



Bethany[®]
**Unaccompanied
Refugee
Minors**

Long Term Refugee Foster Care

All children need to feel safe, loved, and connected.

Refugee youth have their worlds tossed out of control, when forced to flee their homes.

As a Foster Parent, you can provide a loving, safe, and stable home with opportunities for youth to achieve success in ways that they could only dream of.

Attend an upcoming Information Session:

Join us for a no-commitment virtual information meeting to learn more about Bethany's Unaccompanied Refugee Minors and the different options you have in serving them!

Register Today by clicking on this link: [Bethany.org/Philadelphia/Events](https://bethany.org/Philadelphia/Events)

- Click on an upcoming session for Long Term Refugee Foster Care.
- Enter your information.
- You will receive a link for the virtual meeting!

Connecting with the URM Program:

Contacting the URM Program:

If you need any assistance with registering or want to contact the program, please email:

Rubin Mathew - rmathew@bethany.org

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© Bethany Christian Services – Jenkintown, PA Branch

Branch Office:

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UNACCOMPANIED REFUGEE MINOR (URM) PROGRAM FAQs:

Who are the children in the URM program?

- They are minors generally 13-17 years old, fleeing their home country due to war, religious or ethnic persecution, trafficking, and a variety of other reasons. Besides, there are mother/baby placements and sibling groups of different age ranges. The youth come from countries like Eritrea, Somalia, Afghanistan, the DRC, Myanmar, Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador.

What services are provided by the URM program?

- The Unaccompanied Refugee Minor (URM) program provides refugee youth with foster care services until the age of 21, including case management and life skills to assist them in establishing independence. While in foster care, the youth are in the custody of Bethany Christian Services.

Where are the youth prior to arriving in Philadelphia?

- URM children come from a variety of countries from around the world. Many URM youth come from overseas where they reside in refugee camps. Other URM youth are from Central America and reside in shelters located near the Mexican border prior to entering the program.

How is URM foster care different from traditional domestic foster care?

- In the URM program, reunification and/or adoption are not options. Rather, the goal is for the foster family to provide a safe and loving home where the youth can learn life skills to ultimately live independently in the United States when they emancipate from the program at age 21.

What if the youth has difficulty adjusting to life in the United States?

- Each child is assigned a case manager who will maintain contact with both the youth and the foster parent. Case managers can assist in a variety of issues and will help in connecting the youth to community resources and supports.

Do I have to speak a foreign language or the same language as the child placed in my home?

- No. Many foster parents in the program do not speak any language other than English. Your case manager will assist you in finding ways to communicate in the first few months. Speaking English at home assists the youth in practicing their English and developing a better understanding of the language.

What is the process for becoming a foster parent?

- Attend a 1-hr information session with BCS; Complete all paperwork.
- Complete Trauma-informed Training provided by Bethany; Participate in home study.
- Licensure!

What are my roles as foster parent?

- Provide a safe and supportive home.
- Offer emotional support while managing youth's behavior.
- Provide transportation for education and medical appointments.
- Participate in youth's culture and try to embrace it at home.
- Provide opportunities for youth to establish.
- Assist youth in planning for their future.

SEMI-INDEPENDENT LIVING (SIL) PROGRAM FAQs:

How does a youth pay rent? Where does the money come from?

- The youth receives a small monthly stipend from the State to pay for rent and living expenses. Some SIL families wish to not charge rent to help the youth save money, which is very generous; however, we see this as an opportunity for the youth to practice budgeting and paying bills.

How much support is expected from an SIL household?

- The expectation is for the family to hold up to the contract; providing a bedroom and safe place to live at the agreed upon monthly rent and any house rules. Anything above and beyond those minimum requirements are up to you! We have SIL homes who are simply a landlord and available in case the youth has a specific need or question about independence, and we also have SIL homes who have developed relationships with the youth and enjoy spending time together (going shopping, family outings, celebrating holidays together, watching TV together, etc.). Youth are matched to SIL homes based on both parties' interest and level of involvement.

What kind of transportation does the youth have? Am I expected to provide transportation?

- Youth typically rely on public transportation; however, some have driver's licenses and can purchase a vehicle. It is not expected that a SIL home will provide transportation, however, it is your discretion if you would like to. We do caution against providing total transportation, as the youth may come to rely on you for transportation.

Is there a lease or contract? How long does the youth stay in my house?

- This is negotiable. We have some youth who prefer a 12-month contract, others prefer month to month. Some SIL homes allow youth to extend their contracts and stay longer; however, the agency is NOT a party to the contract.

What happens if I don't get paid rent, or the youth doesn't keep their end of the contract?

- If the youth doesn't pay rent they may be discharged. If this occurs, the contract becomes dissolved. SIL homes may consider requesting a deposit if the youth fails to pay rent.

Should house rules be enforced?

- Every household is different, so it really depends on your circumstances and preference. Some SIL homes prefer seeing this arrangement as a housemate or tenant and simply request that common areas be kept clean and share in the upkeep of the house. Others request some rules that they would expect their own children to follow, such as a curfew, or limits to having friends/significant others at the house. This is up to the mentor/landlord.

What background checks are performed?

- To ensure that we're sending our youth into a safe living arrangement, 3 background checks (Child Abuse; Criminal and FBI Clearances) on all adults in the household over the age of 18 are required. BCS staff will complete a home safety check prior to approval of the home for SIL youth prior to move-in date.

What is the timeline to have a youth move in for SIL?

- Each case is different; however, we generally expect it to take up to 2-3 weeks to approve a home for SIL. Our teams work hard to identify a great youth for each home, and once an appropriate match is made, we arrange a meet and greet at the home or virtually as the case may be. Shortly after the home visit, the contract will be signed, and from there the youth is typically approved to move.

RESOURCE PARENT CERTIFICATION PROCESS:

Step 1: ATTEND INFORMATION MEETING

- Register for this meeting at: <https://bethany.org/locations/us/pennsylvania/philadelphia/events>
- Click on **Long-Term Refugee Foster Care Info Meeting**
- Attend the 1-hour overview of the URM program and determine if you are ready for the next step

Step 2: ATTEND PRESERVICE TRAINING

- Respond to CRD's email with pertinent information to be registered for a month-long preservice training *(if you are not ready for this training, but still want to help refugees, express that intention to CRD for other options)*
- You will receive a paperwork packet within 2 weeks of the start of the training; start filling out the forms and contact CRD for any questions

Step 3: SUBMIT PAPERWORK AND CERTIFICATIONS

- Submit completed paperwork packet *(expected within 1 month)*
- Complete the Preservice Training and receive **Certificate of Completion**
- Following certifications are required:
 - CPSL Training: <https://www.reportabusepa.pitt.edu>
 - CPR/First Aid Training: <http://www.firstaidweb.com> (OR in-person training at Bethany site)
 - Sexual Abuse Awareness Training: <https://safetysystem.abusepreventionsystems.com/register/3dentog>
 - **Clearances required (Use Foster Care Code: 1KG71B)** clearances should be within 3 years.
 - PA STATE CRIMINAL HISTORY CLEARANCE:
<https://epatch.state.pa.us>
 - PENNSYLVANIA CHILD ABUSE HISTORY CLEARANCE (CY-113):
<https://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home>
 - PA FBI CRIMINAL HISTORY CLEARANCE:
<https://www.identogo.com/>
- Attend 1 **Cultural Humility Training** (conducted twice a month from 3:30-5:30 PM)

Step 4: FAMILY PROFILE WRITING

- Complete a minimum of 3 interviews *(within 1 month)* with a profile writer *(at least 1 interview must be in-person during which home safety check is completed)*
- Be prompt to provide information to assist the home study process *(profile is completed within 1 month from the last interview)*
- URM Program Director will provide Approval Decision within 15 days of finalization and submission

Step 5: MATCHING PROCESS/ASSURANCE

- Bethany CRD does the initial matching and communicates with Resource Parent
- Once the agreement to accept a child is finalized, youth is assured to the home.
- In case of UACs, a Pre-placement meeting is facilitated by Bethany CRD via zoom



Step 6: PREPARATION/ARRIVAL

- Family prepares resources, endeavors to familiarize with youth's culture, food, language, etc.
- RP is notified of the date of arrival. Overseas youth (URM) & long-distance UACs are flown to PHL International Airport; Bethany staff picks up and drops youth off at RP's home.
- Short-distance UC's are ground transported to Bethany office in Jenkintown and Bethany staff transports youth to the home.

Step 7: POST PLACEMENT SERVICES

- Bethany CM/SW visits client at home within 48-72 hours
- Youth attends adjudication hearing at Montgomery County Court prior to their 18th birthday
- Youth attends local public school.
- Youth receives Medicaid Services
- A court appointed attorney -*Guardian Ad Litem*- represents youth.
- RP receives ongoing training.
- RP is compensated with a stipend for their services to the youth.
- At 18, youth is eligible to graduate into SIL or to discharge voluntarily.
- At 21, youth are emancipated from the program, thus terminating all direct services.

GREATER DELAWARE VALLEY OFFICES

Branch Headquarters: 610 Old York Rd, Ste 220, Jenkintown, PA 19046 • T: 215.376.6200 • F: 215.376.6191 •

Bethany.org/Philadelphia - *Together, we can change the world through family.*



LOOKING FOR TUTORS!

Want to help make a difference in the lives of refugee youth?

Theresa Dell'Angelo | tdellangelo@bethany.org
Selina Morgan | selinamorgan@bethany.org

- **ACCEPTING TEACHERS, COLLEGE STUDENTS, AND GRADUATES**
- **TUTORS WILL HELP YOUTH WITH ESL NEEDS AND/OR HOMEWORK ASSISTANCE**
- **4 HOURS+ / WEEK TIME COMMITMENT**
- **PAID \$22/HOUR**
- **MUST PASS CLEARANCES**

