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## Support Group for Immigrant Children

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Support Group for Immigrant Children

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### **Abstract**

There are many immigrant children enrolled in schools, but it is challenging for children to adapt to the transitions. Transitions can influence their emotional and mental health. One common psychological sign that is often developed is anxiety and low self-esteem. Nevertheless, transitions also have an impact on the children's academic studies. Pajaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance is a non-profit agency that keeps kids safe, protects the community health, and supports families to thrive for a better living for their children. This agency provides school based counseling in the Pajaro Valley School District from K-12. Kids Korner focuses on children from K-5th grade, to support children with emotional, behavioral, and mental health. The project addressed the needs of immigrant students within PVUSD. The project goal was to develop a series of six support group sessions to be conducted for 45 minutes twice a week. The intent was to provide children a space to share their personal experiences and provided an opportunity to know other children who have a similar story. This group identified to participate consisted of 3 participants, two fourth graders, male and female, and one fifth grader, female. While the children were already selected, a pandemic prevented the implementation of the weekly sessions. Due to the COVID-19, schools were closed and the support groups were postponed. Therefore, support groups will be conducted in the future. The results were undetermined due to the delay in receiving consent forms from parents, school programming, and COVID-19. It is recommended that consent forms are sent home ahead of time, so the district can replicate the program model and support immigrant children.

*Keywords:* immigrant children, support groups, transition, language barriers

**Agency & Communities Served**

Pajaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance, (PVPSA), is a non-profit agency that serves children, from K-12, in Santa Cruz county. This agency has collaborated with the Pajaro Valley School District for over 25 years, and has provided services for children and families. The mission of the Pajaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance is to improve the lives of children and families by providing health education, counseling and prevention services in the Pajaro Valley area. PVSPA also advocates for public policies that protect the health of the community (PVPSA, 2016). There are many programs that PVPSA offers through the school district, and they are free. The purpose of this agency is to prevent criminal behavior, gang involvement, truancy, and alcohol and drug abuse (PVPSA, 2016). Their overall goal is to keep kids safe, protect the community health, and support families to thrive for a better living for their children.

Kids' Korner counseling is a school based program that is offered in Pajaro Valley Unified School District elementary schools (PVPSA, 2016). PVPSA provides one counselor in most school sites within PVUSD. The counselors are provided with a safe place, such as a classroom, where they can conduct individual sessions with clients. The counseling services are offered to students who might be going through difficult transitions, having separated parents, going through anxiety, depression, challenging classroom behaviors, bullying, and suicidal ideation. These counseling services are free, and the services are provided during school hours. However, referrals need to be submitted and consent forms need to be signed by parents or guardians.

The specific population that Kids' Korner serves are elementary school children in the Pajaro Valley Unified District. A majority of the children who receive the services are those who don't have access to professional mental health or counseling services. Low-income families are the primary qualifiers. Finally, students who are in need of emotional support are the children that get referred to the agency.

### **Problem Description**

There is a lack of support for recent immigrants in the school system. There have been many people who reside in Santa Cruz County that were born out of the United States. "As of 2017, 17.9% of Santa Cruz County, CA residents were born outside of the United States, which is higher than the national average of 13.7%" (Santa Cruz County, n.d). Many of these families are going through transitions, and face barriers while adapting to a new environment. Some of the barriers are that they don't have family resources accessible to them and they face language barriers. There are many disadvantages especially for those children who are immigrants, and have to adapt to a different environment. According to Mitchel, 2017, language and cultural barriers keep families from enrolling their children to school. One of the common barriers families and children face is a language barrier. Once children are enrolled in school, there is a lack of support for immigrant students within the school system. This may cause students to develop anxiety, become less successful academically, and this population is more likely to have higher dropout rates.

### **Contributing Factors**

There needs to be more support established in the school systems, in order to help these students. There is a lack of school staff that does not represent the population being served.

There are more English speaking teachers, which also reduces the bilingual classes. The fact that bilingual classes are being reduced is depriving students from excelling in their education.

According to Serrano (2018) children don't have educational support and parents are not able to help due to the lack of understanding of the United States education system (para.4). This causes students to feel intimidated, and teachers don't have the ability to communicate with students and provide the adequate support that is needed.

The poor communication skills that are being provided for immigrant students, leads on to obtaining less opportunities to build connections in schools. Mitchel, 2017, also stated that schools are unprepared to address the needs of immigrant students. Children and families become hesitant to ask for additional support, so their opportunities become limited. As for children, they will not develop adequate connections within school. Without school connections, families are less likely to have access to community resources.

Lastly, teachers are unsure of how to provide the extra support for students and families. "Educators who work with immigrant communities want to know how to best support students and their families" (Teaching Tolerance, n.d, para.2). Educators desire to establish relationships with the children's families, so that they can understand the children's lives out of school. According to the magazine, *Teaching Tolerance* (n.d.) developing nurturing relationships is not only good for students, but also for teachers. Teachers want to feel comfortable engaging with

immigrant students. The way educators approach students is important because that way students feel secure.

### **Consequences**

Due to the lack of support systems, students develop anxiety within the school environment. “Major depression and anxiety disorders are two of the most prevalent mental health conditions affecting Latino youth” (Potochnick, & Perreira, July 2010). Immigrant students go through emotional problems. Adapting to a new environment, language, and lifestyle is difficult. It is also intimidating for immigrant children to ask for help, since language is a barrier and they are out of their comfort zone.

Dealing with anxiety can also cause students to become less successful in school. According to the article, Challenges and Avenues to Success for Immigrant Students (December 2014), there are two-thirds of immigrants who are over the age of twenty four without a higher education. High school diplomas are often the highest education obtained. It is challenging for immigrant students to continue with their education, having a language barrier and having continuous thoughts about their new life in the United States.

Lastly, this population of students are the ones who have more drop out rates. According to Gramlich, 2017, there were 648,000 Hispanics between the ages of 18 and 24 who did not continue with their academic studies. This indicates that 6.5 million Hispanics in that age group did not obtain a high school diploma, which is a large number. Immigrant students get discouraged when there is no full support within schools. The importance of education is often not as emphasized for immigrant students in elementary school, and without receiving the adequate guidance there will continue to be more drop out rates.

**Problem Model**

| <b>Contributing Factors</b>  | <b>Problem</b>   | <b>Consequences</b>                              |
|--|--|--|
| School staff does not represent the population served.   | There is a lack of support for recent immigrants in the school system. | Students have anxiety in the school environment. |
| Lack of opportunities for recent immigrants (information, different communication).                  |  | Students are less successful in school.          |
| Teachers don't have the appropriate skills or resources to support students who recently immigrated. |  | Higher dropout rates for recent immigrants.      |

**Capstone Project Description and Justification****Capstone Project**

This capstone project was designed to incorporate six group sessions with immigrant students from one elementary school in the Pajaro Valley Unified School District. The specific targeted population included fourth and fifth grade immigrant students. There was professional communication with the office manager on the school site. Groups were arranged based on children's age and immigration status. There was a resource checklist developed for students and staff to provide better support for this population. Consent forms were needed for this process, qualitative data, and surveys were part of the evaluations. Training was given in regards to conducting group sessions and trauma. The support was provided by professionals in the agency.

The purpose of having an emotional support group for immigrant children, was for children to have a space where they can share their personal experiences. This allows children to



know that there are more people who have experienced something similar to their situation. Incorporating support groups within schools is intended to help children reduce anxiety and isolation. The support groups will also increase communication between school staff and students.

### **Project Purpose**

The purpose of the project was to address the needs of immigrant students entering into PVUSD. There is a majority of school staff that does not represent the population being served. There are more English speaking teachers, which also limits the bilingual classes. The fact that bilingual classes are being reduced is depriving students from excelling in their education. According to Serrano (2018), children don't have educational support and parents are not able to help due to the lack of understanding of the United States educational system ( para.4). This causes students to feel intimidated, while teachers don't have the ability to communicate with students and provide the adequate support that is needed.

Immigrant children are less likely to integrate in schools therefore, six group session interventions were developed. The intent of the first session is to provide an introduction between the counselor and the participants. This session will consist of ice breakers, clients establishing three important rules that they believe are important to follow during the group, which will be displayed in the room, and create a group calendar that will demonstrate the group reunions.

The intent of the second session is for the participants to think of the reasons people come over to the United States. This session will provide an activity for the clients called, "Kids Around the World", (Teaching Tolerance, 2016). This activity will help clients identify the

similarities between one another, their differences, and the way they view the new place they live in. This activity will help clients know more about each other, and realize that there are more kids who also go through similar situations. The clients will also have the chance to share something they learned at the end of the session. In the third session, the facilitator will ask the participants to share their thoughts about what home is and what it means to them. This session will consist of an activity where the participants draw a picture of what home is to them and after they will share a brief story about their drawing. These drawings may demonstrate the people that make their home, what makes their home special, or a special memory they have. At the end of the session clients will share how they felt about doing this activity.

Followed by the fourth session, where the children will have the opportunity to discuss transition. The facilitator will conduct a discussion indicating what was a time in their life they had to go through change, and what has helped them cope with change. Each client will have the opportunity to talk about something they miss, whether it's a pet, a person, an object, a safe space, etc. The participants will also have an opportunity to make a list of the things they have gained by coming over to the United States. This can include meeting new people, new friends, a safe space, etc. The activity that will be conducted is making a glitter jar, in which clients can use two or three different glitter colors. Each color will represent a feeling the client's choice, and each client will discuss the feeling as they pour it into the jar.

The intent of the fifth session will consist of writing a letter to a person or something they miss. The facilitator will ask the clients to close their eyes and think of a special memory or a special person they can't wait to see. The clients will then have the opportunity to share their thoughts and the facilitator will acknowledge their feelings. The facilitator will then move on to

discuss things that can be done when they miss someone or something special. Each client will have the opportunity to write a letter to a person, place or thing they miss. Once they are done writing the letter, they have a choice of sending it out, keeping it to themselves in a special place, read it out loud to that person through the phone, etc. This intervention will help the children express their feelings, through an intimate approach, and they will also be asked to share their thoughts, about this activity, at the end of the session.

To finalize the group sessions, the facilitator will begin with a check in question indicating how the clients feel knowing it is their last group meeting. After the small discussion, the clients will make a transitional object. The facilitator will provide each client a rock and they will be able to decorate it according to their choice. They can either write a meaningful word, an emotion they feel, make a drawing, or just paint the rock. The transitional object will symbolize their determination, strength, encouragement, and a memory of Kids' Korner. During this session, there will also be an acknowledgement celebration. Clients will be receiving an award for completing the program, being respectful, demonstrating great friendship skills, and for their willingness to share their feelings and thoughts with their group peers. The participants will also receive a small treat as part of their reward and they will all agree to pick a game that can be played together. At the end of the session, each client will share what they learned, their favorite part of the group, and how they will use their transitional object. A small survey of three questions will be given out. The questions will be if the sessions were helpful, if they would participate again and the topic they would've wished to discuss. The first two questions will have a happy face and a sad face. The happy face will indicate that the client was satisfied, as for the

sad face it would be not satisfied. For the last question the clients can write a topic they would have liked to learn about.

### **Project Justification**

Children often deal with their own emotions and they also have a hard time expressing their feelings to their family members. According to Chick, (n.d), it is hard for immigrant children to have a conversation regarding mental health, because of the family dynamics. Immigrant parents come from a different culture and instead of listening to their children, they often avoid the conversations. Avoiding questions children may have in regards to immigration might be a way to protect their children, but children need emotional support for reassurance that everything will be fine.

The support groups were developed to provide emotional support for immigrant children where they can express their feelings about the transition and challenges they have faced. The purpose of this support group is to allow children to establish a friendship with other peers that experienced a similar situation. Building a strong friendship is important because they will have each other as a support system. Reminiscing on memories and reflecting on the opportunities they have now, will help reduce their anxiety levels. Talking about cultural differences and adaptation will bring ease to these children.

Incorporating coping skills for transition has helped them for what is to come. Gaining knowledge about coping skills are beneficial because there are many more changes that will occur during their lifetime. Self-advocacy was also practiced during these group sessions because it is important for children to speak up and ask for help. Although there is a language barrier, they will learn that they can ask close friends to accompany them or build trust in a staff

member for support. All in all, this group will help students reduce anxiety, increase self-esteem, increase academics, and implement self advocacy.

### **Project Implementation**

Six group sessions were developed to support immigrant children within the Pajaro Valley Unified School District. The group sessions were designed to have a total of three participants, one fourth grader and two fifth graders. The weekly sessions were focused on specific topics such as, family separation, cultural change/transition, communication barriers, safety, coping strategies, and teaching students how to advocate for themselves.

To prepare for the implementation of the support groups, the participants were selected based on the submitted referrals that are filled out by family members or school staff. Consent forms were required, in order for the students to receive services. Once the students were selected, the intern met each participant individually, in order to determine desired topics for this population. These individual meetings helped the intern get an overview of the concerns the participants had, as well as what each client had been through. This helped the facilitator arrange the group session curriculum for future use. The input obtained, from the concluding session, will provide feedback for the facilitator, including topics that students think are important to cover. The purpose of this project was to provide a safe space for these children to express themselves, which will decrease anxiety levels, will increase their confidence level knowing how to advocate for themselves, and knowing they are safe.

After the sessions were outlined, the next step was to find adequate activities for children to work on. For example, the activities will consist of play therapy, narrative therapy, and art therapy. It is important to incorporate activities because they will comfort the participants and

they will open up. Students will begin to lead conversations and will be open to talk about their emotions. Implementing activities during therapeutic sessions are beneficial because children have a different style of learning, and they will be able to engage more.

Finally, the six weekly sessions were programmed for February 4, 2020. However, the support groups were delayed due to consent forms not being turned in on time, and school programming. The alternative date for the support groups to initiate was in March 17, 2020 through April 10, 2020 for two times a week. Unfortunately there were school closures due to COVID-19, so the group sessions had to be cancelled. It is still unclear on what questions will be asked in the pre and post surveys. This is a sensitive topic, so the questions need to be appropriate. After the surveys, there will be evaluations that will be analyzed to discuss whether the project was successful or not.

### **Assessment Plan and Expected Outcomes**

In order to measure the effectiveness of the support group for immigrant children, there will be qualitative data. The qualitative data will be conducted based on the takeaway questions, after each session. The takeaway questions are based on the topics that are discussed and the activities that will be conducted after each session. The questions are expected to be developed by January, 2020, but instead they also were delayed and they were developed in March, 2020. When the intern met individually with the clients, they gave their own feedback on topics they were interested in. Once the intern had feedback from each participant, the questions had to be adjusted.

Overall, the expected outcomes were to provide a positive impact on children who integrate within the Pajaro Valley Unified School District. It was expected that these children

would develop the necessary skills to be able to assist other children in adapting to a new environment. In addition, it was expected that this project would be implemented in the near future, throughout the Pajaro Valley Unified School District, or workshops would be offered by the school district with similar topics for this specific population.

The initial assessment was planned to assess the knowledge gained, as a result of the support groups by providing takeaway questions, as the sessions concluded. The takeaway questions were related to the content that was discussed during each session. The takeaway questions will give the participants an opportunity to discuss what they learned in each session, talk about what stood out to them, and how they felt about doing the activities. The takeaway questions will assist in assessing how beneficial the topics were and provide input from the clients on what they would like to see for the following sessions.

### **Project Results**

The project provided a curriculum for PVPSA to conduct support groups for immigrant children. (see Appendix B). A group of students have been selected, teachers, parents, and guardians have been contacted, and consent forms have been received. The selected participants were also aware of the support groups, as the intern had an opportunity to meet individually with them. Everything is in place for PVUSD to replicate the support group, once schools are back in session.

Unfortunately the group sessions were not implemented. There were a few events that occurred which delayed the group sessions. All of the consent forms were sent out ahead of time, but they were received during the first week of March, 2020. The participants were in 4th and 5th grade, therefore, according to school programming, the fifth grader would be out the second

week of March in science camp. It was not ideal for the facilitator to begin one group session, during the first week of March, not meet the second week, with a participant missing, and then proceed again the third week. This could have caused confusion to the participants, and inconsistency could have also impacted the outcome of the group sessions.

There was an agreement that the weekly support group would initiate on March 17, 2020, but there was a disruption that detained the project. Despite the fact that the support groups were not implemented, the curriculum was shared with the licensed clinical social worker for feedback and input, which constituted the qualitative evaluation. The supervisor reported that the curriculum would have given the clients an opportunity to have some great and important conversations about their experiences and connect with each other. The licenced clinician also reported that it is hard to tell if this project will work, until it is actually implemented. She did like the activities because they were aimed at processing what they lost and what they missed about their home countries, and proper emotional support would be provided for the participants. The facilitator's supervisor gave an excellent review for the curriculum. She does wish the facilitator could've had the chance to implement this herself because of the hard work that was put into the project, and because it would benefit children. On the bright side, the licenced clinician supervisor will keep the curriculum and she will provide it as a resource for future interns.

### **Conclusion & Recommendations**

Throughout the conducted research, and individual meetings, with each participant, there needs to be more support provided for immigrant children. Adapting to a new culture, school system, having to learn a new language, and not having emotional support will affect these



children as they continue having more transitions during their life. Support groups will benefit immigrant children from K-12th grade, because the younger they receive the help, the less difficult it will be. Having other peers they can relate to will help them understand there are more children and families going through similar situations. It would be ideal that Pajaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance provides these types of support groups, throughout the Pajaro Valley Unified School District.

The support groups will help prevent anxiety, increase academic achievements, increase self esteem, and help this population of children advocate for themselves. In order to ensure this project gets implemented, it is recommended to plan ahead of time. This means that parents need to be contacted, as soon as the participants are identified, so that parents are aware of the group their children will be participating in. It is also important to inform the parents about the consent forms and provide a deadline to get the needed documents turned in on time. All in all, it is recommended that once schools reopen, a PVPSA intern counselor will resume the group sessions. Using the curriculum that was developed, can help determine if the project was successful or not, and what improvements can be made.

### **Personal Reflection**

When I attended middle school and highschool, in the Pajaro Valley Unified School District, I had a great amount of classmates who had immigrated to the United States. Most of these classmates came from Mexico, and what I observed was that most of these students were more reserved, they were not motivated to pursue a higher education, and they were not as involved in school events. I always thought that language barrier was the main contributing factor that prevented this population of students from obtaining a higher education. As I began to

expand my knowledge on social issues, and discovered my passion for wanting to make a change and helping others, I knew I wanted to help children, youth and families, but I was unsure of how I wanted to be involved. Through the Collaborative Health and Human Services program, at CSUMB, I had the opportunity to obtain hands-on experience in this field profession.

Interning for Pajaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance, allowed me to develop a support group for immigrant children, who have recently arrived in the United States. I was eager to implement the support group because as I conducted research, I became knowledgeable of other contributing factors I was not aware of. For example, emotional support is important for immigrant students, since they are making a transition from one country to another. Meaning that they have to adapt to a new culture, a new school environment, family separation, and the language barrier can be an additional stressor for these students. I have learned the importance of emotional support, especially if it is not discussed at home, and if there is not a safe space provided for these children to express what they are going through.

I reflected back to the days where I thought the language barrier was the problem, but in reality there is more to that. I am glad I had the chance to analyze this need more in depth and I would love to work with this population in the near future. Although the support groups were developed, there were challenges that impeded me to proceed with this project. First of all, the consent forms were not turned in on time, so I had to keep pushing back on the date I was supposed to initiate the group sessions. I also had to postpone the sessions due to school programming, because one of the participants was going to be in science camp for one week. When I was finally ready to implement, schools were temporarily closed due to COVID-19. I am

disappointed I did not get to implement the support group, because regardless of the work that was put into this project, all I wanted to do is provide the help for these students and families.

I had a great vision of this support group being implemented throughout PVUSD, from K-12. My ultimate goal was to also provide a workshop for the parents and guardians of these children so they can also gain knowledge on emotional support, academic support, and the importance of family dynamics. I am glad I had the pleasure to meet my participants individually. During one session I was able to build a positive relationship with each one of them and we had great conversations. I am hopeful that the agency will use the curriculum I created, so that immigrant children can benefit from this group. One day I will be able to provide support for immigrant families in general, with the information I have gained through this project. Last but not least, I would advise future capstone students to start brainstorming possible capstone project ideas with their mentor, during the seminar. It will be beneficial because they can prevent stress, they will have more time to prepare, and their project can be implemented on time. This project may seem overwhelming, but in the long run it's a skill that will be essential in our profession. Nevertheless, we will find ways to give back to our community and overall just enjoy the process because it is rewarding. This was by far a beautiful struggle because through challenges and limitations I really got to know what I am capable of doing.

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**Appendix A**

Scope of Work Timeline - All activities below were met within the following timelines, except initiating the support group, due to school closures.

| Activities   | Deliverables             | Timeline/Deadlines                     | Supporting Staff                                 |
|--|--------------------------|--|--|
| Obtain a list of immigrant students from my school site                      | List                     | October 15, 2019                       | Lupita Galvan, Roberto Torres                    |
| Identify grade and age of participants                                       | Grade and age            | October 29, 2019                       | Olga Rechetova                                   |
| Contact teachers and have them refer students to PVPSA                       | Teacher feedback         | December 3, 2019                       | Olga Rechetova, Roberto Torres                   |
| Contact parents/guardians in regards to the support system and consent forms | parent/guardian feedback | December 12, 2019                      | Gisela Rodriguez, Lizbeth Cisneros, school staff |
| Receive training on how to work with immigrant children/families             | Training                 | December 2019- January 2020            | Olga Rechetova, PVPSA staff                      |
| Research activities that can be done through group therapy                   | Activities added         | December 2019                          | Lizbeth Cisneros, Olga Rechetova                 |
| Receive training on how to conduct group sessions                            | Training                 | December 2019- January 2020            | Olga Rechetova, PVPSA staff, PVUSD(maybe)        |
| Arrange a schedule indicating common themes for topics                       | Themes                   | December 20, 2019<br>December 23, 2019 | Olga Rechetova.<br>Lizbeth Cisneros              |
| Developed curriculum   | Curriculum               | February 27, 2020                      | Lizbeth Cisneros                                 |
| Received all of the parent/guardian consent forms                            | Consent forms            | March 3, 2020                          | Olga Rechetova, Lizbeth Cisneros                 |
| Support group initiation   | Support group            | March 17, 2020                         | Lizbeth Cisneros                                 |

**Appendix B**

Support Group Curriculum

**Curriculum: Support Group for Immigrant Children**

**Pajaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance**

**Developed by: Lizbeth Cisneros**

**Kids' Korner Intern 2019-2020**

Group Facilitation: **Support Group for Immigrant Children**  
( 3 clients)

Session #1: Introduction

Kids' Korner counselor will introduce herself and she will explain the reason for the group. (Learn about transitions, adapting to a new school/culture, discuss family separation, importance of emotional support, how to ask for help).

- Icebreaker
  - client will hold a squishy ball, that will be used for the person that is speaking, and they will share their name, age, favorite color, and favorite food
- Group Rules
  - Clients will come up with 3 rules that they believe is important to have for the group and be followed. Clients will sign the poster with rules and rules will be displayed in the room.
  - Create a group calendar that will demonstrate the days we meet
- Activity
  - Pass a ball around with taped questions in order to each other more
  - Questions may include grade level, best friend's name, favorite movie, where were you born, what languages can you speak or wish to speak, who you are closer to in your family etc.
- Takeaway
  - Pass squishy ball and have client share something they learned about their peer or comment on something they wish to learn from group

Session #2: Kids Around the World

Welcome clients back to the session, review the group calendar and remind them it's their second meeting out of six. Review the rules and explain the topic of the day.

- Check-in
  - Ask each client to identify how they are feeling
  - Ask clients, "why do you think people come to the United States?"
  - Counselor will then discuss the possible reasons and mention that there are many kids who also experience this transition
- Activity



- Each client will fill out a “Kids Around the World” worksheet  
[www.tolerance.org/sites/default/files/general/TT\\_Kids%20Around%20the%20World%5B4%5D.pdf](http://www.tolerance.org/sites/default/files/general/TT_Kids%20Around%20the%20World%5B4%5D.pdf)
- They will share where they immigrated from and how long ago they came
- Clients will share their similarities, their differences, and discuss the world they see/live in
- Takeaway
  - Pass the squishy ball and have clients share something they have learned from the group.

### Session #3: What is Home?

Welcome clients back to the session, review the group calendar and remind them it's their third meeting out of six. Review the rules and explain the topic of the day.

- Check-in
  - Ask each client to share one activity they did over the weekend
  - Talk about what is home and what it means
- Activity
  - Each client will draw a picture of what home is to them
  - Each client can have a chance to tell a brief story about their drawing
    - Who is in their home, what makes their home special, favorite memory in their home etc.
- Takeaway
  - Pass the squishy ball and have clients share how they felt about doing this activity and something that stood out to them

### Session #4: Transition

Welcome clients back to the session, review the group calendar and remind them it's their fourth meeting out of six. Review the rules and explain the topic of the day.

- Check-in
  - Ask clients to identify how they are feeling and share about a change that occurred in their life
  - Talk about what a transition is (providing a simple example) and challenges people go through
- Activity
  - Each client will share what changes they have experienced and what has helped them cope with it
  - Each client will have the opportunity to discuss something they miss (person, pet, safe space, etc.)

- Clients will list the things they like about the U.S, people they have met, new friends, safe people etc. in order for them to reflect on the positive things they have now
- Make a glitter jar
  - Each client will use 2-3 different colors of glitter and each color will represent a feeling
  - Clients will share their feelings as they pour glitter color in
- Takeaway
  - Pass the squishy ball and have clients share how they will use the glitter jar (when they feel sad, need to relax, etc.)

#### Session #5: To Whom it May Concern

Welcome clients back to the session, review the group calendar and remind them it's their fifth meeting out of six. Review the rules and explain the topic of the day.

- Check-in
  - Clients will close their eyes, take 3 deep breaths, and think of a special memory or a special person they can't wait to see
  - Counselor will then tell clients to open their eyes and share what they felt as they pictured that image in their mind
  - Counselor will acknowledge feelings and move on to discussing things that can be done when you miss someone or something special
- Activity
  - Each client will have the opportunity to write a letter to a person they miss (if they don't have a person they miss they can write to anything else like a special place)
  - Once they have written that letter they have the option of sending it to that person, keeping it to themselves in an envelope, treasure it in a special place, or read it out loud to themselves
- Takeaway
  - Pass the squishy ball and have each client express how they feel after doing this activity

#### Session #6: Closure "Adios Amigos"

Welcome clients back to the session, review the group calendar and remind them it's their last meeting. Review the rules and explain the topic of the day.

- Check-in

- Pass squishy ball around and have clients express how they feel knowing it's their last group session
- Activity
  - Clients will make a transitional object
  - Counselor will provide a rock to each client and they will be able to write an emotion they feel, a drawing, or just paint the rock as a symbol of something that will determine them to move forward (memory of Kids' Korner)
- Acknowledgment Celebration!
  - Give clients a small snack and drink (or small goodie bag)
  - Give Kids Korner award for completing the program, showing great friendship skills, and willing to share with others
- Free Play
  - Clients will agree to pick an activity we can all play together
- Takeaway
  - Pass the squishy ball and have clients share what they learned, their favorite part of group, if group helped them and something they would improve