



SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH – BLOOMINGTON

**Fostering a Culture of Belonging to Promote
Immigrant Youth Participation in Sports, Health,
and Physical Education.**

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Introduction

- Immigrant from Kenya
- Professor of Kinesiology & Associate Dean for Organizational Climate, Inclusion, & Belonging (OCIB)
- Research Fellow, Center for New North Carolinians, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, North Carolina, USA
- Interim Chair and Department Chair at NCAT &NCCU
- Commission of Research & Publication of International Council of Traditional Sports and Games (ICTSG), established at the 2018 UNESCO Collective Consultation on TSG
- Immigrant Health Access Coordinator, CNNC at UNCG
- Board of Trustee and Advisory Board of many Immigrant serving organizations



Opening Statements

- “My experiences make me who I am, but they also equally and easily distinguish me from American life”-Deepa Manghnani
- A sense of belonging can have a significant impact on a person's physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual well-being
- The increase in the number of immigrant students provides an opportunity to prioritize inclusion and a sense of belonging in schools and communities.
- Participating in physical education sports can help immigrant students learn about each other's cultures, promote integration, belonging, and improved health.



Immigrant Demographics

USA Continues to witness an Increase in the influx of Immigrants & Refugees in the US

Schools in the United States have always welcomed new immigrant children to their classrooms

According to the most recent data, there were more than 840,000 immigrant students in the United States, and more than 4.6 million English learners.

By the year 2050, racial/ethnic groups will make up 48% of the total U.S population (Williams, 2001)

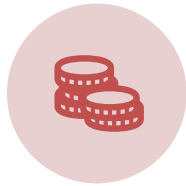
In 2022, immigrant-origin students comprised 5.8 million, or 32% of all, higher education students.



Why they Come to America



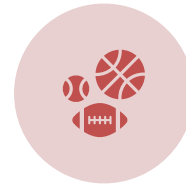
FLEEING WAR AND
PERSECUTION
(POLITICAL,
RELIGIOUS,
CULTURAL/CUSTOM
ARY ETC.,)



ECONOMIC
OPPORTUNITIES



EDUCATION &
CAREER
OPPORTUNITIES



ATHLETIC
OPPORTUNITIES
(MORE MONEY
ETC.)



BETTER HEALTH
CARE



Why leave Home?



“Transition from the Norm”

The Village & Jiko Theory



The support system “Village & Jiko” that plays a significant role in the success and well-being of the individual disappears upon arrival in their new country

Immigrant Students

Immigrant-origin students constitute first-and-second generation immigrants in the U.S.

First-generation immigrants were born abroad and immigrated to the U.S. to live.

Second-generation immigrants are U.S.-born individuals with at least one immigrant parent.

I have a 1st t Generation and 2nd Generation, and their experiences are very different

Immigrant Generations

1ST Generation

- Born abroad, May not speak English and may have started school abroad
- Familiar with sports, games & culture of home country
- May experience acculturation stress
- Tend to feel torn between home country and new Country
- Find US culture & life as unfamiliar and challenging
- self-identity still rooted my home country, and are aware that they are considered foreign
- Interested in life and culture back home

2nd Generation

- US-born children of immigrants
- Grow up speaking English & attending US schools
- Some are bilingual, others cannot speak their parents' language.
- Parents are often conservative, expect tighter control over children, & view larger society as alien.
- Children are torn between parents' ideas and the larger society, leading to common conflicts.

Immigrants Challenges – 7 U's

- Underserved
- Uninsured
- Underinsured
- Uninformed
- Underrepresented
- Uninterested
- Untrusting



Educating the Immigrant Child

FACILITATORS	CHALLENGES
Access to free public elementary and secondary education	Language Barriers and Cultural difference-
Access to Resources and Technology	Less likely to possess cultural knowledge for school assignment , choice of school, sports activities etc.
Technological Advances (access to cell phones, computers, internet etc)	Tend to attend lower-quality/resourced segregated schools due to socioeconomic status.
Free transportation	May Prejudice, discrimination or bullying
Access to Scholarships and Internships	Busy PARENTS – work all the time Limited time due to work (to support family)
Access to Affordable or free food at School	Balancing conflicting expectations (from parents, culture and peers)



Significance of Physical activity for immigrants

Physical activity can help immigrants feel a sense of belonging in several ways, including

- **Build community:** Physical activity can help immigrants build social bonds and community networks (Abur, 2022)
- **Sense of purpose:** Physical activity can support a sense of purpose and direction for disadvantaged young people (Abur, 2022)
- **Reduce stress:** Physical activity can help immigrants reduce stress and negative thoughts (Corvino et al 2022)
- **Regain control:** Physical activity can help immigrants regain control when facing migration-related uncertainties ((Corvino et al 2022)
- **Increasing self-efficacy:** Physical activity can help immigrants increase their self-efficacy (Majed & Lévesque, 2023)
- **Strength ethnic identity:** Physical activity can help immigrants strengthen their ethnic identity(Majed & Lévesque, 2023)
- **Learn life skills:** Physical activity can help immigrants learn the life skills needed to adapt to life in their host community(Majed & Lévesque, 2023)
- **Escapism:** Physical activity can help traumatized immigrants feel an embodied connection to sport and provide mental escapism (Thierry R.F. et al 2021)



Unlocking Potential For Immigrant Students

Unlocking Potential For Students in Physical Activity and Sports

Make inclusion and belonging a priority in school and in the field (i.e. avail resources in multiple languages & diversity staff)

Be mindful of the additional burdens and cultural concerns students face and provide or connect them with available resources & services

Incorporate inclusive curriculum and activities and encourage participation in sports and clubs

Prevent and mitigate bullying promptly.
Cultivate relationships with students

Promote family and community involvement & create multiple channels to communicate with families & community organizations.

Increase diverse staff and Offer professional cross-cultural learning opportunities for educators and coaches

Unlocking Potential For Immigrant Students

**Incorporate
inclusive
activities to
enhance
Belonging &
mattering**

Incorporate culturally inclusive activities ,sports & examples from students' home Countries and culture

Be respectful of diversity and allow students to dress for activities in culturally appropriate dressing & learn correct pronunciation of names

Incorporate demonstrations for different levels in activities

Use diverse examples of activities, sports music, names, pictures etc. from different cultures and countries

Use different languages if you are able or provide translated print Materials to facilitate learning

During sports activities, provide snacks from different cultures & countries

Examples of Project

1. Faces Around Us, a Multicultural Youth Program.
2. Immigrant and minority youth after school Program
3. Project Bounce: Developing Resiliency & Responsibility Using Sport as a Metaphor



Make Inclusion & Belonging a Priority

Diversity

- Who is the room
- range of differences among people, including their backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives
- Having a seat at the table
- Invited to the party

Inclusion

- state of being included
- Having a Voice in the room
- Have everyone's ideas been heard and respected
- being asked to dance

Belonging

- feeling of being accepted, included, and valued in a group or environment
- having your voice be heard – Feeling valued through positive connections with others
- Able to bring your authentic self
- being asked for input on music or feeling free to ask anyone you want to dance with you.

