



# Support tools for professionals working with families with refugee background



TURVAPAIKKA-,  
MAAHANMUUTTO- JA  
KOTOUTTAMISRAHASTO

Euroopan unionin tuella

# PALOMA-Centre of Competence

- Support and expertise for persons and organizations working in mental healthcare of clients with refugee background.
- Founded in conjunction with the PALOMA2 -project as a national support and competence structure for refugee mental healthcare services.
- As part of the PALOMA2-project were introduced also the support tools for those working with the mental healthcare of persons with refugee background.
- Further information (at the moment only in Finnish):  
[Thl.fi/palomaosaamiskeskus](https://thl.fi/palomaosaamiskeskus)
- More about this during the afternoon virtual fair!

# Help tools for those working with families

## Prevention

United Family (UF) – Family oriented therapeutic support for families with children

## Support and care

Culturally sensitive interview on parenthood

## Strengthening of professional competence

PALOMA-training

# United Family – family-oriented therapeutic support for immigrant families

- Developed by the city of Oulu immigrant services (Iida-Maria Bimberg)
- UF (United Family; in Finnish PY) model - offers preventive support to refugee families facing life challenges within the family .
- Developed originally to cater to the needs of families that have come to Finland through the process of family unification. Later the model has been enlarged to encompass the needs of all refugee families.
- Focused on empowerment, and concentrated in strengthening communication, parenthood, and unity within the family .
- The model is free to use.
- Requires personnel resources.

# UF-model themes and methods

- Themes of the UF model:
  - Family situation at the moment and the internal roles in the family
  - Parents background and how they were brought up
  - Family's internal communication and ways of expressing feelings
  - Parents' couple relationship
  - Family's rules and habits
  - Family's integration in Finland

Help tools:

- Family tree, lifeline and lifeline cards

# Work method

- Start, at the earliest 4 months after the family has arrived in Finland.
- Based on free choice, not recommended on acute crisis situations.
- In Oulu, this work-method is offered to all refugee families, in conjunction with their integration plan.
- Timeframe for the work ~4 months , 6-8 meetings
  - Meetings predominantly at home with the family.
  - Some meetings only with the parents.
  - It is recommended that separate meeting are organized also for teenage children.
  - Meetings can be facilitated by an interpreter; it is recommended that the interpreter is physically present at the meeting.



# Experiences from the UF model

## PALOMA2-project'cooperation:

- Implementation of the model within the OUS special-care catchment area (Oulu, Kokkola, Kajaani, Pudasjärvi)
- Training and guidance for the experts
- Interviews with the client families (3) and experts (5) about their experiences of the model.
  - Parents feedback was positive: the work done was deemed important and helpful.
  - Parents experienced that they had gotten support for their parenthood and working through their emotions and feelings. Parents understanding of each-other had increased.
  - Experts felt that the model complemented significantly other immigration services. **Focusing on the family** and **concentrating on the children** was perceived as really important.

<https://innokyla.fi/fi/toimintamalli/perhe-yhtenaiseksi-perheterapeuttista-tukea-pakolaisperheille>

- Guide (in Finnish) via the link above.

# Culturally sensitive interview on parenthood

- A half-structured qualitative interview-framework developed by Paloma Competence Centre
- interview + checklist on the main topics
- The interview is to be found in Finnish, Swedish and English (translations ready by the end of 2021).
- To be used by professionals within the social and healthcare services working with immigrant families with children.
- The goal is to meet the families on an individual bases and cultural-sensitively → establishing a care relationship / confidential relationship.



# Culture sensitive interview on parenthood

- The interview comprises 4 separate parts
  - 1. Family's language and cultural background
  - 2. Family's life in Finland and immigrant background
  - 3. Children's problems from the parents' point of view and helping experience
  - 4. Family, upbringing and parenthood
- Each part includes core and help questions
  - *Which language(s) do you use in your family?*
  - *Which language would you like to use in our meetings?*
- The interview can be conducted in several parts, during several meetings, and some questions can be ignored if unapplicable – customizable according to situation
- Meeting heterogenous families on individual basis
- The interview is voluntary – perception of official interrogation is to be avoided

# Culturally sensitive interview on parenthood

(a picture of how the questionnaire looks like in Finnish)

**OSIO 1: Perheen kielellinen ja kulttuurinen tausta**

Tässä osiossa kysytään vanhempien ja lapsen äidinkielestä tai -kielistä sekä etnisestä ja kulttuurisesta taustasta. Perheen taustaan liittyvät asiat ovat tärkeitä tietää. Etninen tai kulttuurinen tausta voi olla merkittävä asia joillekin perheille, toisille taas vähemmän. Tutustuminen perheeseen ja sen taustaan tukevat toimivaa yhteistyötä. Kieleen liittyvät asiat vaikuttavat käytännön asioihin ja lapsen kielelliseen kehitykseen. Tämän ja muiden osioiden kysymyksiä voi kysyä tarvittaessa.

**Kielitaito**

<u>Ydinkysymykset</u>	<u>Apukysymykset</u>
Mitä kieliä teidän perheessänne puhutaan?	Mitä kieltä käyttäisitte mieluiten asioidessanne terveydenhuollossa tai palveluissamme? <i>HUOM. Työntekijän on hyvä varmistaa, millä kielellä perhe toivoo ajanvaraustiedot ja muut tiedotteet jatkossa, jos se ei ole vielä tiedossa.</i>
Mitä kieliä te vanhemmat puhutte <i>lapselle</i> tai lapsille? Puhutko eri kieliä eri tilanteissa?	Mitä kieliä te vanhemmat puhuitte itse lapsena ja nuorena?

# Evaluation of the interview framework

- Implemented as part of the PALOMA2 - project
- Group interviews (N = 32) with mothers of immigrant background
  - Middle East, Russia, Africa
- In general, positive feedback
- The major part of the questions were considered necessary and understandable.
- It was deemed desirable that during the meetings dealing with child issues, also couple's relationship and violence in the family were discussed.
- Important pondering HOW things were discussed (choice of words, gesticulation)
  - Why did you choose Finland; why Finland?

# Culturally sensitive interview on parenthood

- It is important to frame and motivate the questions.
  - For example, why ask questions about parents' background when discussing child issues
  - Avoid misunderstandings
- Explain the work method in its entirety (for example, the meaning with several meetings)
- Direct questions
  - For example, were the questions about children's difficult experiences pertinent.
  - Furthermore, it was deemed desirable that questions are asked about violence in the family and the parents' couple relationship:
    - "I think it is important to ask directly about violence in the family; how are things in your family, what does mamma do when she is angry and what does daddy do when he becomes angry."
  - Need for talk and discussion around specific themes; among others, friendship with Finns and racism.

# Culturally sensitive interview on parenthood

- Keep an open mind, avoid preconceived notions
- Ask the questions kindly, keeping in mind the individual you are talking to.
- Experts suggest friendly eye contact and smiles
  - Different experience from for example, meeting with the immigration authorities
- No hurry during the interactions
- Clear and understandable questions
  - Use an interpreter

# Culturally sensitive interview on parenthood

## Further information

- Permanent address of the publication:  
<http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-343-652-7>
- THL's summary of the survey: 2021\_021  
<https://innokyla.fi/fi/toimintamalli/kulttuurisensitiivinen-vanhemmuuden-haastattelu>

Thank you to Saija-Liisa Kankaanpää and Essi Salama for providing the basic content for the slides of this presentation

# PALOMA-educational package

- PALOMA-is a free and extensive internet-based educational package, that provides good basic information on how to work with customers of refugee background, and how to support their wellbeing.
- The educational package is based on 16 videos with different themes
- All videos have subtitles in Finnish, Swedish and English.
- An accompanying package is available in Finnish only.
- In Swedish: [www.thl.fi/palomautbildning](http://www.thl.fi/palomautbildning)
- In Finnish: [www.thl.fi/palomakoulutus](http://www.thl.fi/palomakoulutus)
- In English: [www.thl.fi/palomatraining](http://www.thl.fi/palomatraining)

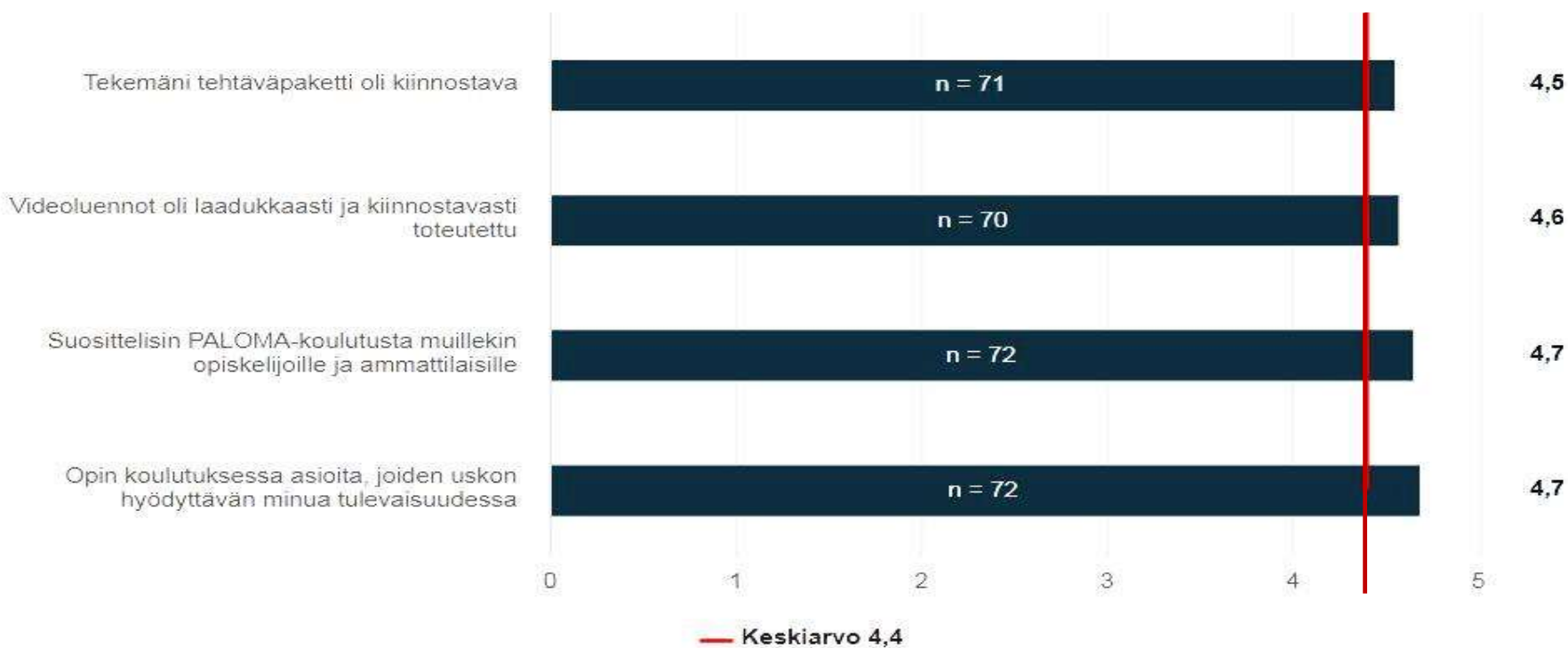
## PALOMA-koulutus

På svenska / In English





## Feedback from the participants in the Paloma education



Palautetilanne  
11/2020 THL

# Professionals working with mental health-care and their experience with the Paloma education.

- Piloted first as an independent educational package for the personnel of the Turku University Hospital's psychiatry department (as part of the Paloma2 project cooperation)
- Of those participating and answering the questionnaire (N =16) 50% were really satisfied and 37,5 % quite satisfied.
- 62,5% would recommend the educational package to others

<https://innokyla.fi/fi/toimintamalli/paloma-koulutus-ammattilaisten-tukena-pakolaistaustaisten-mielenterveystyossa>

