

PROTECTIVE AND RISK FACTORS IMPACTING TRAUMA RECOVERY DURING SETTLEMENT



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The Victorian Foundation
for Survivors of Torture Inc.

PROTECTIVE & RISK FACTORS

For students and families of refugee backgrounds, settlement in Australia means the opportunity to recover and rebuild their lives. However, it is a difficult process involving a variety of new and ongoing stressors.

Protective factors mitigate risks (when one or more are present) and support recovery and settlement.

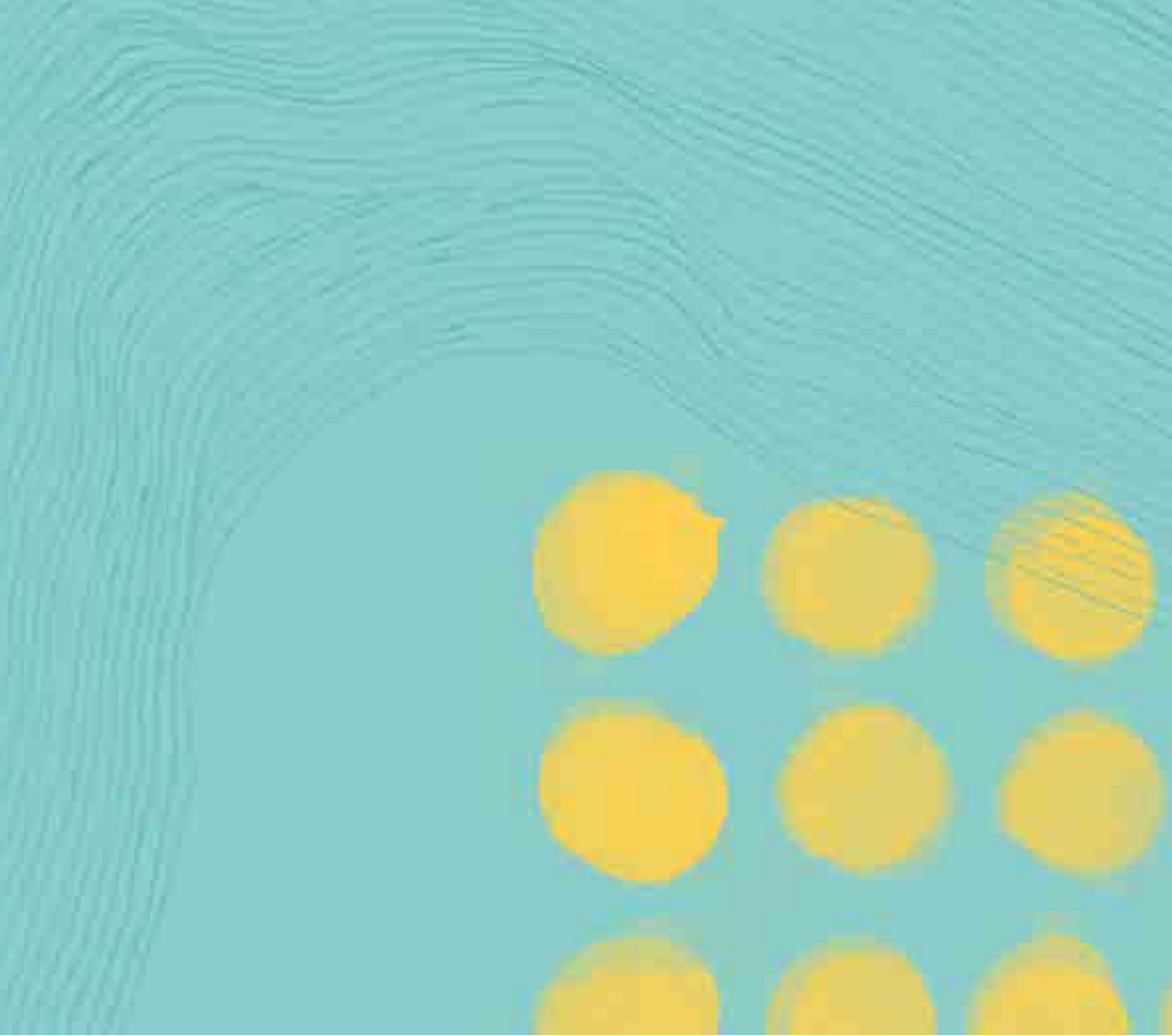
Risk factors present barriers to trauma recovery and settlement.

Protective and risk factors should not be viewed in isolation because they are dynamic and interactive. Identifying the range of protective and risk factors impacting upon students and their families enables schools to understand the most relevant ways to support them.

The table below presents important protective and risk factors for students and families of refugee backgrounds across three levels.

	PROTECTIVE FACTORS	RISK FACTORS
INDIVIDUAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good interpersonal and social competencies • Self-efficacy and control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to communicate in English • Poor physical and mental health on arrival • Perceived lack of social and economic status • Lack of familiarity with dominant culture and its systems
FAMILY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actual or early prospect of family reunification • Stimulating and safe family functioning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family members in dangerous circumstances • Family stressors including breakdown • Illnesses of family members - physical and mental
COMMUNITY/ SOCIETY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsive service systems: health, education, legal and employment • Welcoming and inclusive policies and attitudes to diversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socioeconomic disadvantage • Racism and discrimination • Marginalisation • Community fragmentation

Source: *Integrated Trauma Recovery Service Model, Foundation House, 2016*



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