



WHAT CAN WE DO TOGETHER?

This list of survival English skills was created by Lutheran Family Services in Nebraska.

*These are just a few suggestions of ways to spend quality time with the family or individual. Most of them are free and focus on giving new refugees the skills and knowledge they need to live in the U.S. Some are just aimed at having fun! No matter what the activity, remember to focus on **empowering** the refugees to do it by themselves. Our ultimate goal is to help them thrive in American society and be comfortable in their new country. Just remember, any time together is an opportunity for them to learn!*

Practical & Educational Activities:

- Walk together to the park, library, grocery store, etc. After walking there 2-3 times, let them take the lead.
- Demonstrate developmentally-appropriate ways for interacting with children. Help parents remember that they are still their children's most important teacher.
- Show the parents how they can teach kids the alphabet, numbers, or how to write their name. Many parents who don't speak English will still know the alphabet.
- Practice writing checks or paying bills.
- Help teach the major streets in the city.
- Practice using the bus to visit friends and family.
- Practice naming and counting money.
- Teach the rules of the road or help them enroll in a driving school.
- Help read the mail.
- Facilitate parent-teacher conferences.
- Introduce yourself to the children's teacher.
- Help buy phone cards.
- Help them review their ESL lessons.
- Help kids with homework.
- Take parents to special events at their children's school.
- Practice naming objects in English.
- Practice writing names, addresses, and phone numbers.
- Practice writing and sending letters. Walk to the post office together.
- Practice using the washer and dryer.
- Teach simple home maintenance and repairs.
- Help childproof the home.



Recreational activities:

- Visit the farmer's market.
- Teach them how to cook a popular American dish.
- Ask them to teach you how to cook a traditional dish from their culture.
- Help introduce the family to their neighbors.
- Arrange a welcome potluck for them.
- Visit the zoo.
- Check out Chicago Park District or City of Chicago websites for local, free family events.
- Visit famous Chicago landmarks.
- Ask them to teach you a few words or phrases in their language.
- Go to the beach.
- Bring over a card game or board game.
- Help them plant vegetables or herbs if they have a balcony.
- Attend the family's place of worship one week.
- Learn their holidays and participate in the celebration.
- Take them to a local sporting event.
- Play sports with the family.
- Take pictures of them and give them copies.
- Go to the children's museum.
- Slowly introduce simple American foods. Go shopping together for the ingredients.
- Help them learn how to celebrate American holidays.
- Visit nearby thrift stores.
- Introduce them to your friends that may be interested in co-sponsoring or volunteering.
- Listen to music from each other's culture.