITIZE MENTAL HEALTH AND TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE.

Due to the circumstances they've fled, refugee and immigrant children often experience trauma and mental health challenges such as PTSD, depression, and anxiety. LIRS established our **MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES PROGRAM** to serve the unique needs of refugee and immigrant children and families at no cost. Our licensed bilingual clinicians are well-versed in trauma-centered, empowering care that supports children as they begin their new lives in the United States.

THERAPEUTIC FOSTER CARE SERVICES provide children with special needs a family-like setting with access to specialized on-site case management and mental and physical healthcare.

In 2022, 1,442 children were served by our Transitional Foster Care Program.

5,991
FAMILIES SERVED
BY LIRS SAFE
RELEASE SUPPORT
PROGRAM IN 2022.

8,454
CHILDREN SERVED BY
LIRS HOME STUDIES/
POST-RELEASE SERVICES
PROGRAM IN 2022.



LIRS galvanizes the efforts of five partner organizations across four states to arrange transitional foster care for children.

LIRS KEEPS ITS PROMISE TO THOUSANDS OF UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN EVERY YEAR BY PROVIDING THE SAFETY OF FAMILY AND THE SUPPORT OF WELCOMING COMMUNITIES.

“Families that open their homes and hearts to immigrant children, even for a short time, are providing the best possible care during a pivotal transition.”

KRISH O'MARA VIGNARAJAH
LIRS PRESIDENT AND CEO



Lutheran Immigration
and Refugee Service