

Considerations for Effective Practice with Latino Children and Families

- **The growth of the immigrant population in the United States requires that child welfare professionals examine and adapt their practices to insure effective responses to the specific needs of this population.**
- **Culturally responsive practice with this population requires that the child welfare professional understand the impact of migration and acculturation has on each family and how these experiences have contributed to their child welfare involvement.**

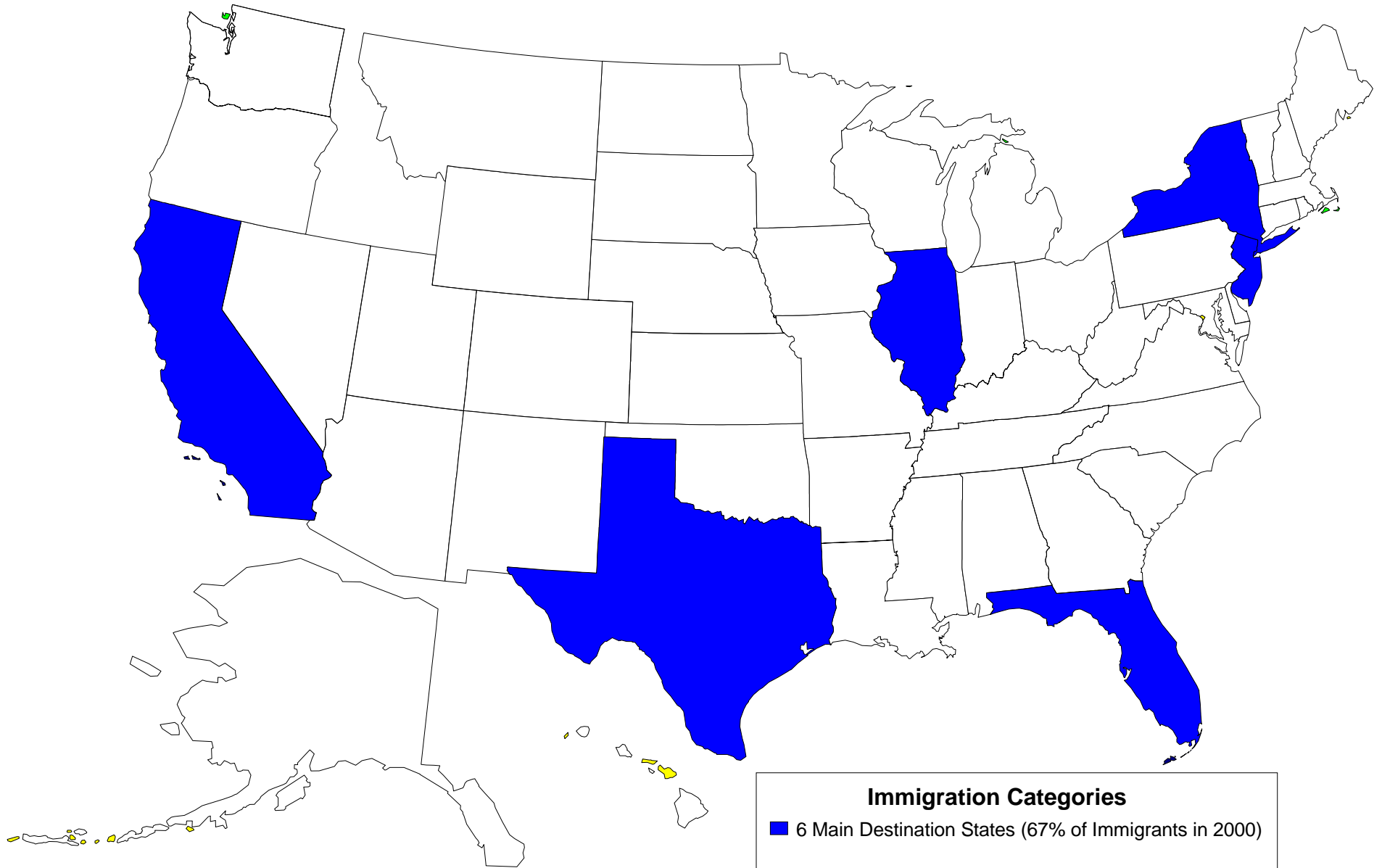
Immigration in the U.S.

- The United States has long been considered a land of immigrants.
- The peak of immigration occurred in the 1890s, (15% of the total population, 9.25 million foreign-born in 1890)
- We are now in a second peak (11.5% of total population, 32.5 million foreign born in 2002)

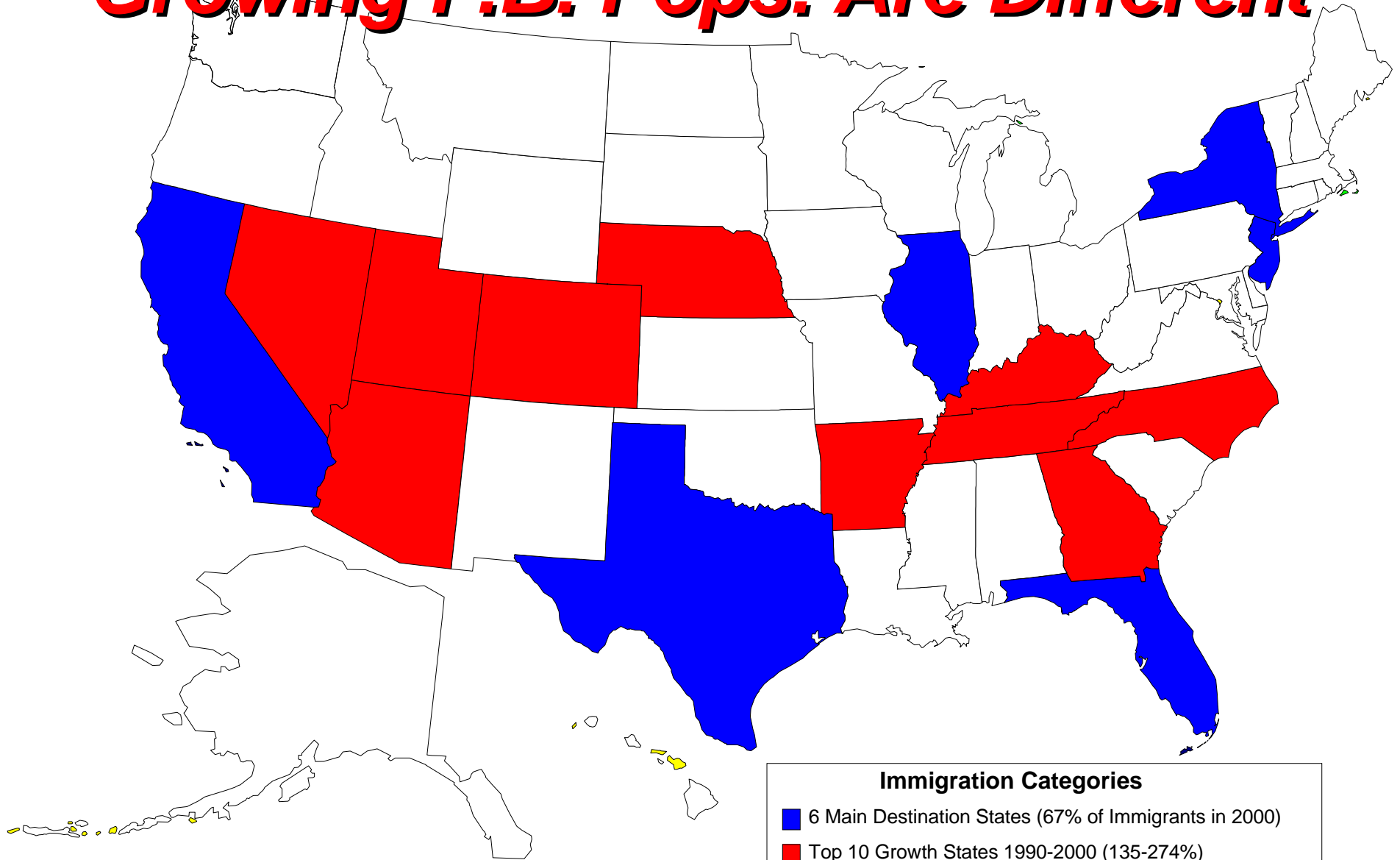
Immigrant Presence

- One in five U.S. residents is either foreign born or a first-generation child of an immigrant.
- Twenty-one percent of the nation's population under age 25 in 2000 was either foreign born or first generation, up from a mere 7% in 1970 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2002).

2/3 of Immigrants Live in 6 States



But Top 10 States with Fastest Growing F.B. Pops. Are Different



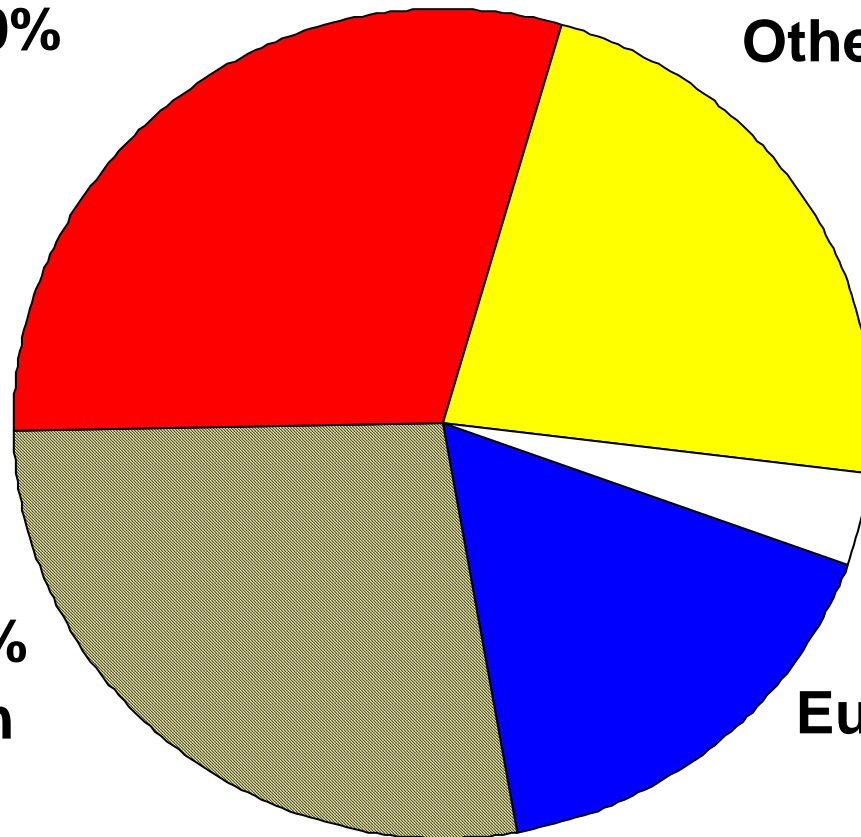
Immigration Categories

- 6 Main Destination States (67% of Immigrants in 2000)
- Top 10 Growth States 1990-2000 (135-274%)

Half of Immigrants from Latin America

Mexico -- 30%
10 million

Other Latin America -- 22%
7.5 million



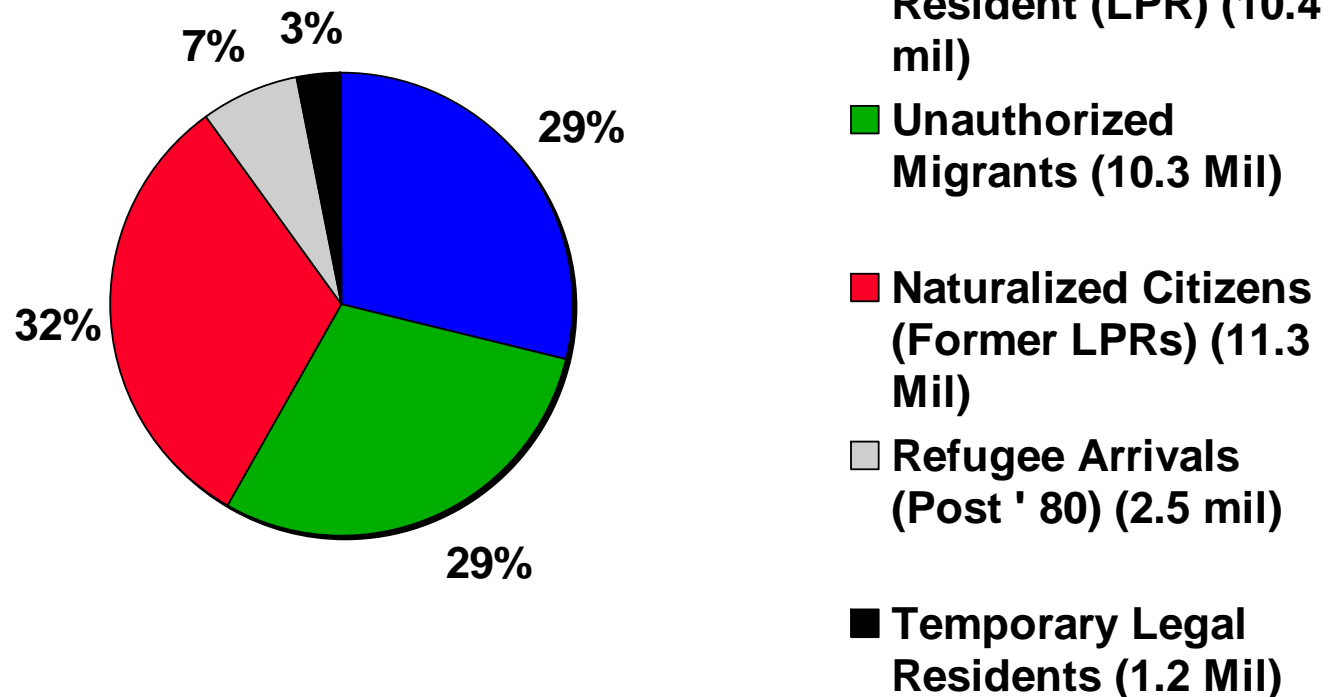
Africa & Other -- 4%
1.2 million

Asia -- 27%
9.1 million

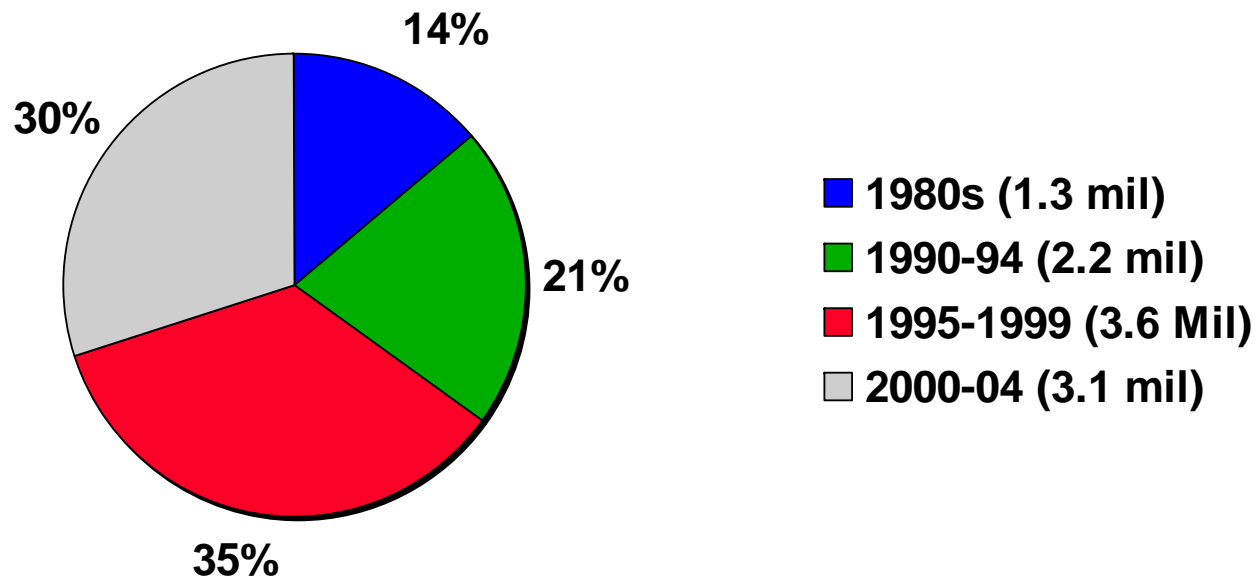
Europe & Canada -- 17%
5.6 million

33.5 Million Foreign-Born
(March, 2003 U.S. Current Population Survey)

Legal Status of Immigrants (March 2004 CPS)



Most Unauthorized Immigrants Have Arrived since 1990



Mixed Status Families

- Nearly one in ten U.S. families with children is a mixed immigration status family (i.e., families with at least one non-citizen parent and one child who is a citizen).
- Three-quarters of the children in non-citizen parented families are citizens (Fix & Zimmerman, 2001).
- While the birth of children in the United States is the most frequent route to a mixed-status family, there are other avenues as well, primarily family members who immigrate to join others in the United States.

Challenge to Immigrant Family Well-Being

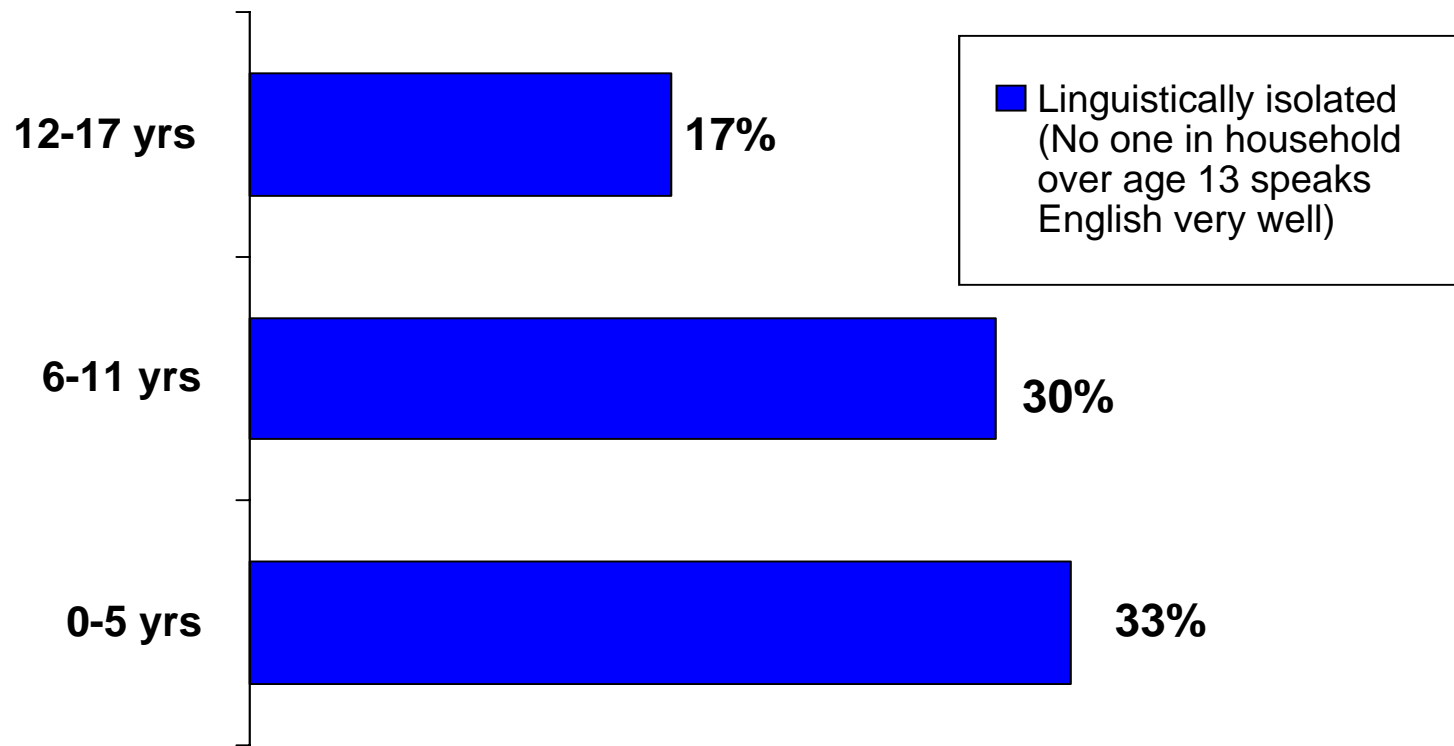
- Immigration laws and policies
- Language Differences
- Cultural Differences

Why is immigration status an important consideration for child welfare professionals?

- An immigrant family's status is a critical aspect of their reception and eligibility for needed services during their period of resettlement.
- Different statuses carry varied entitlements to benefits, services, and legal rights.
- It structures the immigration experience (e.g. the journey, pattern of migrations, household structure, economic opportunities, educational opportunities, the ability to maintain family ties, and the shaping of family dynamics.)

Why is Language an important consideration for child welfare professionals?

% of Children in Linguistically Isolated Households



((Source Randy Capps, Urban Institute, 2006))

Why is culture an important consideration for child welfare professionals?

- **Acculturation stress**
- **Distrust/lack of familiarity of government agencies**
- **Cultural norms and child rearing practices differ from U.S.**
- **Household composition and family structure**
- **Differences in service utilization**

Illinois Policy Tools and Training that Facilitate Effective Child Welfare Practice with Immigrant Children and Families

- Burgos Consent Decree
- The Memorandum of Understanding Regarding Consular Notification & Access Between the State of Illinois, DCFS and the Consulate General of Mexico (MOU)
- Latino Consortium
- Training Initiatives

Burgos Consent Decree

The protections gained for Latino families under the Consent Decree include:

- assurances that all services and written communications will be made available in Spanish;
- all Spanish-speaking families will be assigned Spanish-speaking caseworkers;
- children of Latino parents who are placed with foster parents will be placed in Spanish-speaking homes

Decree and subsequent Agreed Orders created

:

- a new category of certified bilingual workers,
- prohibited having children translate for

The Memorandum of Understanding Regarding Consular Notification & Access Between the State of Illinois, DCFS and the Consulate General of Mexico (MOU)

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- Determination of Mexican lineage
- Notification to the Mexican Consulate
- Initial information to be provided to the Consulate
- Confidentiality and further information
- Interview of a Mexican or Mexican American Minor
- Special Immigrant Juvenile Status for Mexican Minor
- Proof of Mexican nationality for Mexican American minors
- Assistance provided by DIF
- Location of witnesses in Mexico
- Ongoing communication between Consulate & DCFS
- Changes to DCFS rules and procedures

Latino Consortium

- Consortium created in mid 1990's
- The mission of the Latino Consortium:
 - To provide a holistic array of community-based bilingual and culturally competent social services to Latino children and families, through agencies that have demonstrated mission-based planning in their services to Latino children and families, as well as dedicated substantial resources to serve Latino families.
 - To build the capacity of other organizations to provide culturally competent services to address the unmet needs of Latino children and families.



Training Initiatives

- **Child welfare training grant focus on immigration**
- **Cross discipline training/networking opportunities**
Migration and Child Welfare Conference and Network
Deepening and extension of collaboration
- **Creation of Opportunities to Develop Language Skills**
UNAM-Chicago
Field Placement Abroad /Service Opportunities Abroad
- **Creation of Transnational Understandings and Collaborations**
NASW-IL Sister Cities
Maryville Collaboration
SNDIF Conference, Consultation, Observation
Hosting of Mexican Students Completing Service Hours
- **Creation of Migration Studies Sub-Specialty in Social Work**