



**RESTORING
DIGNITY**

*Welcome
Home*

Refugee Family Education Program

"There comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river. **We need to go upstream** and find out why they're falling in."

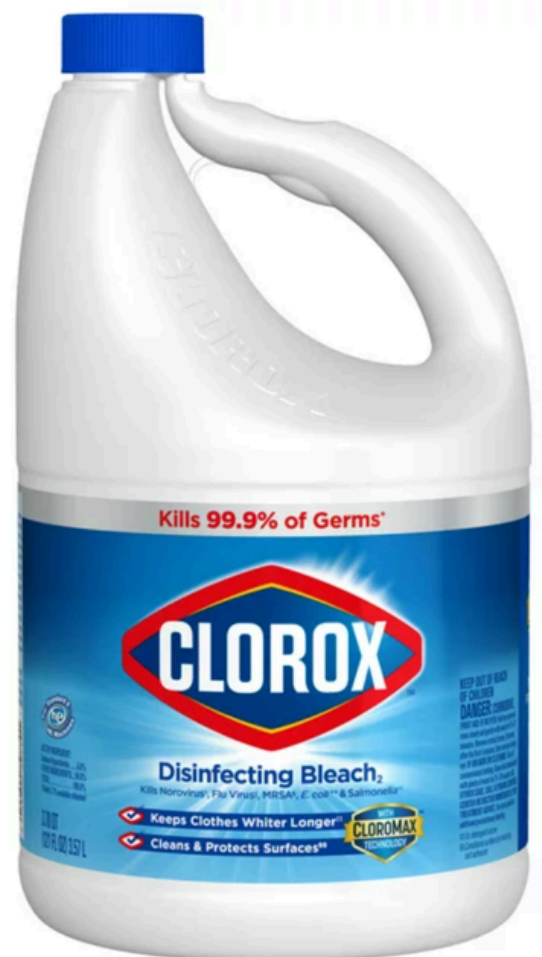
-Desmond Tutu



It all started with bleach. We were assisting a gentleman who came to America as a resettled refugee from Burma. He asked us to help him get his landlord to fix several broken items in his apartment. Before we left, he motioned us to his kitchen. **Pulling out a bottle of bleach,** he pointed to the stove, which was covered in stuck-on grease. "Do you know what I can use to get the grease off?" he asked via the interpreter.

"Every week, I go to the store and pick a new cleaning product to try to get the grease off. **This week, I bought this bottle.**" He demonstrated how he tried pouring bleach on his stove, but it wasn't working. "**No one taught me** what to use when I came to America. Do you know what I can use?"

Out of that moment sparked the idea of **creating classes** to teach the knowledge and skills needed to take care of a home in America. A program that would provide **hands-on teaching** for people who are resettled as refugees in our city. We called it the **Welcome Home Program.**



Why we are doing this



When refugees are brought to America, they have only **90 days of support** from the Federal Government before they are expected to be self-sufficient.



Many refugees have lived their entire lives in camps and areas **without refrigeration, plumbing, heating and cooling and electricity.**



Without **proper acclimation education**, refugees struggle to know what to do and **how to take care** of their new living environment.



Life-threatening situations have occurred when refugees have **not been taught** about gas and fire safety, fire alarms, safe cleaning chemical usage, and basic home maintenance.



When refugee families are **taught how to acclimate** to their new environment, they are able to live in **safer and healthier homes.**

Our Classes



Home/Fire Safety



Healthy Home (Cleaning)



Home Owners Maintenance Education (HOME)



Our Model

1

One-on-one, in-home classes, taught by former refugees, in the native language of the family



2

Each family is given a cleaning, home/fire safety or home maintenance starter kit



3

Pre and post-tests assess client understanding & material is retaught if needed



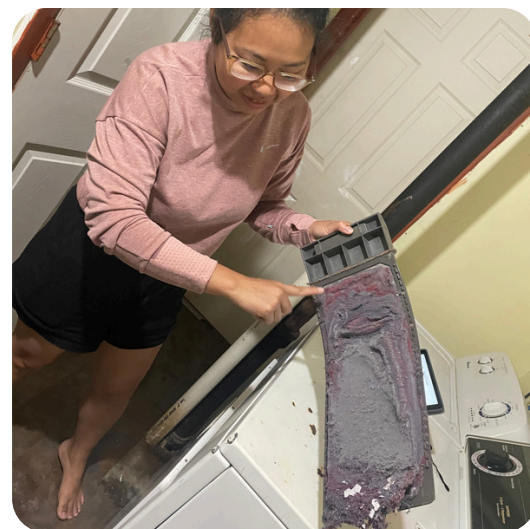


Home/Fire Safety Classes

In partnership with the American Red Cross

Core Topics Taught

- Kitchen fire safety
- Grease fire safety
- What to do if there is a stove fire
- How to use a fire extinguisher
- What to do if a fire is out of control
- Installing smoke detectors
- Fire escape plan
- Clothes dryer safety (change lint collector)
- Electrical outlet safety
- Space heater safety
- Candle safety
- Electrocuting safety
- Iron safety
- Smoking safety
- Keeping children away from matches and lighters
- Natural gas leaks
- Identify if stove is gas or electric
- Identify if water heater is gas or electric
- Identify if dryer is gas or electric
- Identify if furnace is gas or electric
- Warning signs of a gas leak
- What does natural gas smell like
- What to do if you smell natural gas
- What is carbon monoxide
- Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning
- Potential sources of carbon monoxide
- Grilling safety
- Installing carbon monoxide detectors
- Maintaining good airflow in the home
- Proper storage of propane cylinders
- Lead education (spices, paint)
- Tornado safety
- What does it mean when the outdoor warning sirens go off?
- Making an emergency bag
- Creating emergency contact cards

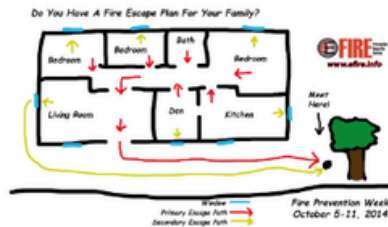


Home/Fire Safety Kit

Each family is given a home/fire safety kit. Educators install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.



Fire extinguisher



Fire Escape Poster and Markers



Smoke Detectors



Carbon Monoxide Detector



Emergency Card



Sound the Alarm Magnet



MUD magnet



Gas leak flyer



Emergency Bag Poster

Results



SKILL GAINED IN OUR HOME/FIRE SAFETY CLASSES INCLUDE:

- Prior to class, only **5.24%** of families were able to demonstrate skills or knowledge of how to put out a **grease/stove fire**. After the classes, **93.3% of families** were able to show how to do so.
- Prior to class, only **7%** of families were familiar with how to use a **fire extinguisher**. After the classes, **98% of families** were able to confidently show how to use a fire extinguisher to put out a fire.
- Prior to class, only **10%** of families had a **plan to escape from a fire**. After classes, **98%** of families had a plan.
- **1,203 smoke detectors** installed (2022-early 2026)
- **54.29%** of families had **no working carbon monoxide detectors** in their home prior to class. After class, **100%** had working carbon monoxide detectors.
- Prior to class, only **3%** of families could **identify a gas leak**. After class, **92%** of families were able to identify signs of a gas leak.
- Only 37% families knew to **seek shelter** in the basement during a **tornado**. After class this number rose to **100%**.





Healthy Home (Cleaning) Classes

Core Topics Taught



- How to use hand soap to wash hands and how long to wash hands
- How to use dish soap
- Using a sponge
- Using SOS pads
- How to twist open the sprayer on a bottle
- How to use a disinfectant
- How to clean countertops
- Cleaning a refrigerator
- Cleaning a stove
- Safely disposing of oil
- Cleaning walls and floors
- Food storage
- Cockroaches and mice
- Proper toilet use
- Cleaning the inside and outside of a toilet
- How to clean a tub and shower
- Cleaning up water on bathroom floors
- How to kill mold
- Cleaning crayon and marker off of walls
- How to wash windows
- Cleaning supply safety



Cleaning Starter Kit

Each family is given a cleaning starter kit. Each product is labeled with translated, waterproof, reusable tags.



Kitchen Cleaner



Bathroom Cleaner



Wall/Floor Cleaner



Stove Cleaner



Toilet Bowl Cleaner



Glass Cleaner



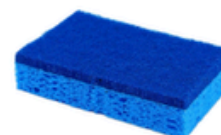
SOS Pads



Saran Plastic Wrap



Reusable gloves



Sponge



Dish soap



Handsoap



Hand soap Refill



Magic Erasers



Cleaning rags



Mop



Cockroach Killer



Mouse Traps



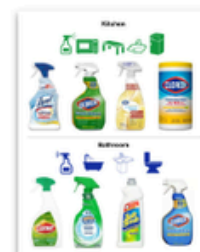
Rat Traps



Waterproof, reusable cleaning tags



How Often to Clean Poster



Products to Buy Poster

Results

SKILLS GAINED IN OUR HEALTHY HOME CLASSES INCLUDE:

- Prior to class, only **6%** of families demonstrated sufficient knowledge in how to properly and **safely clean a stove**. After our classes, 94% of families were able to demonstrate this skill.
- Prior to class, only **31%** of families were able to demonstrate how to **clean windows, glass and mirrors** in their home. After our classes, 100% of families were able to demonstrate this skill.
- Prior to class, only **3%** of families were aware of how to **properly clean walls** in their home. After our classes, 100% of families could demonstrate to the family educator how to clean walls, which product to use and the proper technique of cleaning.
- When looking at **cockroach and/or mouse infestations**, prior to taking our classes, **62.93% of families reported having a severe or moderate infestation**. After class, only 3.45% of families reported having a severe infestation, 21% reported having a moderate infestation and 75% of families reported having no infestation.





Home Owners Maintenance Education (HOME) Classes

In partnership with Habitat for Humanity

Core Topics Taught

- How to use basic tools
- How to use a power drill
- What is a home improvement store and how to locate one nearby
- Extensive "Do-it-Yourself" translated and pictorial posters with QR codes to vetted YouTube videos (we will also teach families how to activate a new feature on YouTube: auto-generated captions in seven of the twelve language we teach in. This will allow many families to read captions to all videos, in their language).
- "Who to call for help" translated and pictorial poster with QR codes to Google Maps for professional help categories (ie. "plumber" QR code will pull up a map with plumbers close to the family's home)
- Teaching what different professionals fix (electrician, plumber, HVAC technician, etc).
- 1% rule (how much to save for home repairs)
- What home insurance covers and helping family find contact information for their home insurance company
- Electrical panel and how to reset circuit breakers
- GFCI outlets and how to test them
- Basics of home plumbing (learning about pipes, water heater, how to fix constantly running toilets, sink leaks, etc).
- Signs of underground and inside water leaks
- How to unclog a drain (including installing strainers in drains to prevent clogs)
- How to unclog a toilet (providing plungers to families who have none)
- Bathroom fans and how to test and clean
- Adjusting water heater temperature and how to light a water heater pilot light
- How to turn off the water in the house
- Preventing burst pipes
- Sump pump basics
- HVAC basics (ducts, registers and return registers, air conditioner, furnace, etc).
- How to change a furnace filter
- How to use a thermostat
- Changing ceiling fan direction in summer and winter
- Energy saving useful tips
- Level payment plan with MUD and OPPD
- Cleaning refrigerator coils
- How to light a stove pilot light
- How to use and reset a garbage disposal
- How to use a dishwasher
- City rules (snow, ice, parking, leaves, lawn, garbage, animals, hunting, slaughtering, gardens, pets)
- How to clean carpet
- How to caulk
- How to clean clothes dryer vent
- How and what to recycle
- Basics on pest treatment
- Termite awareness
- Repairing screens on windows and doors
- Gutters and downspouts
- Egress windows and basement safety



Home Owners Maintenance Kit

Each family is given a home maintenance kit. Educators teach families how to use items.



Tool set



Nail and Screw Set



Homeowners Maintenance Manual



Nightlight



Dishwasher detergent



Cleaning rags



Coil and dryer cleaner



Utilities and financial help handout



Plunger



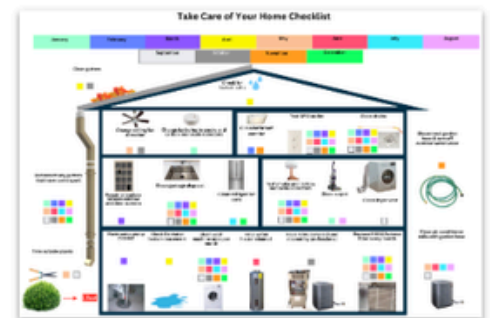
Drain cleaner



Garbage disposal cleaner brush



Wash machine cleaning brush



Monthly Checklist Poster

Results



SKILLS GAINED IN OUR HOME CLASSES INCLUDE:

- Before class, only **14.88%** of families had **home tools** and/or could identify where they were. After class, **99.41% had home tools** and could show our educator where they kept the tools.
- We wanted to know if families knew **who to call if their heat or air conditioning broke**. Before class, only **23.81%** of families knew who they needed to call (an HVAC technician). After class, **97.02%** of families knew how to call an HVAC specialist and knew how to do so (using the QR codes in their HOME manual).
- Before class, only **9.81%** of participants knew how to **adjust the temperature on their water heater**. After the class, this increased dramatically to **93.93%**, showing a significant improvement in participants' practical home maintenance skills.
- Part of owning a house means having to **pay for repairs**. Best practice calls for saving money each month (1% of the mortgage divided by 12 months), in preparation for repairs that are inevitable. We wanted to know if families were saving money each month. At the beginning of class, only **3.57%** of families were actively saving money each month for home repair times. After classes, this number surged to **61.31%**.
- Understanding how to **reset a tripped circuit breaker** is vital information. Before class, only **24.40%** of families knew how to reset their circuit breaker. After classes, **91.67%** could show us how to do so via their electrical panel.

Results Con't.

SKILLS GAINED IN OUR HOME CLASSES INCLUDE:

- We wanted to know if families were able to search **DIY videos online**, if they needed to do a **basic home repair**, such as fixing a broken door handle. Before class, **30.36%** of families could find a video online showing how to do a basic home repair. The largest barrier was language and not knowing how to type English characters into a search bar. After classes, **95.24%** of families were able to **find videos for basic home repairs via the QR code sheets** in their HOME manual.
- **Clogged drains** were the number one thing families asked us to teach before we launched these classes. Prior to class, **32.74%** of families could show us how to properly unclog a drain. After classes, this number increased to **100%!**
- **City laws** are important to understand as a homeowner, because not following them can lead to fees, fines, court proceedings, and potential injuries to others (and lawsuits). We wanted to know if families knew some basic city laws important for public safety. One of those laws was knowing **how quickly you need to shovel after it snows** (within 24 hours). We asked our families, "When it snows, how quickly do you need to shovel your snow?" Only **4.17%** of families knew the answer to this question. After class, this number increased to **99.40%**.
- Before class, only **5.61%** of participants knew whether it was possible or allowed to **raise farm animals** at home in the city. After class, this knowledge increased dramatically to **98.60%**, showing a major gain in understanding following the instruction.





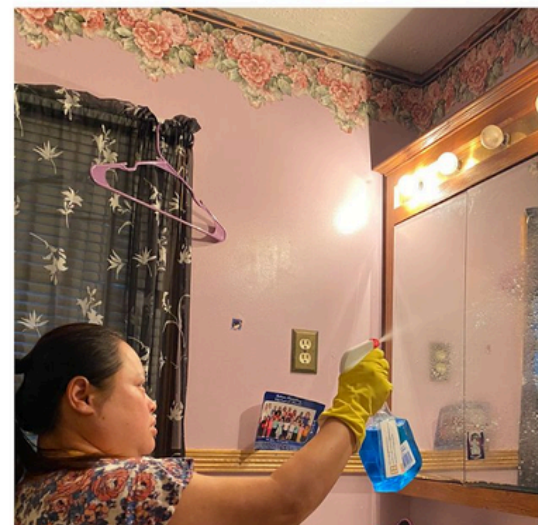
Our Impact

From 2019 to 2025....

- **9,657 in-home classes** have been taught
- **132,049 items** have been given to families via our classes
- **9,595 children** and **10,296 adults** have benefited from our programming
- A total of **19,891 refugee lives** in Omaha have been impacted by this program



RESTORING DIGNITY



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