

Key Messages of Safety and Caring

Students with refugee backgrounds are sensitive to verbal and non-verbal messages. Intentional messages of safety and caring can build strong connections between teachers and students.

Key Message	Examples of how to convey in classroom settings
I am interested in you	Take a few minutes out of class preparation time to watch the student at something he/she enjoys (e.g., physical education, art, etc.)
I accept you	When a teacher or adult brings students to you regarding yet another incident of fighting on the school grounds, communicate your frustration with compassion and calmness.
Adults can be helpers	Just before the student is about to engage in a difficult activity, tell the student that you are there to help.
I am consistent	Tell the student that you are always around for 5 minutes after lunch break begins if the student wants to talk. Be there.
I am safe	When the student complains about playground issues, listen, provide support and take action.
You have competencies	Make a positive comment the very first time the student follows the routine of joining the group and sitting without touching anyone else.
I will be here even when things get tough	Make a point of listening to the student's side even when the student is clearly to blame for a fight.
I can read your signals and will respond to them	Notice when the student comes in more quietly than usual from recess. Take a moment to ask how the student is doing.
Hamre and Pianta, 2006	