

Anna & Syrian Family

Anna works at a human service agency that offers home visiting services to parents. Recently, in one of the neighborhoods where she works, Anna noticed one family who looked as if they were Muslims. When she later returned to her office, she spoke with a co-worker and found out that a local agency has been resettling refugees from different countries including Iraq and Syria in that area.

Anna was surprised to discover this because the neighborhood does not feel dangerous. She has heard in the news that Americans needed to be careful of terrorist attacks when refugees start to resettle because of the risk of terrorists pretending to be refugees.

Anna feels the need to inform herself more before approaching this family to share information about home visiting services. Online she read that there isn't a connection between an increase of crime or terrorist attacks with an increase in refugee populations. She also learned that refugees are in a lot of need when they arrive to United States because they have to start new lives with little knowledge of America and most of the time they arrive with no money and need to find jobs right away in order to support their families.

This information helped Anna feel safe and think that home visiting would be a good start for refugee families to learn more about the American culture, raise children as American citizens and develop skills to be good parents. Anna thinks it would be better to first share useful resources such as ESL classes, subsidized child care and Job Training Programs to the family and then offer home visiting services.

The following week Anna approached the women:

- **Anna:** Good morning, do you speak English?
- *Amira:* Good morning, yes, I do.
- **Anna:** Great. My name is Anna and I work with an agency named "Strong Parents, Healthy Children." I was talking with a co-worker and she told me that there are many refugees from Iraq living in this neighborhood. I know how difficult it is to be a refugee and the economic hardships people have to go through before arriving to the States.
- *Amira:* Oh, OK.
- **Anna:** That's why I want to share information about these three resources. I think your family is going to benefit from these programs because you will develop skills you need to have better jobs and increase your income.
- *Amira:* Thanks so much but I do not need any of these resources. You can give them to another family.
- **Anna:** There is not anything wrong with accepting some help. We all need help once in awhile.
- *Amira:* Sure but I do not want to waste your time. We really do not need your help. We are indeed from Iraq but we are not refugees. We recently move to this neighborhood but we have lived in the country for more than 9 years. At the moment we have good jobs and we are bilingual so we are not interested in your programs.
- **Anna:** I wish you well, have a good day!

Discussion Questions

1. What went wrong?
2. How can you help Anna to become culturally humble?