

How Well Are Young Children of Refugees Integrating into the United States



Webinar
March 23, 2016



Logistics

- Slides and audio from today's webinar will be available at www.migrationpolicy.org/events
- The report discussed today is available on our website:
 - *Young Children of Refugees in the United States: Integration Successes and Challenges*, By Kate Hooper, Jie Zong, Randy Capps, and Michael Fix is available at: <http://bit.ly/1XKBQW6>
- If you have any problems accessing this webinar, contact us at events@migrationpolicy.org or 1-202-266-1929.
- Use Q&A chat function on the right of the screen throughout webinar to write questions. Or write events@migrationpolicy.org with your question.

Presenters



Michael Fix, President, Migration Policy Institute



Randy Capps, Director of Research, U.S. Programs, Migration Policy Institute



Kit Taintor, State Refugee Coordinator, Division of Refugee Services, Colorado Office of Economic Security



Kathleen Newland, Senior Fellow, Migration Policy Institute

How Well Are Young Children of Refugees Integrating in the U.S.?



By Kate Hooper, Jie Zong, Randy Capps, and Michael Fix

March 23, 2016



Acknowledgements

- Current and former MPI colleagues Kathleen Newland, Jeanne Batalova, Susanna Groves, Chiamaka Nwosu, and Greg Auclair advised on content and assisted with data development.
- James Bachmeier at Temple University, Philadelphia assisted with assignments of refugee status to immigrants.



Purpose of the Research

- Describe risk and protective factors for young children of refugees (ages 10 and younger) in comparison to children of non-refugee immigrants and children of U.S. natives.
- Describe the diversity of the population by comparing indicators for children of refugees from 20 most common parental origins.
- Identify risk and protective factors for these groups.



Data and Methods

- Data: 2009-13 pooled American Community Survey
- “Refugees”:
 - formal refugees,
 - asylees (granted status within the United States),
 - Cuban-Haitian entrants.
- Refugee status assigned
 - Based on % of refugees among all immigrants by origin country and year of entry.
- Children of refugees: at least one refugee parent.
- Children of non-refugee immigrants: at least one immigrant parent, no refugee parents.

Vietnam and Cuba Are the Most Common Parental Origins

Top 10 Parental Countries of Birth for Young Children of U.S. Refugees, 2009-13

Rank	Country	Number	Share (%) of Young Children of Refugees
	U.S. Total	941,200	100%
1	Vietnam	204,600	22%
2	Cuba	117,200	12%
3	Laos	56,200	6%
4	Ukraine	51,100	5%
5	Somalia	49,500	5%
6	Haiti	49,100	5%
7	Russia	43,200	5%
8	Iraq	42,200	4%
9	Ethiopia	32,300	3%
10	Cambodia	25,500	3%

Note: Includes children ages 10 and younger residing with at least one refugee parent.

Source: Migration Policy Institute (MPI) analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) for 2009-13, pooled.



Most Children of Refugees Are U.S.-Born

- Three quarters or more of children of refugees are U.S.-born with two exceptions:
 - Burmese (42% are U.S.-born)
 - Iraqi (64% are U.S.-born)
 - These are the 2 most recent groups of resettled refugees.
- Southeast Asian refugees (Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos) have average parental residence over 20 years, and nearly 100% of children are U.S.-born.

Over Half of All Children in Refugee Families Reside in Five States

Top Ten States of Residence for Young Children of Refugees, 2009-13

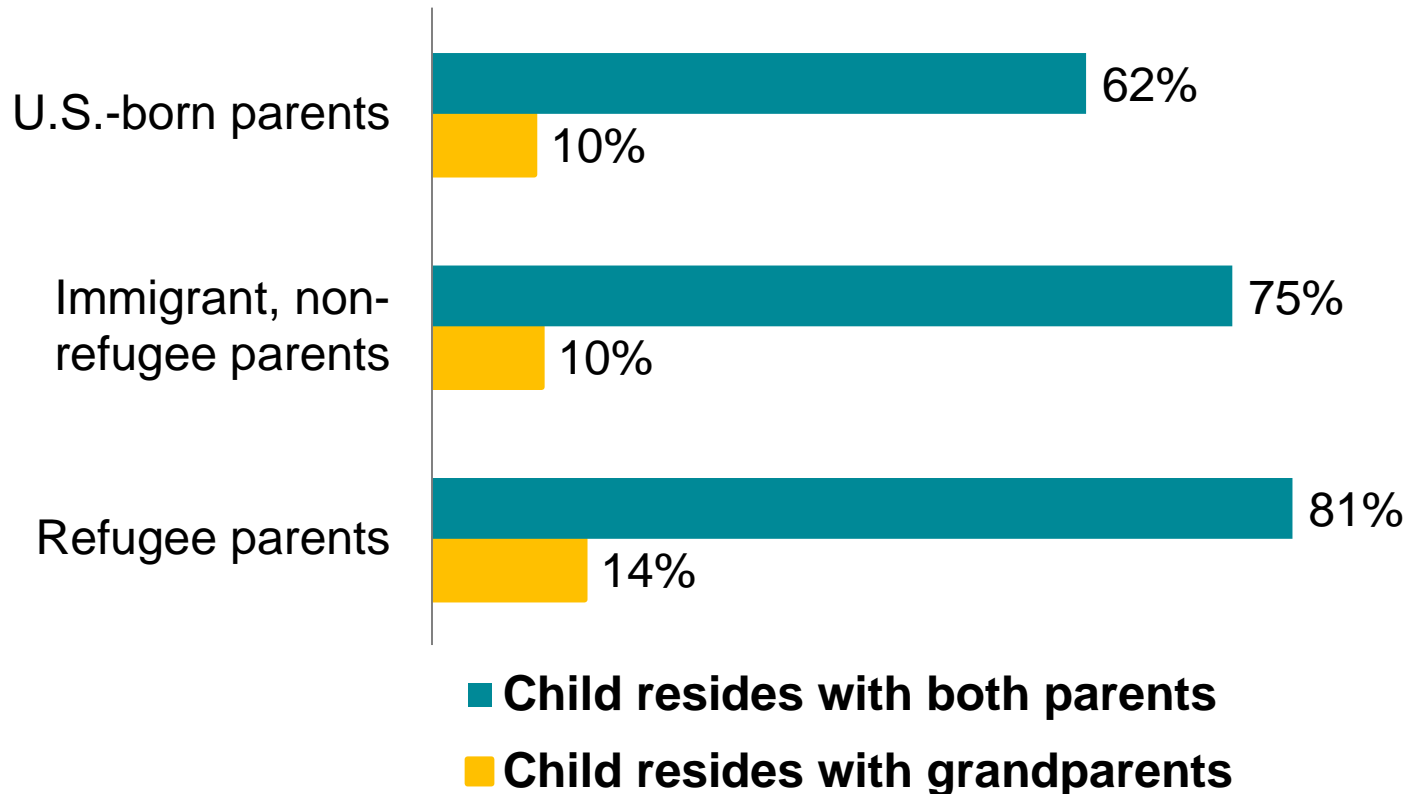
Rank	State	Number	Share (%)
	U.S. Total	941,200	100%
1	California	187,600	20%
2	Florida	152,000	16%
3	New York	66,600	7%
4	Texas	58,900	6%
5	Washington	41,600	4%
6	Minnesota	39,700	4%
7	Virginia	28,200	3%
8	Massachusetts	27,700	3%
9	Georgia	24,500	3%
10	Illinois	23,700	3%

Note: Includes children ages 10 and younger residing with at least one refugee parent.

Source: MPI analysis of pooled 2009-13 ACS data.

Refugees' Children Live with Two Parents and/or Grandparents More Often Than Other Children

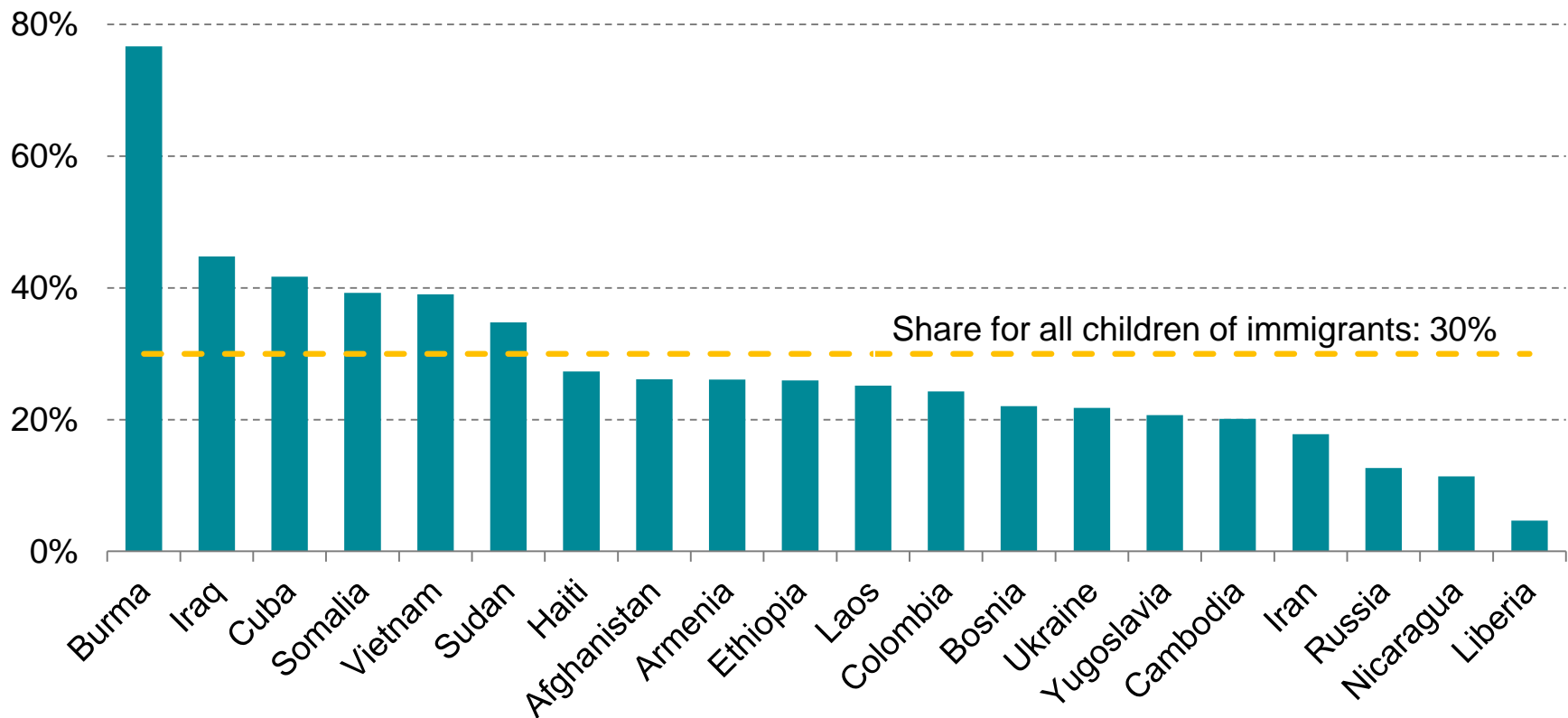
Young Children Residing with Two Parents or with Grandparents, by Parental Origin, 2009-13 (%)



Note: Includes children ages 10 and younger residing with at least one refugee parent.
Source: MPI analysis of pooled 2009-13 ACS data.

Many Children of Refugees Live in Linguistically Isolated Households

Young Children of Refugees Residing in Linguistically Isolated Households, by Parental Country of Birth, 2009-13 (%)

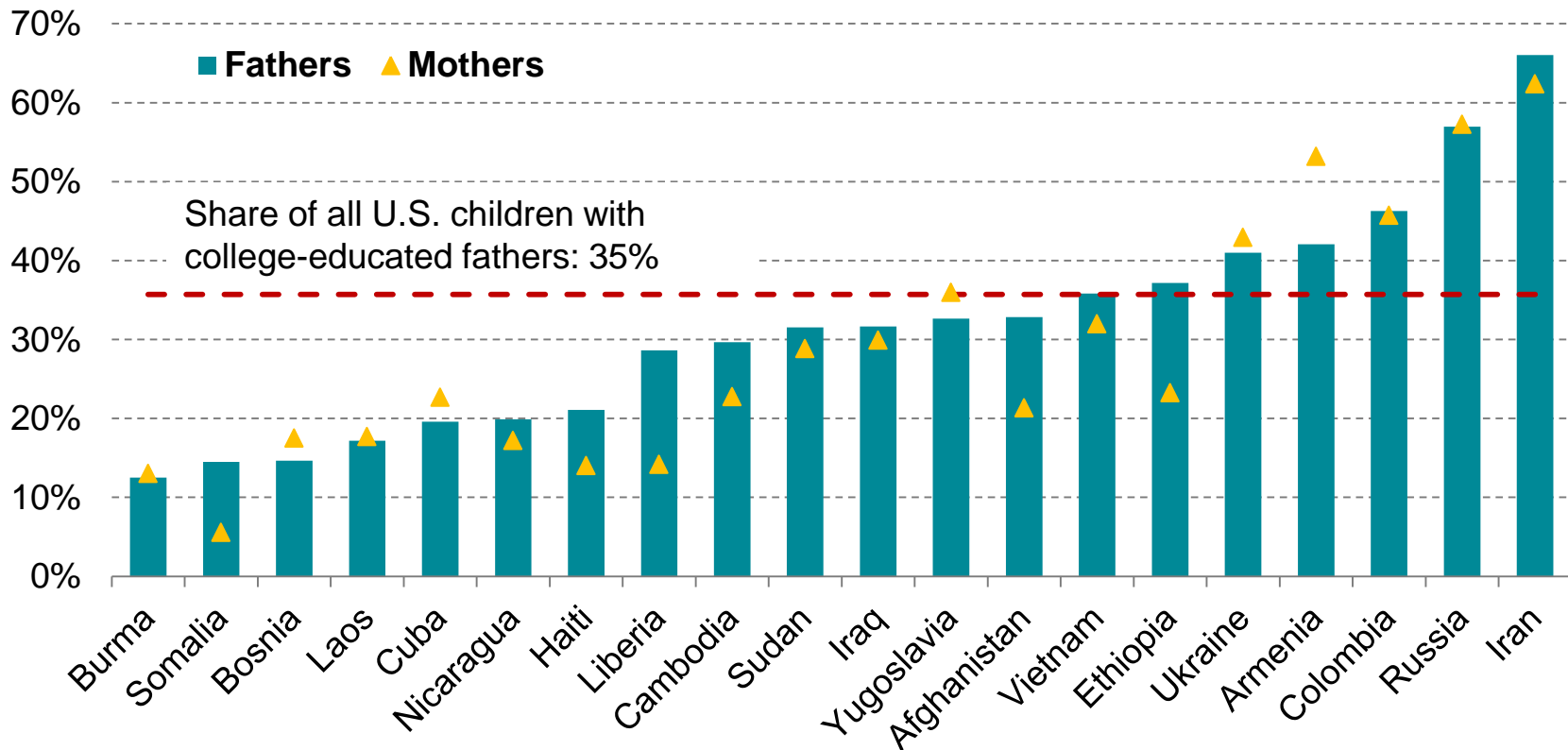


Note: Includes children ages 10 and younger residing with at least one refugee parent.

Source: MPI analysis of pooled 2009-13 ACS data.

More Than Half of Refugee Parents from Iran and Russia Have College Degrees

Young Children of Refugees with College-Educated Parents, by Parental Country of Birth, 2009-13 (%)

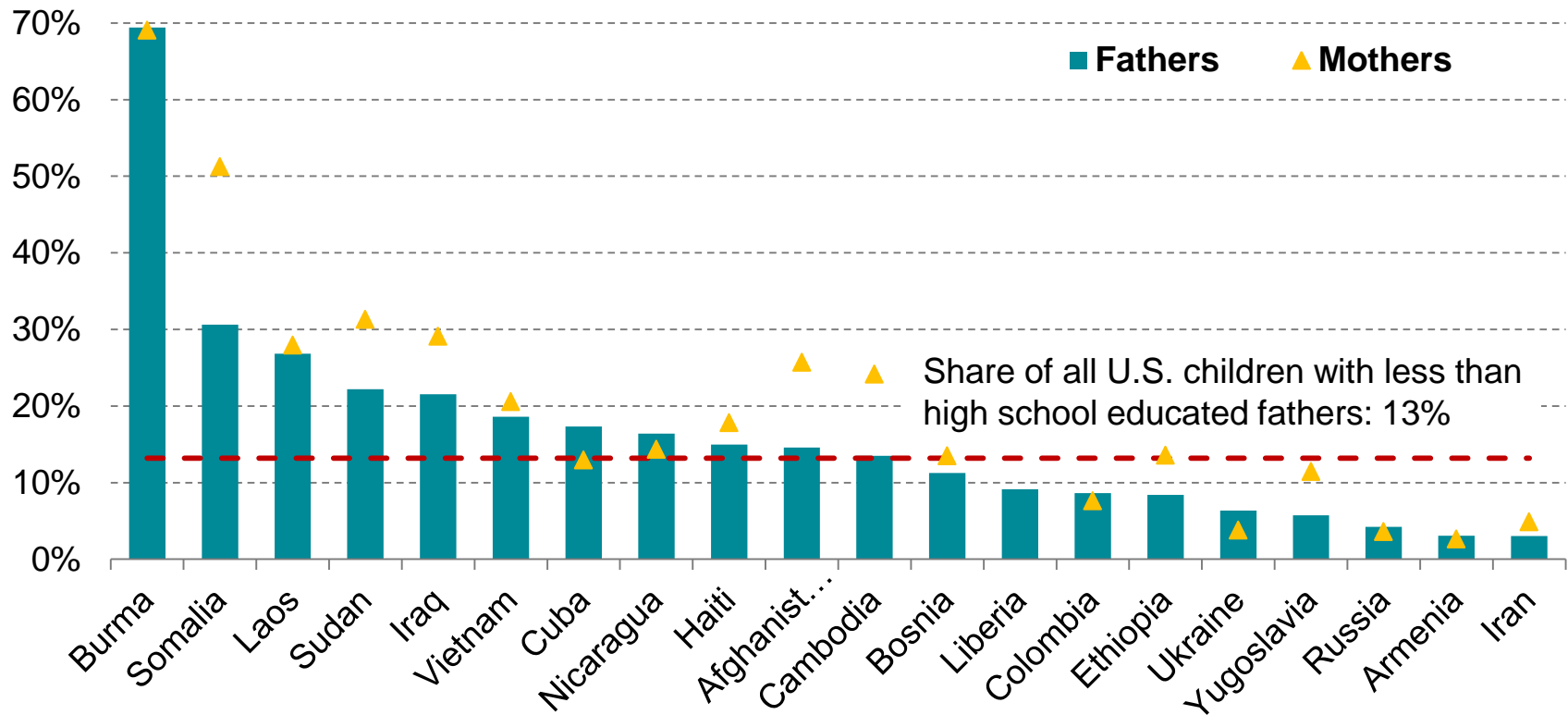


Note: Includes children ages 10 and younger residing with at least one refugee parent age 25 or older. "College-educated" parents have a four-year college (bachelor's) degree or higher.

Source: MPI analysis of pooled 2009-13 ACS data.

Few Refugee Parents Do Not Have a High School Education

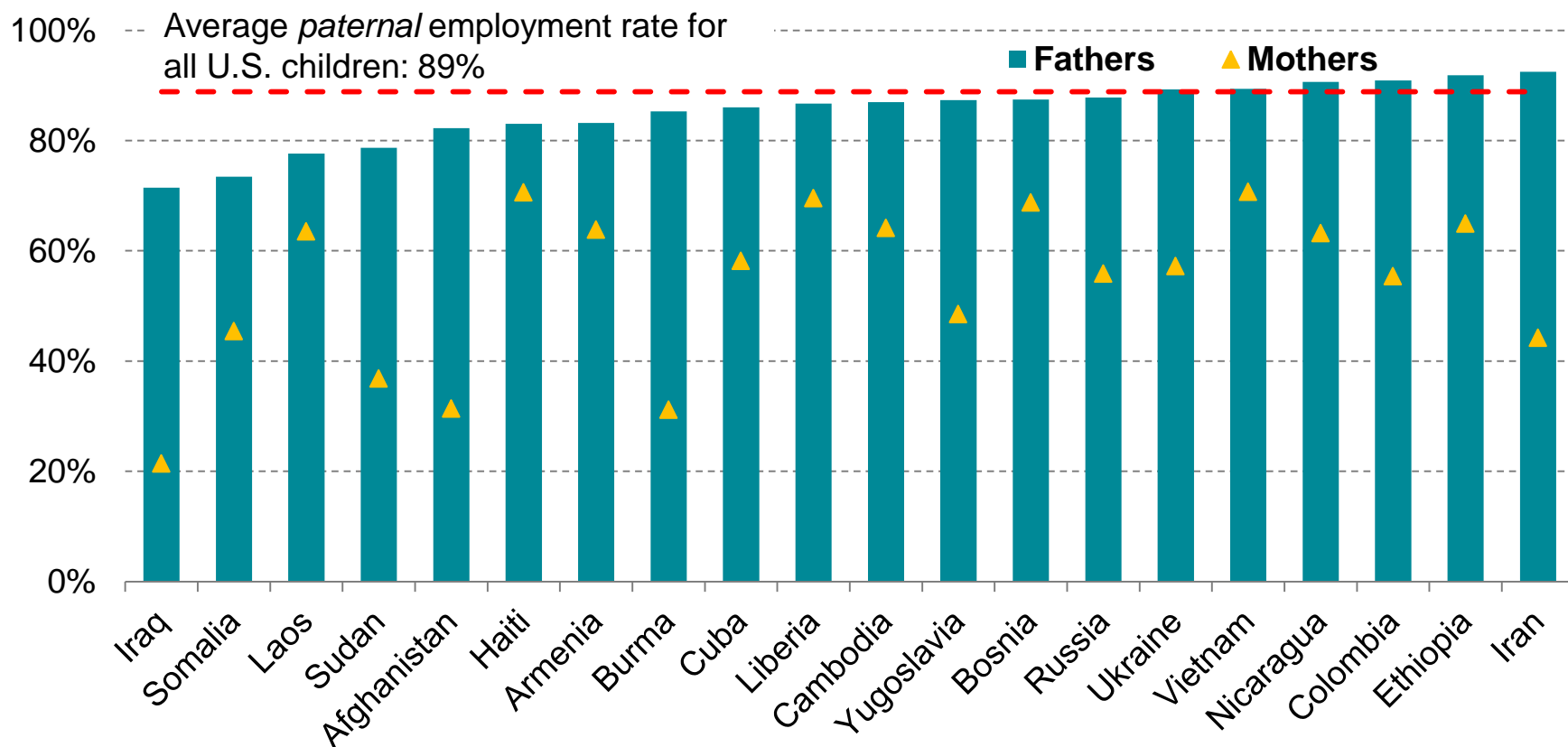
Young Children of Refugees Whose Parents Lack a High School Diploma, by Parental Country of Birth, 2009-13 (%)



Note: Includes children ages 10 and younger residing with at least one refugee parent age 25 or older. *Source:* MPI analysis of pooled 2009-13 ACS data.

Paternal Employment Is High

Young Children Residing with Two Parents or with Grandparents, by Parental Origin, 2009-13 (%)

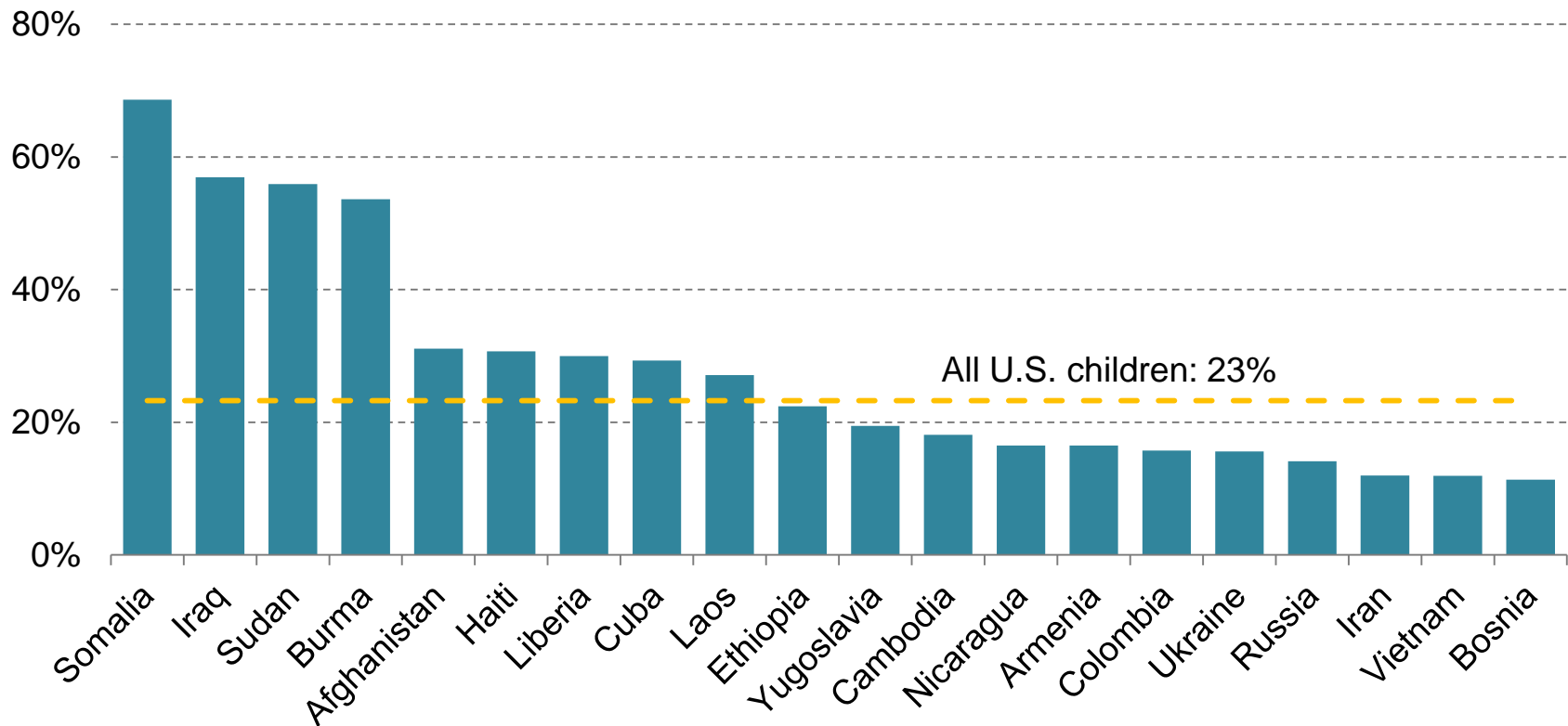


Note: Includes children ages 10 and younger residing with at least one refugee parent age 16 or older and in the civilian population.

Source: MPI analysis of pooled 2009-13 ACS data.

But Poverty Rates Are High in Many Refugee Families

Young Children of Refugees with Family Incomes Below the Federal Poverty Level, by Parental Country of Birth, 2009-13 (%)

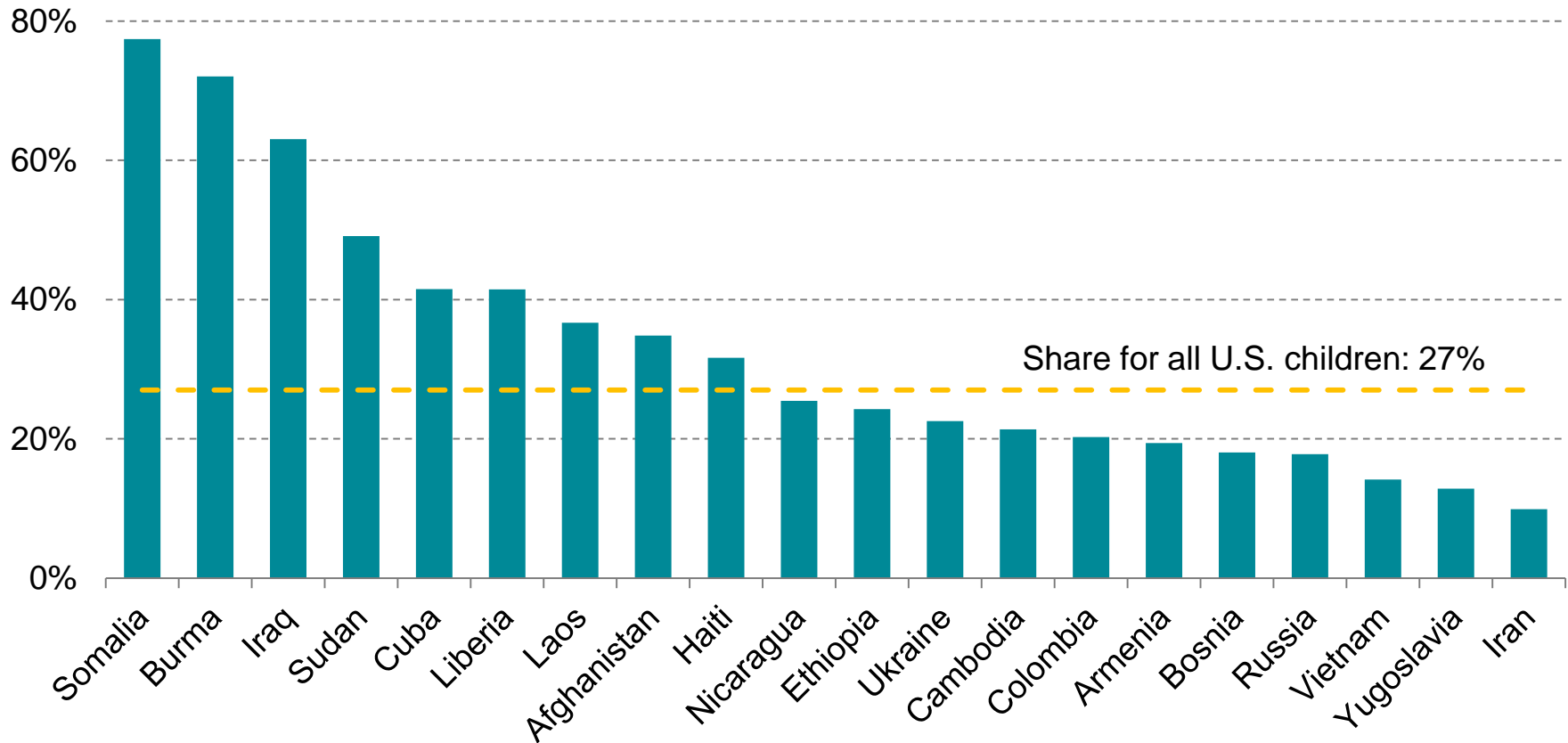


Note: The federal poverty level (FPL), calculated based on total family income before taxes (excluding capital gains and noncash benefits such as food stamps), was \$23,834 for a family of four in 2013. Children living in group quarters are excluded. Includes children ages 10 and younger residing with at least one refugee parent.

Source: MPI analysis of pooled 2009-13 ACS data.

Food Stamp Use Closely Tracks the Poverty Rate

Young Children of Refugees in Households Receiving SNAP Benefits in Past 12 Months, by Parental Country of Birth, 2009-13 (%)

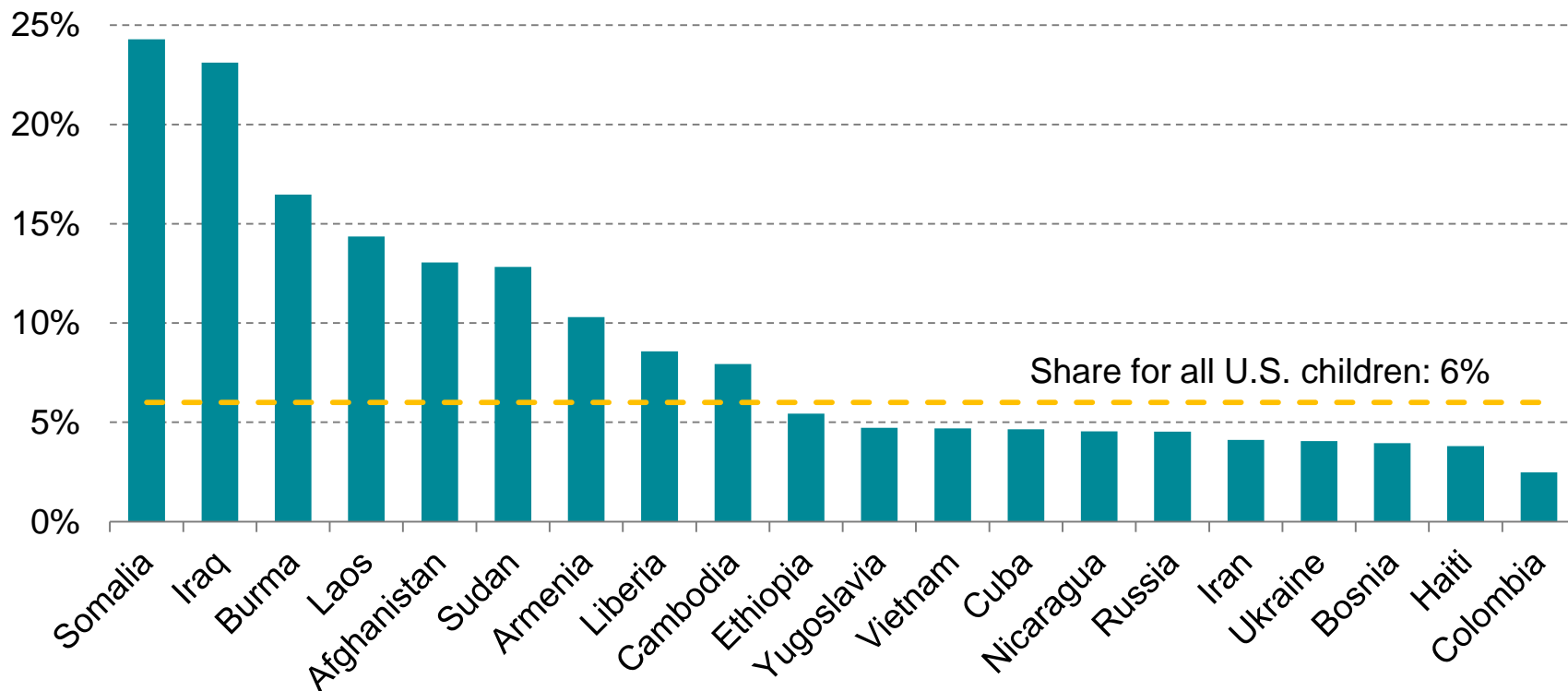


Note: SNAP refers to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly the Food Stamp Program. Includes children ages 10 and younger residing with at least one refugee parent.

Source: MPI analysis of pooled 2009-13 ACS data.

Cash Assistance Closely Tracks Food Stamp Use (Except for Cuban and Haitian Households)

Young Children of Refugees in Households Receiving Cash Assistance, by Parental Country of Birth, 2009-13 (%)

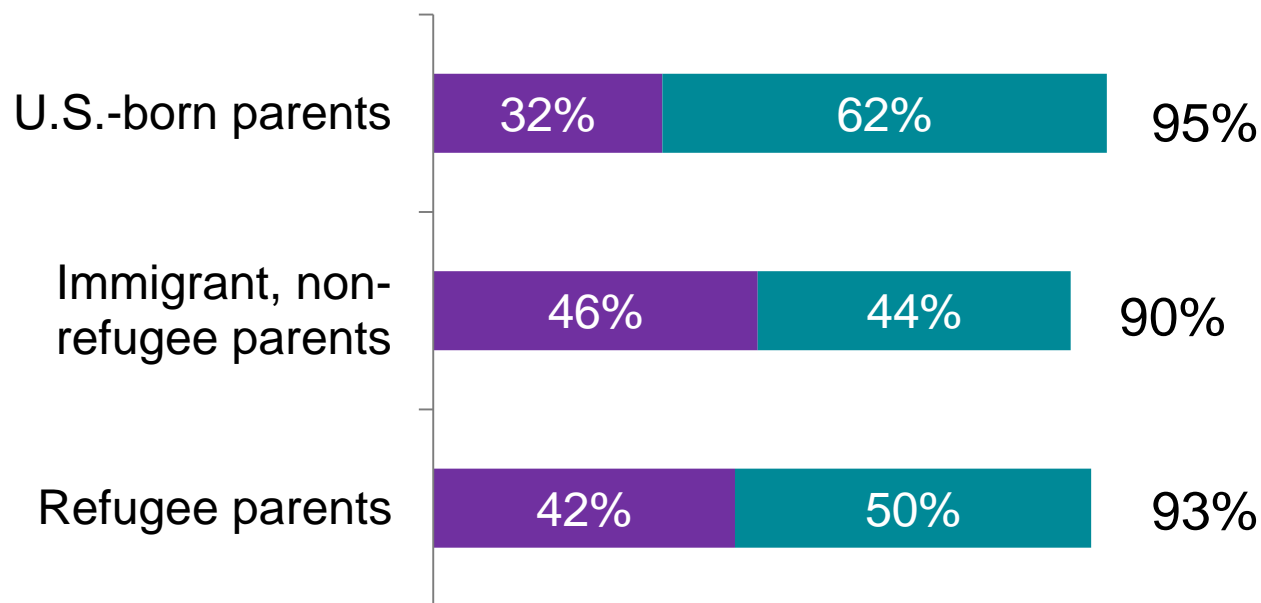


Note: Cash assistance includes receipt of at least some income from welfare programs such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA), or General Assistance (GA) during the past month. Program eligibility requirements and benefit levels vary greatly from state to state. Includes children ages 10 and younger residing with at least one refugee parent.

Source: MPI analysis of pooled 2009-13 ACS data.

Health Coverage of Refugees' Children Nearly Matches U.S. Natives' Children

Young Children with Public or Private Health Insurance Coverage, by Parental Immigrant/Refugee Status, 2009-13 (%)

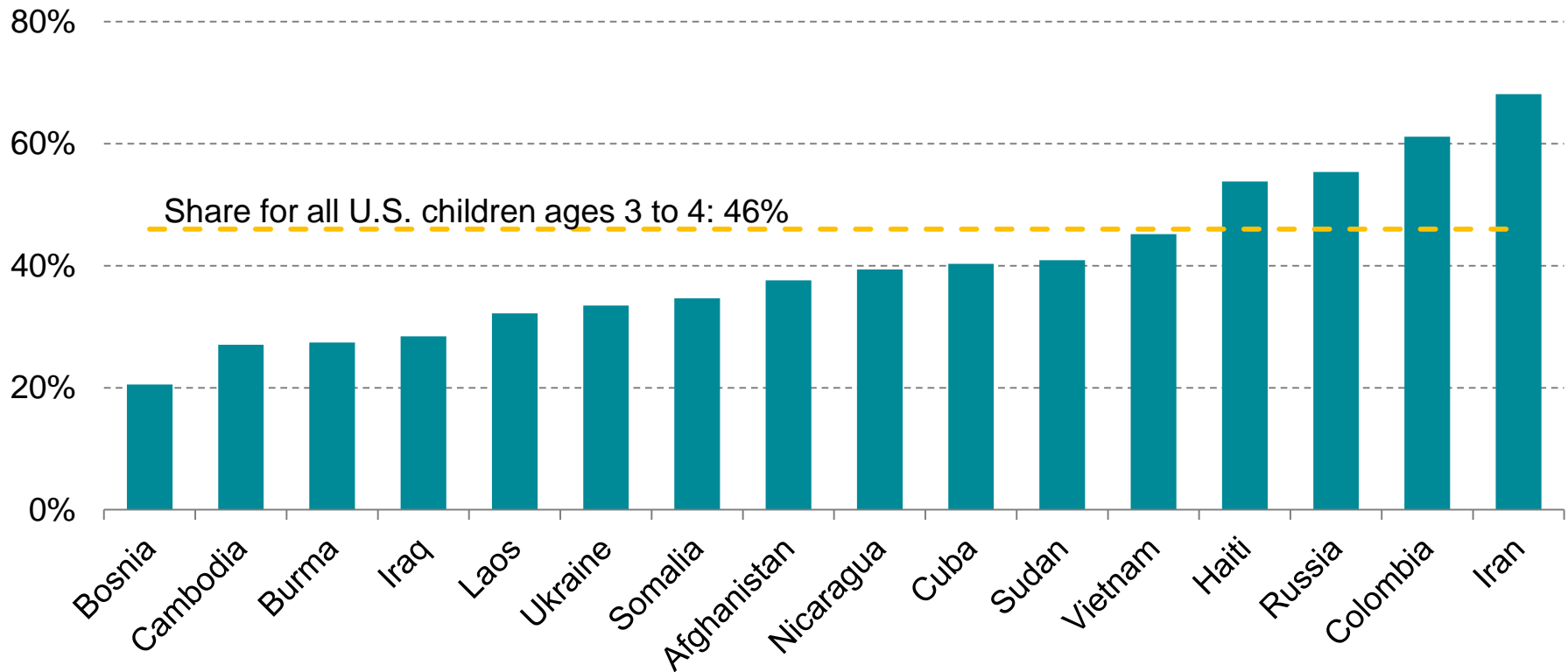


- Children with public health insurance coverage only
- Children with private health insurance coverage

Note: Children with both public and private health insurance coverage are classified as having private coverage. Includes children ages 10 and younger residing with at least one refugee parent.
Source: MPI analysis of pooled 2009-13 ACS data.

Children of Refugees Less Likely To Be Enrolled in Preschool

Children of Refugees Ages 3-4 Enrolled in Preschool, by Parental Country of Birth, 2009-13 (%)



Note: Children of refugees from Yugoslavia, Armenia, Sudan, and Liberia are excluded due to small sample sizes of children ages 3 to 4. Some children participating in Head Start and other forms of center-based care might go unmentioned by parents who do not consider these programs to be preschool. Children enrolled in kindergarten are excluded.

Source: MPI analysis of pooled 2009-13 ACS data.



Conclusions

- Refugee's children fare as well or nearly as well as natives' children on most indicators, especially:
 - Higher prevalence of two-parent families
 - Similar parental college-completion rates
 - High levels of employment, including among mothers
 - Similar poverty and health insurance coverage levels
- But some key groups experience significant risks:
 - Linguistic isolation is high, especially among Vietnamese and Cuban households—the two largest groups
 - Several recent African (Somali, Sudanese) and Asian (Afghan, Burmese, Iraqi) groups face multiple risks
- Preschool enrollment low for almost all groups

Kit Taintor



Kit Taintor

State Refugee Coordinator

Division of Refugee Services

Colorado Office of Economic Security

Kit Taintor is the State Refugee Coordinator at the Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS), responsible for statewide coordination of Colorado's refugee resettlement program. Prior to her appointment as State Refugee Coordinator, Ms. Taintor was the Grant and Program Manager for the refugee program at CDHS. Between 2009 and 2014, as Executive Director, she led the Colorado African Organization, a mutual assistance association that supports metro Denver's refugee and immigrant communities.

Before moving to Colorado, Ms. Taintor studied at Tulane University's School of Public Health in International Health and Development and at the University of Virginia in English literature. She served in the United States Peace Corps as a volunteer in Malawi and led a local nongovernmental organization in Uganda that focuses on elevating and standardizing traditional healing. A native of Tennessee, she has traveled extensively but is proud to have finally found a home in Golden, Colorado, with her husband and their two furry children.

Refugee Integration Survey and Evaluation (RISE) Year Five Report

Colorado Refugee Services Program:

kit.taintor@state.co.us / 303-863-8040

Quality Evaluation Designs, for further information
on study design: gary@QualityEvaluationDesigns.com

Funded by the **Office of Refugee Resettlement**

Why this evaluation?

- Most of what is reported through state refugee programs is about employment and self-sufficiency, which are just a piece of the refugee experience;
- How refugees view their community integration is a valuable outcome indicator as to whether resettlement was the right durable solution; and
- Refugee resettlement locally is more about integration than about rescue or employment.

Integration Pathways that the RISE survey tracked

1. Employment & Economic Sufficiency

6. Social Bonding

2. Education & Training

7. Social Bridging

3. Children's Education

8. Language & Cultural Knowledge

4. Health & Physical Well-Being

9. Safety & Stability

5. Housing

10. Civic Engagement

+

Overall Integration Score

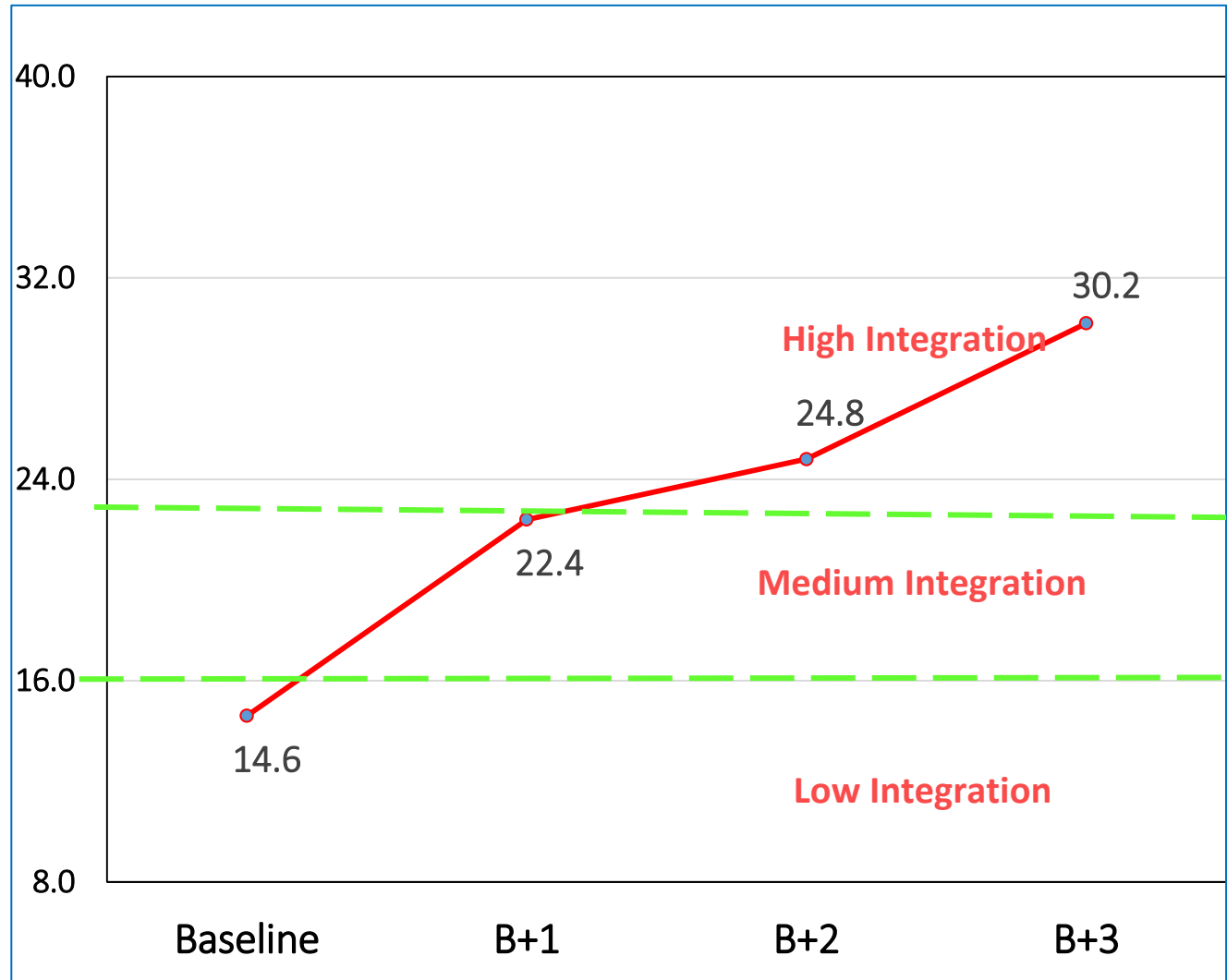


Key Take Aways

- 1) As a group, refugees moved steadily from Low to High Integration;
- 2) In the *Children's Education* Pathway, respondents showed improvement over time;
- 3) Cluster Analysis shows us the pathways that impact integration for parents; and
- 4) Programs wanting to improve integration of parents would need to impact other integration pathways besides *Children's Education*.

RISE Survey: Overall Mean Integration Score

Average scores move from low to high Integration across the four years.



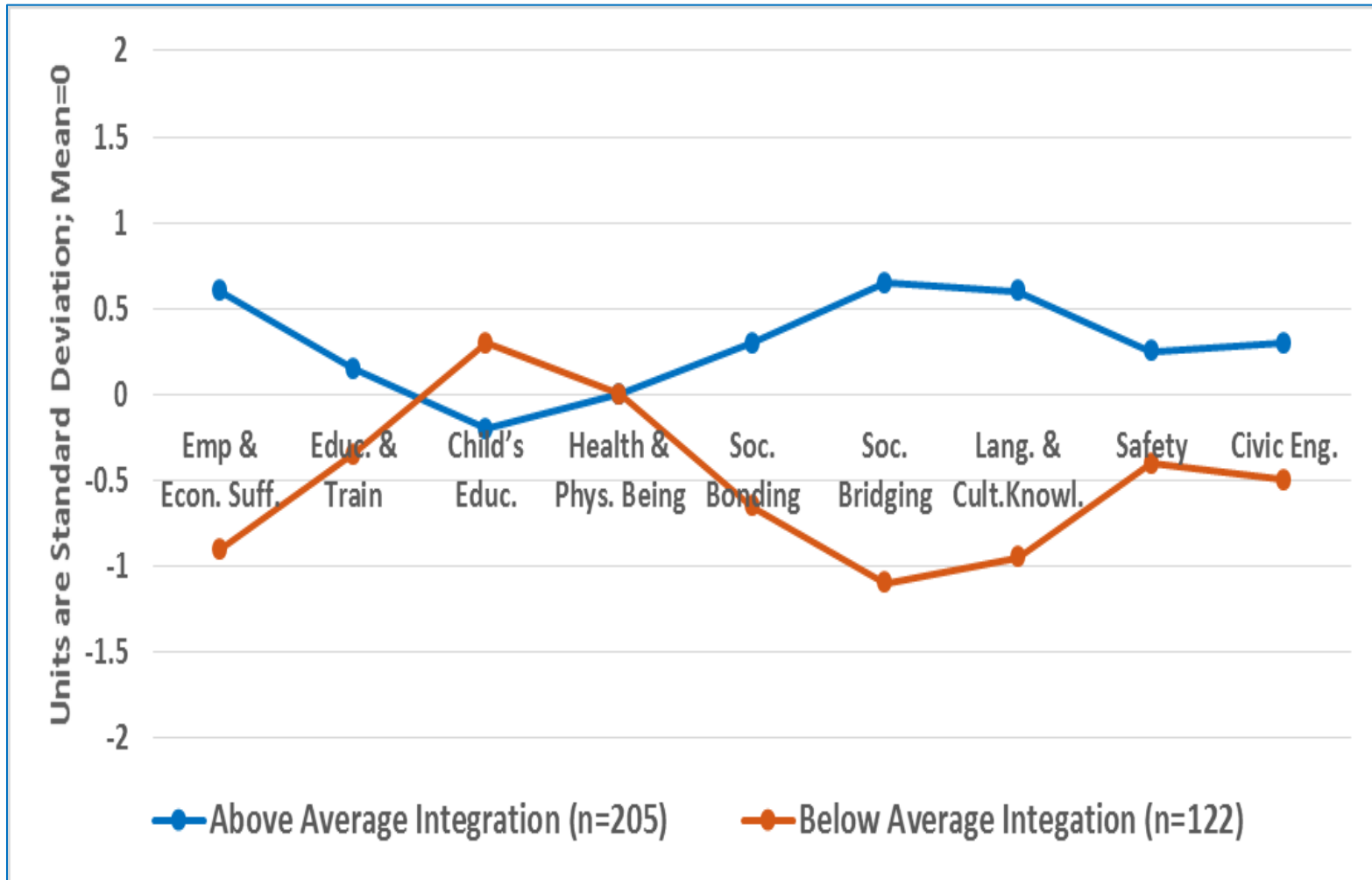
Children's Education Pathway Variables

5.3. Frequencies for Children's Education Variables

Variable	Baseline % (n=223)*	B+1 % (n=147)*	B+2 % (n=158)*	B+3 % (n=145)*
Has visited with at least one of your children's teachers about his/her performance or progress in school	29.1	59.2	65.2	82.8
Has volunteered time at children's school	1.6	2.7	5.1	4.1
Has attended a social, sporting, cultural, educational activity or event at children's school	7.2	26.5	41.5	69.2
Has attended a social, sporting, cultural, educational activity or event outside children's school	4.4	21.2	7.0	9.5
At least one child has at least one good friend at school who is not from home country or culture	31.1	39.3	34.9	43.9

RISE Survey: Cluster Analysis

Graph shows different integration patterns across pathways for refugees with low vs. high overall integration.



Integration Pathway: Children's Education

- **Original Query:** Could having school-aged children be a pathway towards integration for caregivers, if supporting the child's education resulted in interactions with teachers and attendance at school events (which reflects social bridging, another pathway)?
- Low-integrators were more likely to score higher on the Children's Education pathway and were more likely to have children
- Refugees who were high integrators scored high on *Employment & Economic Sufficiency, Social Bridging, and Language & Cultural Knowledge*
- This could lend itself to promoting family literacy programs in schools, volunteer programs for refugee parents, and more social opportunities to bring parents from diverse backgrounds together

For the full RISE report:

- <https://sites.google.com/a/state.co.us/cdhs-refugee/>

Kathleen Newland



Kathleen Newland
Senior Fellow and Co-founder
Migration Policy Institute

Kathleen Newland is a Senior Fellow and Co-Founder of the Migration Policy Institute. Her focus is on the relationship between migration and development, the governance of international migration, and refugee protection. She is also the Founding Director of the International diaspora Engagement Alliance (IdEA) during its incubation phase at MPI from 2011-13; IdEA was established as a partnership among MPI, the State Department, and U.S. Agency for International Development. She is a Member of the MPI Board of Trustees. Previously, at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, she was a Senior Associate and then Co-Director of the International Migration Policy Program (1994-01). She sits on the Board of Overseers of the International Rescue Committee and the boards of directors of USA for UNHCR, the Stimson Center, Kids in Need of Defense (KIND), and the Foundation for The Hague Process on Migrants and Refugees. She also is a Chair Emerita of the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children.

Prior to joining the Migration Program at the Carnegie Endowment in 1994, Ms. Newland worked as an independent consultant for such clients as the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Bank, and the office of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. From 1988-92, she was on the faculty of the London School of Economics. During that time, she also co-founded (with Lord David Owen) and directed Humanitas, an educational trust dedicated to increasing awareness of international humanitarian issues. From 1982 to 1988, she worked at the United Nations University in Tokyo as Special Assistant to the Rector. She began her career as a researcher at Worldwatch Institute in 1974. Ms. Newland is author or editor of eight books, including *Developing a Road Map for Engaging Diasporas in Development: A Handbook for Policymakers and Practitioners in Home and Host Countries* (2012); *Diasporas: New Partners in Global Development Policy* (2010); *No Refuge: The Challenge of Internal Displacement* (2003); and *The State of the World's Refugees* (1993). Ms. Newland is a graduate of Harvard University and the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton University. She did additional graduate work at the London School of Economics.



Questions and Answers

- Use Q&A chat function on the right of the screen to write questions. Or send an email to events@migrationpolicy.org with your question.
- Slides and audio from today's webinar will be available at www.migrationpolicy.org/events
- The report discussed today is available on our website:
 - *Young Children of Refugees in the United States: Integration Successes and Challenges*, By Kate Hooper, Jie Zong, Randy Capps, and Michael Fix is available at: <http://bit.ly/1XKBQW6>

MPI Resources

More Available: <http://bit.ly/mpi-refugees>



Young Children of Refugees in the United States: Integration Successes and Challenges is available
<http://bit.ly/1XKBQW6>

Refugees and Asylees in the United States available at
www.migrationinformation.org
along with many other related articles

THE ONLINE JOURNAL OF THE MIGRATION POLICY INSTITUTE
MIGRATION INFORMATION SOURCE
FRESH. GLOBAL. AUTHORITATIVE.



Commentary:
The U.S. Record Shows Refugees Are Not a Threat
By Kathleen Newland
<http://bit.ly/rfgcomm>



Providing a Head Start: Improving Access to Early Childhood Education for Refugees is available
<http://bit.ly/1RhFzfi>



The Academic Engagement of Newly Arriving Somali Bantu Students in a U.S. Elementary School is available
<http://bit.ly/fcd-somali>



Ten Facts About U.S. Refugee Resettlement is available
<http://bit.ly/refugee-facts>



The Educational Experiences of Refugee Children in Countries of First Asylum is available
<http://bit.ly/fcdasylum>



The Educational and Mental Health Needs of Syrian Refugee Children is available
<http://bit.ly/fcd-syrian>



Improving Instruction for Immigrant and Refugee Students in Secondary Schools
<http://bit.ly/tcm-symposium>

Find out about refugee crisis in Europe: *Moving Europe Beyond Crisis*
<http://bit.ly/eubeyondcrisis>



For More Information

Kathleen Newland
Senior Fellow, MPI
Knewland@migrationpolicy.org

Randy Capps
Director of Research
U.S. Programs, MPI
rcapps@migrationpolicy.org

Kit Taintor
Colorado State
Refugee Coordinator
kit.taintor@state.co.us

Reporters can contact:

Marissa Esthimer
mesthimer@migrationpolicy.org
+1-202-266-1906

For additional information and to receive updates:

www.migrationpolicy.org

For interactive data tools on U.S. and International migration data, visit:

<http://www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub>