Children Seeking Refuge in the United States

Unaccompanied children have been entering the United States for decades. In fact, the United States has entered into numerous treaties with other countries to ensure the protection, safety and well-being of refugees.

The number of children apprehended at the U.S./Mexico border between 2004 and 2011 averaged 6,800 per year.

Over 107,000 children have been reunited with a family member or a sponsor. (As of December 2014)

Top receiving states of unaccompanied children. (2013-2016 data)

Who are the unaccompanied children entering the U.S. Southern border? (2015 data)

NATIONALITY
- Honduras 17%
- El Salvador 29%
- Guatemala 45%
- Mexico 6%
- Other 3%

GENDER
- Female 32%
- Male 68%

AGE
- Over 14 years of age 68%
- Under 14 years of age 32%

Reasons why these children are seeking refuge in the United States include, but are not limited to, the following:

- To escape violence, abuse, persecution and communities overrun by crime, corruption, endemic poverty and human trafficking.
- To find family members already residing in the United States.
- To seek better educational or economic opportunities.
- Were brought to the United States by human smugglers.

Resources
AFT Website: go.aft.org/BorderCrisis
Colorin Colorado: www.colorincolorado.org/principals/unaccompanied
For more information, contact Cesar Moreno Perez, AFT Human Rights Department via email: cmoreno@aft.org

* An unaccompanied child is a child who has no lawful immigration status in the United States; is under the age of 18; and, who has no parent or legal guardian in the United States, or has no parent or legal guardian in the United States available to provide care and physical custody. See 6 U.S.C § 279(g)(2)