



**Mind
Spring**

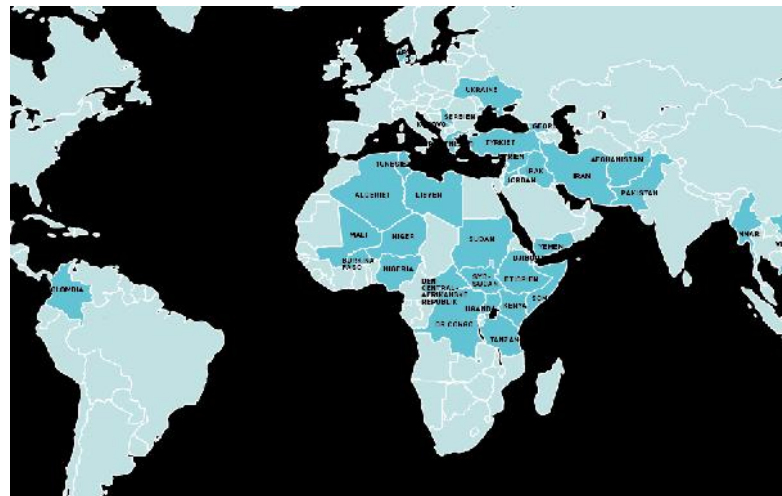
MindSpring – a
preventive group
method for refugees

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Danish Refugee Council

Established in 1956 to support refugees from Hungary. Today, the largest Danish NGO with programs in 36 countries worldwide.

In Denmark, we cooperate with Government, municipalities and public institutions for provision of integration services, advocacy and counselling to asylum seekers.



Danish Refugee Council Integration - 500 employees and 8000 volunteers

Lærdansk

FRIVILLIG
AFDELINGEN

**CENTER FOR
UDSATTE
FLYGTNINGE**

DFUNK
DANSK FLYGTNINGEHJÆLPS UNGENETVÆRK

Integrationsnet
En del af Dansk Flygtningehjælp

**FLYGTNINGE
HJÆLPENS
TOLKESERVICE**



MindSpring – the background

- ❖ The exile terms have crucial meaning for the healing and integration of the refugees.
- ❖ All refugees are affected by what they have experienced and it affects their health, parenting abilities and family life.
- ❖ MindSpring gives newly arrived refugees knowledge and strength with regards to life in exile.
- ❖ The goal is to prevent the development of social and psychosocial issues that affect the wellbeing of the family.

The reception, conditions and opportunities matters for healing and integration of a refugee

Risk-factors

- Uncertainty with regards to asylum and stay
- The lack of social network and support
- Separation from the family
- Loss of social status
- Different gender roles
- New parent/child-relation



Protection-factors

- Positive and personal coping-strategies with focus on the present and the future.
 - Social network and support
 - The parents openness toward their children regarding traumatizing incidents – age appropriate and sensitive

Methods for addressing exile-challenges

In Denmark since 2010 – developed in
Holland

Methods for professional managing of
exile-related challenges attached to
parenthood.

Exchanging of knowledge, ideas and
good advice creates empowerment and
strength.



The special about MindSpring

- **The reflexive room**
- **Peer-to-peer**
- **Close cooperation between professional and volunteer**
- **Mothertongue**



An opportunity to discuss difficult topics

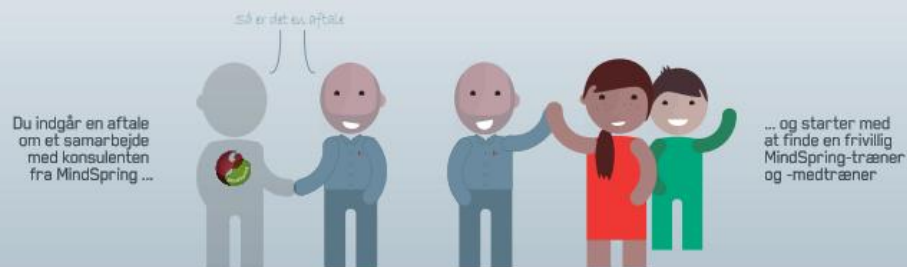
- Identity and change in identity
- Meeting of cultures and norms
- Stress and trauma and handling of trauma

The raising of children - Challenges and methods



How does MindSpring work?

- **Group:** 8-10 participants, same language, refugee background
- **MindSpring-trainer:** a volunteer with refugee background
- **Mother tongue**
- **Co-trainer:** professional and employed locally
- **Translator:** for the co-trainer
- **Place:** e.g. local municipality, residential area, language school, kindergarden...
- **Training of trainers:** Seven-day course



Statements

"Before, I thought, that I was just a refugee and that everything was hopeless. But after participating in MindSpring, I believe that I can change my own future."

group participant, parents group



"If I had been met with such a program when I came to Denmark, it had made it all a bit more easy for me."

MindSpring-trainer





*"I have realized what kind of resources exist in the target group. Those are resources that can be difficult to get in touch with in the daily work",
Co-trainer*

Our experiences so far

- Total 90 group courses - 64 group courses for parents and 26 group courses for youth (around 600 participants and 100 trainers)
- Covers all of Denmark (34 out of 98 municipalities)

Evaluations say...

- Great attendance (maybe 80%)
- Low drop-out rate (maybe 10%)
- All (also trainers) gets new knowledge
- New perspectives and empowerment



Follow research

MindSpring – a mixed-method study of a group intervention for newly arrived refugees

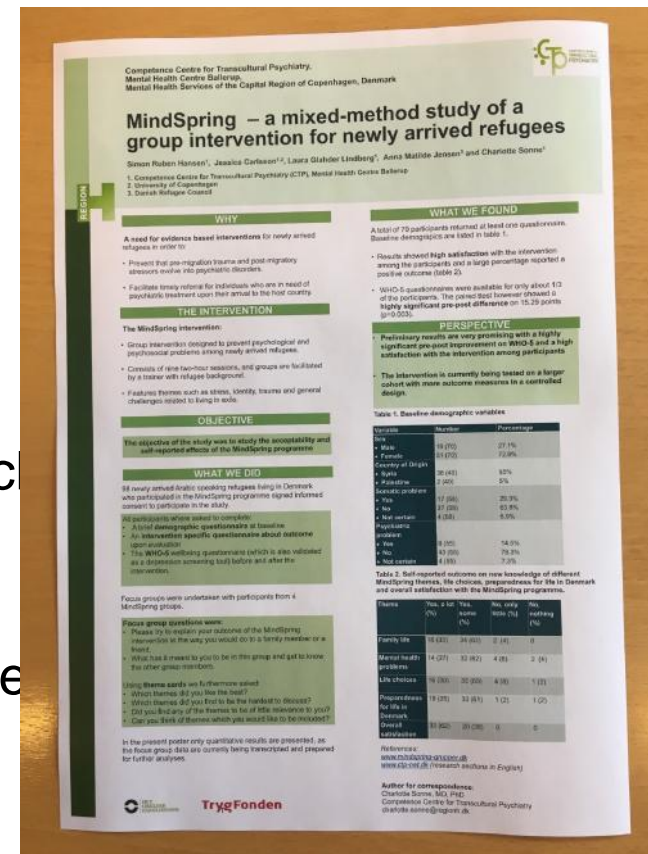
By post doc. And PhD Charlotte Kærgaard Sonne.

The pilot project shows:

- High participant satisfaction with the MindSpring group course.

- Positive outcomes in the 5 MindSpring specific goals (family life, mental issues, life c, life in Denmark and general satisfaction.

- 25% increase in quality of life – WHO5 scale



Learn more: www.mindspring-grupper.dk,
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A wide-angle photograph of a large-scale refugee camp. The foreground and middle ground are filled with rows of white, conical tents. The ground is dry and dusty. In the background, there are a few scattered trees and utility poles under a heavy, overcast sky. A red rectangular box is superimposed over the center of the image, containing white text.

Thank you!
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