

Refugee education

Around half of the world's refugees are children under 18 years of age. They often miss school for long periods, in some cases years, which puts them at risk of missing out on education. This can affect them for the rest of their lives.

So how many refugee children go to secondary school?

Look at the graph on this page. On average, about 8 out of 10 children (84%) who are of secondary school age are actually enrolled in a school. For refugee children, this percentage is much lower. On average, only around 1 out of 4 (24%) refugee children of secondary school age are actually enrolled in a school.

Do a little exercise to visualize this in your classroom. **Count the number of pupils and ask 3 out of 4 to leave the classroom for 15 minutes.** Ask for volunteers, or ask pupils to leave starting with the desks in front of the classroom. Teach the remaining children something new (cf. how to do a calculation, a history fact, or a chemistry formula).

Then ask the group that had to leave the classroom to come back in. Do a little test and ask them if they know about the fact you just taught the other children. Now imagine what the effect would be if the group of children that left the classroom for 15 minutes would skip school for a few months. How far would they be behind the others in your classes?

SECONDARY SCHOOL ENROLMENT

REFUGEES

24%

GLOBAL

84%

SOURCE: UNESCO (2017), UNHCR (2018)

Source: UNHCR report 'Stepping Up: Refugee Education in Crisis', 2019

Find more facts and figures on refugee children on www.unhcr.org/teaching-about-refugees.html#facts