

## How To Uplift Immigrant Stories

### 1 Create sparks of awareness

Share stories of strength, resilience and success. When negative stereotypes are reinforced through pop culture, it makes it difficult to change the narrative. Instead, include the joy and love that is present in immigrant communities. Here are some tips:

- **Choose vocabulary and images thoughtfully:**
  - Give immigrants agency. A story about immigrant children at the border can be accompanied with images of children studying rather than images of children looking desperate.
  - Reinforce our commonalities and avoid “othering” that puts distance between people, making it easier to chip away at immigrant rights. Talk about the “people” rather than “migrants” at the border.
  - Avoid descriptions that are associated with war and natural disasters. For example, a “surge” in immigration implies that it is unstoppable and adversarial. An “increase” in immigration is a more neutral alternative.
- **Show complex portraits of immigrant communities.** Hearing nuanced, complex layers of immigrant stories can bring us closer and lead us to a more welcoming society. Honor the uniqueness of each immigrant’s story.
- 🌐 **Resource for example stories:**  
[Immigrant Nation \(iNation\)](#)

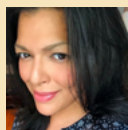
#### Strategies provided by:



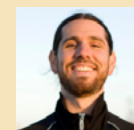
**collaborative.org**  
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**Emerging  
America.org**



**Jo Napolitano**  
Immigration reporter  
and author



**Theo Rigby**  
Filmmaker at  
iNation Media



**Marcela Simpson**  
Bilingual education  
specialist



**Ibrahim Hirsi**  
Researcher at  
Immigration History  
Research Center

## 2 Empower the next generation

Ensure that all children and youth in your community have timely access to an appropriate education. When teachers, students, and families from different backgrounds share stories and experiences, everyone gains empathy, understanding and mutual respect.

- **Check your school district's enrollment policies for barriers.** For example, public schools cannot require students to provide a social security number.  
↳ [🌐 ACLU's FAQ on Immigrant Students in Public Schools](#)
- **Don't underestimate the ability, intelligence and potential of immigrant children.** Encourage your school district to use culturally relevant, non-language-based assessments for gifted and talented programs.  
↳ [🌐 Learn more: Language Isn't Needed: Nonverbal Assessments and Gifted Learners](#)
- 🌐 **Read about two school districts that are serving undocumented and asylum-seeking students.**

## 3 Engage with local media

Encourage local news organizations to cover immigration stories. Highlight immigrants in your community, why they are here, what brought them here and their journey. Celebrate their contributions to the community.

- **Encourage local media to dig into and critically look at root causes.** What is pushing people to leave their birth countries? Paint a more complex picture.
- **Tell your immigration story to a reporter.** Personal stories are powerful!
- 🌐 **Reporting for and with immigrants and communities of color in Minnesota:**  
[Sahan Journal](#)