**Family Mentor Program**

**Mission Statement**

To create a group of Mentor Families or individuals to support newly arriving Afghan youth in the following areas:

**Language** - Pashto and Dari speakers to support the Resource Family and youth with basic translation and interpretation especially when the youth first arrives. Catholic Charities connects youth with tutoring agencies, but the youth may need additional support with tutoring and homework.

**Culture -** Help the Resource Family to understand the culture of the youth. For example, how gender roles may impact the dynamics of living in large households and other basic cultural norms such as modesty in dress attire, avoidance of shaking hands and seclusion with the opposite sex, and interacting with other children in the home.

**Religion -** Assistthe Resource Family in understanding the basic tenets of Islam and the Muslim faith, including whether the youth practices Sunni Islam or Shia Islam. Check where local mosques are located and assist the Resource Family with resources to get prayer rugs, the Quran, and understand the practice of bathing before prayers and using water rather than paper products in the bathroom for the act of cleansing.

Educate the Resource Family on Common Celebrations such as:

Nauruz, Eid ul-Fit, Eid ul -Adha, Ashura, and Ramadan.

**Food -** Help the Resource Family by making a meal and selecting foods the youth might like. Most Afghan people do not eat pork and beef is not a staple food. Common meats are chicken and lamb and Basmati rice and soft flat bread. Also many dishes are cooked with lots of tomato, onion, cardamom, salt and oil.  Fruit and nuts are familiar snacks. Help the Resource Family to find ethnic stores and Afghan restaurants in the area.

**Program Goals**

Provide Resource Family and youth with support and guidance especially when they are new to the U.S.

* Participate in a pre-placement call with Resource Family and Catholic Charities’ staff.
* Determine what needs the family perceives they might have and then do an assessment once the youth has arrived.
* Be prepared to make a commitment of one year and to be available to the Resource Family at least once a week initially, and then monthly or as needed by the family.
* Meetings Can be in person or on-line depending on current covid-19 protocols and family preferences.
* Mentor Families will be assigned based on the needs of the family and what the Mentor has signed up to do.

**Qualifications:**

**18+ years old**

**Fill out RFC Application**

**Get fingerprinted through Guardian**

**Willing to commit to a Resource Family/ Youth 1 year**