

IMMIGRANT *and* REFUGEE CHILDREN

A GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS AND SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF

Tools and resources to help support and prepare youth
and families in case of immigration enforcement actions



The content in this guide was compiled by United We Dream, the National Immigration Law Center, the Center for Law and Social Policy, Kids in Need of Defense and Social Policy and the AFT.



AFT members and allies: UWD, NILC and CLASP are here to help!

United We Dream: www.unitedwedream.org

National Immigration Law Center: www.nilc.org

Center for Law and Social Policy: www.clasp.org

Kids in Need of Defense: www.supportkind.org

Learn more about the AFT's work on immigration and unaccompanied children: www.aft.org/immigration



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OUR MISSION

The AFT is a union of professionals that champions fairness; democracy; economic opportunity; and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services for our students, their families and our communities. We are committed to advancing these principles through community engagement, organizing, collective bargaining and political activism, and especially through the work our members do.

Introduction

This guide was created for educators, school support staff and service providers who teach, mentor and help open the doors of opportunity for immigrant students and families. Educators, school support staff and service providers are often the first individuals to whom students and families disclose their undocumented status. They also witness firsthand the profound impact of heightened immigration enforcement measures on students' well-being, mental health, academic success and sense of security.

Schools should be safe havens, sanctuary places of learning that embrace all students and families, regardless of citizenship and national origin, and that includes unaccompanied and refugee children. The 1982 U.S. Supreme Court case *Plyler v. Doe* ruled that undocumented children have a constitutional right to receive a free public K-12 education, which provides the means to becoming a "self-reliant and self-sufficient participant in society," the court wrote, and instills the "fundamental values necessary to the maintenance of a democratic political system." However, today's increased enforcement measures by the Department of Homeland Security threaten that right for thousands of undocumented youth and the 4.4 million U.S.-born children who live in mixed-status households with at least one parent or family member who is undocumented.

Immigration enforcement actions, such as raids or apprehensions at home, schools or other places, take an emotional, psychological and physical toll on developing children, youth and entire communities. Such actions produce chronic fear, anxiety and stress that consume students and their families on a daily basis. Fear of immigration enforcement drives undocumented and mixed-status families further into the shadows and erodes the trust built between educators and the students and families they serve. Educators know that circumstances outside the classroom and school grounds have a huge impact on the educational success of students. They see the impact of these out-of-school factors in homework assignments, grades, interactions in class and extracurricular activities. It's critically important that educators, school support staff and service providers know the tools and resources available to help prepare youth and families for an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raid or other immigration enforcement action.

Now more than ever, educators across the continuum of public education must stand firm in their commitment to protecting students' access to education and ensuring that every child, regardless of immigration status, has the opportunity to learn, thrive and build a brighter future.

Educators, school support staff and other service providers play a critical role in helping to end the criminalization, detention and deportation of students and families. Rather than being punished for their immigration status, students and their families should be recognized for their sacrifice, hard work, determination and contributions that strengthen our communities.



All children have a right to a public education

Under federal law, all children, regardless of their immigration status, are entitled to a free public K-12 education. Schools can ask for documents to prove age and district residency for enrollment, but no student should be turned away for lack of documentation. Schools may not bar a student from enrolling because the student lacks a birth certificate or Social Security number or has a record that indicates a foreign place of birth. Also, schools may not bar a student from enrolling because their parents or guardians lack a driver's license or state-issued ID. Doing so may be a violation of the *Plyler* decision. Some students qualify for protections under the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987, which provides certain exemptions from enrollment requirements, including for children from other countries lacking a fixed home address. School districts that either prohibit or discourage children from enrolling in schools because they

or their parents/guardians are undocumented immigrants, including by asking about immigration status, may be in violation of federal law. If you believe that a school district is violating this law, contact the AFT Human Rights and Community Relations Department at afthumanrights@aft.org.

Have you witnessed or experienced an immigration enforcement action in your community?

The AFT is working with community partners on a rapid response to help our immigrant communities. Please go to go.aft.org/hwg and [report](#) enforcement actions in your community to help us mobilize resources and provide support to those impacted. All reports are confidential.

Facts about undocumented students and unaccompanied children

Undocumented students

An undocumented student is a young person who came to the United States without legal documentation or who has overstayed their visa or whose permission to remain in the United States is no longer valid. These students:

- ▶ Often don't know they are undocumented until they begin the college application process or try to get a job or driver's license.
- ▶ Don't qualify for federal grants or loans, even if they are in financial need and their parents pay taxes.
- ▶ Have persevered through countless obstacles to pursue their education,

demonstrating resilience, dedication and determination; they want the opportunity to apply their talents and gifts to contribute meaningfully and give back to their communities.

- ▶ Are racially and ethnically diverse, from all corners of the world, and are part of the 11.5 million undocumented immigrants in the United States.

Facts about Undocumented Youth

Approximately **3.4 million** undocumented youth live in the United States.



Each year, **98,000** undocumented youth graduate from high school.

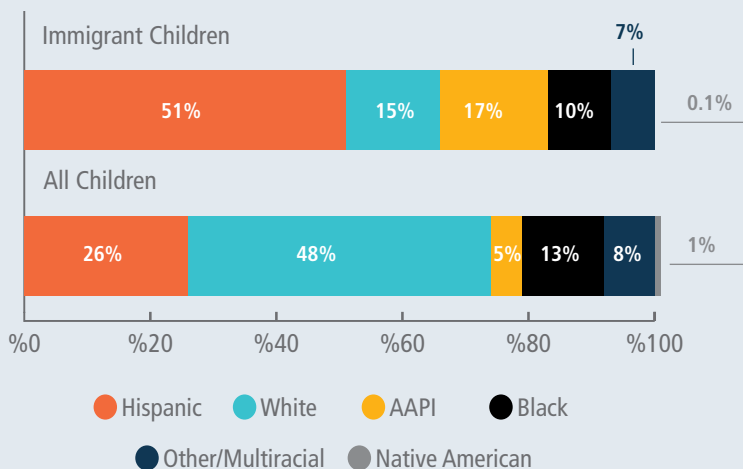


408,000 undocumented students are enrolled in college representing **1.9%** of all post secondary students.



Facts About Immigrant Students and Families

- ▶ There were an estimated **850,000** undocumented children under 18 living in the United States as of 2022.¹
- ▶ An estimated **733,000** undocumented children ages 3-17 were enrolled in school in 2019.²
- ▶ Each year, an estimated **120,000** undocumented youth graduate from high school.
- ▶ Approximately **408,000** undocumented immigrant students are enrolled in higher education, making up approximately 1 in 5 first-generation immigrant students in higher education.³ Of these, less than **30 percent** are eligible for DACA.
- ▶ Among children with an immigrant parent, **51 percent are Latinx, 17 percent are AAPI and 10 percent are Black.**



¹Jeffery S. Passel and Jens Manuel Krogstad, "What we know about unauthorized immigrants living in the U.S.," Pew Research Center, (July 22, 2024) <https://pewrsr.ch/42eNQzt>.

²"Profile of the Unauthorized Population: United States," Migration Policy Institute, 2015-'19 ACS and 2008 SIPP data, <https://bit.ly/4lyoJJQ>.

³Miriam Feldblum, Felecia Russell, Melquin Ramos, and Corinne Kentor, "Immigrant-Origin Students in U.S. Higher Education," President's Alliance on Higher Education (September 2024) <https://bit.ly/4ijt1C6>

IMMIGRANTS & REFUGEES



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WELCOME
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www.aft.org/Immigration

Unaccompanied children

An unaccompanied child is a child who at the point of apprehension by immigration authorities has no lawful immigration status in the United States, is under the age of 18 and has no parent or legal guardian in the United States available to provide care and physical custody. For the purpose of this guide, the term “unaccompanied children” refers to recently arriving children who entered the United States without a parent or guardian, usually through the U.S.-Mexico border. Here are some important facts about these recently arriving unaccompanied children:

- ▶ Since FY2014, more than 794,000 unaccompanied children have sought refuge in the United States, primarily from Central America’s Northern Triangle—El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. In more recent years, greater numbers of children have arrived from other countries, including Mexico, Haiti and Venezuela.
- ▶ Many of these children’s first language is Spanish. However, many other children’s first languages are Mesoamerican indigenous languages, such as Q’eqchi’ and Mam, and other languages such as Haitian Creole and French.
- ▶ Unaccompanied children do not have guaranteed legal representation in immigration court and may have to navigate the complex legal system entirely on their own.
- ▶ Children are migrating from all over the world and seeking refuge in the United States for many reasons, such as:
 - To escape violence, abuse, war, persecution and communities overrun by crime, corruption, endemic poverty, climate crises and human trafficking.
 - To reunite with family members already residing in the United States.
 - To seek better educational or economic opportunities.

Newcomers

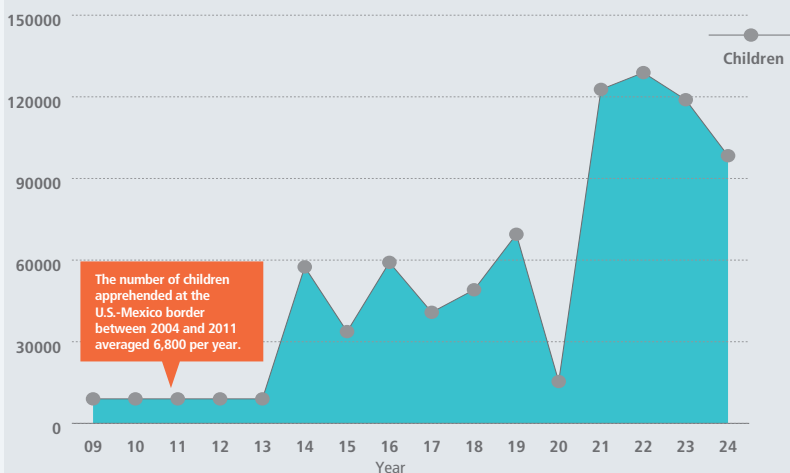
Students who are newcomers to the United States are likely to be navigating challenges that accompany all major life changes and transitions, coupled in some cases with uncertain immigration status. Recently arrived families are experiencing dramatic changes in U.S. immigration policy, including revocations of status, often resulting in stress and diminished access to social services.

Newcomer students:

- ▶ Come from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds.
- ▶ May be refugees, asylees or asylum seekers, unaccompanied children or recipients of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) or Deferred Enforced Departure (usually granted to nationals from specific countries due to natural disasters, conflicts and other country conditions making it unsafe to return).
- ▶ May have been paroled into the United States (allowed to enter into the country) through programs no longer in effect, such as the parole program for nationals of Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua and Venezuela. Some families who entered on parole have since applied for or received another type of lawful status, while others are vulnerable to immigration enforcement.
- ▶ Have a range of educational experiences, as these students may have limited or interrupted formal education. For example, they may have been in school in the countries they transited through after leaving their country of origin.
- ▶ Have varying levels of proficiency in English, although not all are identified as English language learners.

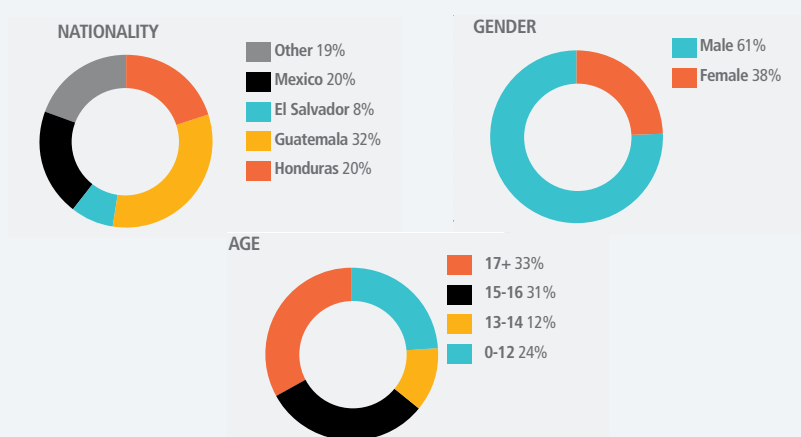
Children Seeking Refuge in the United States

Unaccompanied children* have been entering the United States for decades. From FY2014 to FY2024, more than 794,000 unaccompanied children were referred to ORR's care. Many unaccompanied children are eligible for one or more forms of legal protection under U.S. and international law.



*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)

Unaccompanied children's profile (FY2024 Data)



For more on addressing the needs of unaccompanied children, visit www.aft.org/immigration.

Background on DACA

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals is a deferred action policy implemented by the Obama administration in June 2012. It provides temporary protection from deportation and work authorization to certain undocumented individuals who were brought to the United States as children and meet other requirements. There are approximately 530,000 DACA beneficiaries throughout the country working in various sectors, including in education and healthcare as teachers, paraprofessionals, early childhood educators, university professors, and nurses and other health professionals. DACA beneficiaries help bring our classrooms, college campuses and healthcare centers to life.

What is the state of DACA?

As of March 2025, DACA remains in effect for all current recipients across all 50 states, including Texas. Current DACA recipients can and should continue to apply for renewals. While the legal case is still making its way through the courts, DACA recipients will maintain full protections, including work authorization and lawful presence.

On January 17, 2025, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled against major components of the Biden administration's DACA rule. If the Fifth Circuit Court's decision becomes effective as it is currently written, DACA will continue as a full program in 49 states. However, in Texas, it will become a more limited program, offering protection from deportation but no longer providing work authorization or driver's licenses. It is important to note that the Fifth Circuit's ruling could still change as the case progresses through the legal system. Check with an immigration attorney before submitting your renewal in case the law has changed.



Supporting immigrant youth and children in mixed-status families

Most children of immigrants live in mixed-status families, meaning that not all members of the family have the same immigration or citizenship status. There are 5.2 million children with at least one undocumented parent, and 4.4 million are U.S.-born citizen children. About half a million children have a parent with DACA or TPS. In order to avoid singling out anyone in your classroom, it's best to share information on the topic of immigration and the impact of immigration enforcement actions broadly to the entire classroom and offer to be available for follow-up questions and one-on-one conversations if students are interested. Incorporating books and lesson

plans that explore immigration into classroom resources is essential for fostering empathy, understanding and cultural awareness among students. Immigration is a key part of many students' lived experiences, and representing it in literature can create more inclusive and relatable learning environments. Creating a safe space where students can come to you for support and advice is the best thing you can do for your students.

Educator FAQ about raids and immigration enforcement actions

What is an immigration raid?

An immigration raid is an enforcement operation conducted by U.S. immigration authorities, such as ICE or Customs and Border Protection (CBP), to locate, detain and potentially deport individuals suspected of being in the country without lawful immigration status.

These arrests can target a wide range of immigrants, from long-term lawful permanent residents who are suspected of committing a minor offense, to undocumented immigrants who have final deportation orders (even if they were issued without a person's knowledge). Although an enforcement operation may target one or several individuals, immigration officers will often arrest many other individuals in proximity if they are suspected to be undocumented.

Immigration raids can happen at any given time, but they rely heavily on an element of surprise and most frequently take place at the individual's workplace or in or near their home, often during predawn or early morning hours. ICE officers often appear in large numbers, may be visibly armed and may not be easily identifiable as ICE agents. Other common features of these immigration enforcement actions: an absence of a warrant and an agent giving false or misleading information to gain access to the home and to describe the nature and length of the arrest. In recent months, these apprehensions have targeted immigrants leaving their homes on their way to work or to drop off their kids at school.

Raids cause widespread fear and disruption in immigrant communities, as they may lead to family separations, job losses and the detention or deportation of individuals with deep ties to their communities.

Why are immigration enforcement actions happening now?

In January 2025, President Trump signed a series of executive orders introducing significant changes to U.S. immigration policies, laying the foundation for his campaign promise of mass deportation. These actions mark a dramatic shift in enforcement priorities, expanding the scope of deportations and intensifying federal immigration crackdowns. The administration's policies signal a significant escalation in immigration enforcement, raising concerns among immigrant communities, advocacy groups and legal experts regarding due process, humanitarian considerations and the broader societal impact of these measures. Individuals and families who may be affected should take proactive steps to prepare for an encounter with an immigration or law enforcement officer.

It's important that immigrant communities know their rights, develop an emergency immigration family preparedness plan, obtain guidance from reputable immigration attorneys or advocacy organizations to explore options for immigration relief or protection, and stay informed. Taking these proactive steps can help mitigate risks and ensure that individuals and families are prepared for potential enforcement actions.

What impact does immigration enforcement have on children and youth?

Research consistently shows that immigration enforcement actions have a harmful impact on the health, safety, academic performance and overall well-being of children, including U.S. citizen children living in mixed-status families. Studies on the impact of immigration enforcement actions under the first Trump administration found that children were demonstrating signs of post-traumatic stress disorder due to fears of separation from a parent, even children whose parents were not at risk of deportation. Following worksite raids, educators noted increased absenteeism in the days after. In cases when a parent was deported, the impact on children was greater, including older siblings needing to abandon plans for college to care for their younger siblings. Even children whose parents were not at risk of deportation exhibited anxiety because they may not have known the immigration statuses of their caregivers, nor did they understand the nuances of immigration policy.

What does the law say about law enforcement in and near schools and other settings?

In January 2025, the Trump administration rescinded a policy memo that protected certain areas—such as schools and healthcare facilities—from immigration enforcement. As a result, ICE officers and agents are allowed to conduct enforcement actions at the following locations and events:

- ▶ Schools (including preschools, primary schools, secondary schools, colleges and universities, and other institutions of learning, such as vocational and trade schools);
- ▶ Hospitals;

- ▶ Churches, synagogues, mosques and other institutions of worship, such as buildings rented for the purpose of religious services;
- ▶ During funerals, weddings and other religious ceremonies;
- ▶ During public demonstrations, such as marches, rallies and parades;
- ▶ Places where children gather, such as playgrounds and bus stops;
- ▶ Social service establishments, such as domestic violence shelters and food pantries; and
- ▶ Disaster/emergency response sites, such as evacuation routes.

There are important steps that can be taken to support students and families in all formerly designated protected areas. These steps include:

- ▶ Identify any applicable federal, state and local laws and district policies that protect immigrant students and families.
- ▶ If policies don't exist, develop a written response policy and preparedness plan in advance for when there's an interaction with an immigration enforcement officer at or near your school or other setting.
- ▶ Designate an authorized person to review warrants and subpoenas.
- ▶ Understand the distinction between public and private areas.
- ▶ Train non-authorized staff and volunteers on how to respond to ICE requests.
- ▶ Document all interactions with immigration enforcement.
- ▶ Connect with immigration response networks in your area.

For more information, see the National Immigration Law Center's "*Plyler* and Data Collection" fact sheet at bit.ly/4iwO5G0 and the resources at the end of this guide on page 40.

Is there a federal law that prevents schools from sharing student information?

Yes. Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), schools are generally prohibited, without parental consent, from providing personal information from a student's educational record to federal immigration agents. If ICE agents present a school with a removal warrant (deportation order), the school is permitted to refrain from providing student information, as the warrant is administrative, not judicial. Under FERPA, schools may disclose directory information without consent, but they are required to allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Requiring students to provide Social Security cards or birth certificates as a condition of enrollment, test taking or participation in school activities may also be a violation of *Plyler*. For more information, see the NILC's "Plyler and Data Collection" fact sheet at bit.ly/4iwO5G0. For more on FERPA, see studentprivacy.ed.gov/ferpa

What if I am an early education provider?

Head Start and Early Head Start are available to all income-eligible children, regardless of immigration status, and also subject to data privacy laws that safeguard students' information. Early education providers can create a "safe space" policy to ensure that staff are prepared to respond and to protect the privacy of children, parents and other staff if immigration enforcement agents arrive at their facility. For more guidance, see the Center for Law and Social Policy's "A Guide to Creating 'Safe Space' Policies for Early Childhood Programs" at bit.ly/4iBxf8X.

How can I support students facing expedited removal?

Offer Know Your Rights trainings to educate students and employees facing expedited removal (a process described on p. 13) about their legal rights in case they encounter immigration enforcement officers. Students should carry documentation to establish they have been in the United States for more than two years, making them ineligible for expedited removal. Schools should help provide a school ID card with a date of issuance, school registration records or other certified paperwork to show proof of residence. Help students and families gather alternate documents that may be most helpful in establishing the two-year presence: driver's licenses or local government issued ID cards, if dated; library cards, if dated; utility bills addressed to the individual; documentation about medical visits or prescription information indicating presence at a U.S. medical office or pharmacy; and bank statements or bank transaction records.

When mandated reporting does more harm than good, especially for immigrant youth: Tools for a new approach

Because school employees are mandatory reporters—required by law to report suspected child abuse, maltreatment or neglect—the answer is often to immediately call child welfare authorities. But while such reporting is well-intended, mandatory reporters as well as child welfare agencies are seriously questioning whether it is appropriate in every case. For immigrant youth who live in mixed-status households or who may be undocumented themselves, this approach can lead to family separation and even deportation proceedings. Research shows that mandatory reporting often does more harm than good.

Most reports are unsubstantiated upon further investigation, and many can trigger a cascade of harmful consequences, such as intrusive home inspections—even strip searches of children—and painful family separation. Mandatory reporting could place students and their families in immigration custody and deportation. Recently, the idea of mandatory supporter, rather than mandatory reporter, has taken hold.

Mandatory support offers a different path. Focusing on students' well-being, it utilizes solutions that the AFT has long championed, including trauma-informed

practices, community schools and bargaining for the common good. Its basic tenets use preventive “healing gestures” to celebrate, comfort and inspire students; continue professional growth on implicit bias; combat stigma; support student privacy; collaborate; make caregivers the first call; consider a consultation that anonymizes the family; and share power with families by ensuring they are aware of triggers, know their rights and share their strengths as well as vulnerabilities. At the heart of this work is students' well-being.



“Visions from the Inside” by Robert Trujillo is an illustration of the day-to-day activities of detained immigrants in a family detention.

Tools to support and protect students and their families

Home raid to deportation map

- **STEP 1:** The raid happens. ICE officials come to an immigrant's home and arrest the person and possibly other people in the household ICE suspects are undocumented. ICE raids/arrests can also happen outside the home, such as on the street, at work or after a person is arrested by local police or released from jail.
- **STEP 2:** The person is taken to a local ICE office for fingerprinting and processing.
- **STEP 3:** The person is released or taken to a detention center. The length of detention varies from person to person, but people in immigration detention often are given very little information or misinformation about what to expect. If ICE decides to detain the person and does not allow them to post a bond for release, the person may ask an immigration judge to hold a bond hearing.
- **STEP 4:** ICE may put the person in a form of summary or expedited deportation, meaning they can be fast-tracked to deportation within a matter of days or weeks, and without ever seeing an immigration judge. People should not be put in expedited removal if they have been in the United States for longer than two years, although the administration may try to do so. There are also exceptions to expedited removal processes for people who express a fear of returning to their country of origin. Those not in expedited processing will see an immigration judge, who may consider their request to be released on bond as well as whether they have the right to remain in the United States. The person should explain to the judge why they have the right to remain in the United States, including detailing fears of persecution if forced to return to their country of origin and providing evidence of community and family ties here in the United States. Alternatively, the person can agree to be deported without a hearing. In some cases, a person may ask for time to find a lawyer or to gather evidence, but this request is not always granted.
- **STEP 5:** Some people facing removal proceedings may be released from detention, sometimes on bond and/or with an ankle monitor, until the case is decided. Others must continue to fight their case from inside the detention center. If the judge issues an order of removal, the person is sent to their country of origin, either by plane or by bus. In some cases, ICE will hold individuals for weeks or months after their deportation order becomes final. People facing prolonged detention can challenge their detention by filing a habeas corpus petition.



Know Your Rights

Information for students and families

Be prepared, families at risk of deportation should:

- ▶ **Identify a local nonprofit organization that can help you.** Find out who in your community provides free legal support services (e.g., immigration advocates, legal aid organizations, churches or worker centers).
- ▶ **Identify an attorney.** Find out the name and phone number of a reliable immigration attorney ahead of time and keep this information with you at all times.
- ▶ **Obtain a “know your rights” card.** These cards state that you would like to exercise your right to remain silent and that you would like to speak to an attorney. The name and phone number of your attorney should be listed on the card.
- ▶ **Advise family members** who do not want to be questioned by ICE to stay away from prior areas of enforcement action and where detained people are being held.
- ▶ **Ensure you have documentation** to establish your physical presence in the United States during the past two years to reduce the likelihood of being placed in expedited removal (fast-tracked deportation). This can include (but is not limited to) utility bills, lease agreements, bank statements and school registration records.

- ▶ **Start saving money.** You’ll need money to hire an attorney, for toiletries and food during detention, and to pay your bond. It’s best to start saving now.
- ▶ **Create a family immigration raid emergency plan.** To find out how to make your plan, refer to page 17 of this guide.

Questions families should address in order to prepare for an immigration enforcement action or raid

- ▶ Who will take care of my children (family member and/or legal guardian)?
- ▶ Have I updated my children’s emergency contacts at their school or child care center?
- ▶ Who can sign a guardianship or power of attorney (the best option will differ by state)?
- ▶ Who will have access to my assets (bank accounts, car, home, etc.)?
- ▶ How and where can I find legal help? What are the forms I need to have ready to be able to receive this legal help?
- ▶ How can I find my loved one in detention?
- ▶ What are a person’s rights in detention?
- ▶ How can I fundraise to pay for a bond or an attorney’s legal services?
- ▶ What can I do to help my children deal with the uncertainty?
- ▶ Who or what organizations can help me?

WHAT TO DO IF ICE COMES TO YOUR DOOR



DO NOT OPEN DOORS

ICE cannot come in without a signed judicial warrant. Tell them to pass the warrant under the door before you open it. Remember, they can only come in if you let them.



REMAIN SILENT

ICE can use anything you say against you in your immigration case, so claim your right to remain silent!

*Say, "I plead the Fifth Amendment and choose to remain silent."



DO NOT SIGN

Don't sign anything ICE gives you without talking to an attorney.



REPORT & RECORD

Take pictures and video unless you're on official government property. Take notes of badge numbers, number of agents, time, type of car and exactly what happened.



FIGHT YOUR LEGAL CASE!

Get a trustworthy attorney, contact a local immigrant rights organization and explore all options to fight your case. If detained, you may be able to get bond—don't give up hope.



QUÉ HACER

SI ICE LLEGA A SU PUERTA



NO ABRA LA PUERTA.

ICE no puede entrar sin una orden judicial firmada por un juez. Dígales que pasen la orden por debajo de la puerta antes de abrirla. Recuerde, ICE solamente puede entrar a su casa con su consentimiento.



PERMANEZCA EN SILENCIO.

Cualquier cosa que diga podrá ser usada en su contra por ICE en su caso de inmigración, así es que ¡reclame su derecho a permanecer en silencio!

*Diga: "Me amparo en la quinta enmienda y tengo el derecho a permanecer en silencio."



NO FIRME.

No firme nada que ICE le dé sin consultar con un abogado.



¡DENUNCIE LA REDADA!

¡Tome fotos, video y notas: ¡los números de placa, el número de agentes y exactamente lo que sucedió!



¡DEFIÉNDASE!

Consiga un abogado de confianza, contacte a una organización local de inmigración y explore todas las opciones para defender su caso. Si lo detienen, podría obtener una fianza; no pierda la esperanza.



United We Dream[®]

Immigrant and Refugee Children

A Guide for Educators and School Support Staff

What to Do If ICE Comes to Your Door

TEAR AND SHARE!



Do not open the door. ICE authorities cannot come in without a signed judicial warrant. Tell them to pass the warrant under the door before you open it. Remember, ICE authorities can only come in if you let them in.



Exercise your right to remain silent. ICE can use anything you say against you in your immigration case, so claim your right to remain silent! Say, "I plead the Fifth Amendment and choose to remain silent."



Do not sign. Don't sign anything that ICE gives you without talking to an attorney. Do not sign anything in a language you don't understand.



Document the encounter. Take pictures, video and notes. Write down badge numbers, the number of agents and exactly what happened.



Fight Your Legal Case! Get a trustworthy attorney, contact a local immigrant rights organization and explore all options to fight your case. If detained, you may be able to get bond—don't give up hope.

Creating a family immigration raid emergency plan

Some parents at risk of deportation may be reluctant to develop an emergency plan or even talk to their children about the risk of separation. However, developing a plan can help ease anxiety of the unknown, increase the chances of families being able to stay together should separation occur, and prevent children from unnecessarily entering the child welfare system. Parents should create a plan and share as much of that plan as possible with their children. Don't wait—be proactive and plan ahead.

Getting started:

Nine steps to help prepare your family for an immigration raid

- 1. Identify a legal aid organization,** legal advocate or pro bono attorney, and write down the organization's or person's contact information.
- 2. Collect documentation to establish your physical presence in the United States over the past two years.** This can include (but is not limited to) utility bills, lease agreements, bank statements and school registration records.
- 3. Identify at least two willing caregivers** and write down their complete contact information, and make sure you have provided their names to your child's school as an emergency contact.
- 4. Collect important documents for children,** such as passports, birth certificates, Social Security cards, and school and medical records.
- 5. Save money for legal fees/bonds.** Write down your information regarding financial records, bank statements, savings accounts, credit cards, etc.

Immigrant and Refugee Children

A Guide for Educators and School Support Staff

Qué Hacer si ICE llega a su Puerta



No abra la puerta. Los agentes de inmigración no pueden entrar a su casa sin una orden judicial firmada por un juez. Recuerde, ICE solamente puede entrar a su casa con su consentimiento. ¡No les abras la puerta!



Tiene el derecho de permanecer en silencio. Cualquier cosa que diga podrá ser usada en su contra por ICE en su caso de inmigración, así es que ¡reclame su derecho a permanecer en silencio! Diga: "Me amparo en la quinta enmienda y tengo el derecho a permanecer en silencio."



No firme nada, que los agentes de ICE le den. Usted tiene el derecho de consultar con un abogado antes de contestar preguntas o firmar cualquier documento. No firme nada que este en un lenguaje que no entiende.



Documente el encuentro. Tome fotografías, vídeo y notas. Anote los números de identificación de los agentes, la cantidad de agentes y exactamente lo que sucedió.

TEAR AND SHARE!

6. Consider establishing a guardianship or power of attorney for a designated caregiver, authorizing that adult to care for your children under the age of 18. The best option will vary by state.

7. Do not carry any false documents.

8. Have your documents ready and organized: passports, IDs, attorney contact information, financial records, letters from immigration and your Alien Registration Number, or A-Number, if you have a pending immigration case. All of these documents should be organized in a folder or binder for easy access in a place where your children, housemates

or trusted relatives will be able to access them in case of an emergency.

9. Talk to your children about your plan so they know what to expect. This is not easy, but it is important to ease your children's anxiety, especially should an enforcement action occur. There are resources at the end of this guide to help support you in talking with your children.



KNOW YOUR RIGHTS CARD

I am exercising my Fifth Amendment right under the U.S. Constitution to remain silent, my right to refuse to answer your questions and my right to refuse to sign anything until I consult an attorney.

Unless you have a signed judicial warrant to search the area, I do **NOT** consent to your search of my home, vehicle or property. If I am detained, I request to contact this attorney/organization immediately:

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TARJETA DE DERECHOS

Estoy ejerciendo mi derecho de la Quinta Enmienda de la Constitución de los Estados Unidos a guardar silencio, mi derecho a negarme a responder a sus preguntas y mi derecho a negarme a firmar cualquier documento, hasta que consulte con un abogado.

A menos que tenga una orden de registro judicial firmada, **NO** doy mi consentimiento para que registren mi casa, vehículo o propiedad. Si me detienen, solicito que me comuniquen con este abogado/organización inmediatamente.

Nombre/N.º de teléfono:

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During an immigration raid and enforcement action

Know Your Rights:

- ▶ **Do not open the door** unless the immigration officer/ICE agent has a signed judicial warrant.
- ▶ **Ask for a warrant.** Have the ICE agent push the warrant under the door or through a crack on the side of the door. Do not open the door to get it. Make sure the warrant correctly states your name and address.
- ▶ **Exercise your right to remain silent.** ICE can use anything you say against you in your immigration case, so claim your right to remain silent! Say, "I plead the Fifth Amendment and choose to remain silent."
- ▶ **Ask to speak with a lawyer.** You have the right to an attorney.
- ▶ **Carry a "know your rights" card.** Be sure to hand it to the ICE agent.
- ▶ **Do not sign** any documents in a language you do not understand and without first speaking with a lawyer.
- ▶ **Let the officers know if you have children.** Parents or primary caregivers of U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident children may be eligible for discretion.
- ▶ **Document the raid.** If it's possible and safe to do so, take photos and videos of the raid. Take notes and write down the names and badge numbers of the ICE agents.

After an enforcement action or raid

Finding someone who has been detained by ICE:

- ▶ Use ICE's online detainee locator to find an adult who is in immigration custody

(<https://locator.ice.gov/odls>). You can search using the person's full name or Alien Registration Number and country of origin. If you can't find a person using the online locator, call your local ICE office. For a directory of local ICE offices, visit www.ice.gov/contact/ero.

- ▶ You can determine the status of a loved one's immigration case by calling 800-898-7180 (toll-free) or online at <https://acis.eoir.justice.gov/en>.

Finding legal representation:

- ▶ You can access a directory of free and low-cost immigration legal services providers in your area by visiting www.immi.org/en/Info/FindLegalHelp, a directory run by the Immigration Advocates Network and Pro Bono Net.
- ▶ The Department of Justice lists pro bono and low-cost immigration attorneys by state (<https://bit.ly/4cvdOMO>).
- ▶ Visit the website of the American Immigration Lawyers Association (www.ailalawyer.com).

Ensuring children are safe:

- ▶ Parents, legal guardians and primary caregivers should let ICE know right away if they have minor U.S. citizen children, as this may make them eligible for release and/or ensure consideration of their parental rights. If release is not possible, parents should make every effort possible to maintain contact with their designated caregivers and children and to notify ICE and detention personnel about their plans for their children's care if they are deported.



"I think people forget that these detention centers are prisons and sometimes have harsher conditions. The figure of a woman and her child in a desolate cell is eye-opening. I don't want to victimize her, but I also want to be real about her struggle."

ZEKE PEÑA

Immigrant and Refugee Children

17 things educators, school support staff and communities can do to help support undocumented students and their families

1. Inform students and their families of their rights.
2. Stress the importance of taking proactive steps to ensure the safety and well-being of children and entire communities.
3. Distribute “Know Your Rights” materials to students and communities about what to do if a raid occurs or an individual is detained.
4. Prepare your school for the possibility of an enforcement action on site:
 - Establish a centralized protocol for how to respond to any law enforcement presence at schools and share it with all staff through trainings.
 - Establish a written policy and put up signs clearly identifying which areas at the school are private and are not open to the public to preserve Fourth Amendment rights.
 - Create strict procedures for any guest, including law enforcement officers, to enter the school premises. Require law enforcement officers to present a valid judicial warrant or judicial subpoena before entering the property. This document should be subject to a review by a designated trained individual (preferably a principal, superintendent or district counsel). If the warrant is insufficient, access should be denied.
 - Avoid collecting information about immigration status and birthplace information, since a person’s birth abroad can prompt further investigation by immigration officers. And asking about a student’s immigration status may chill or prohibit access to an education.
5. Find out if there is a local immigration rapid response team in your community. These teams usually consist of attorneys, media personnel and community leaders who may be able to provide support.
6. Partner with a pro bono attorney, legal aid organization or immigrant rights organization to schedule a “Know Your Rights” workshop on campus to inform students and families about their rights.
7. Provide a safe place for students to wait if a parent or sibling has been detained.
8. Provide mental health and counseling services for students who have had a family member detained by ICE and or witnessed an immigration enforcement action.
9. Maintain a list of resources, such as the names of social workers, pro bono attorneys and local immigration advocates and organizations, that can be shared with your students and their families.
10. Identify someone at your school who can serve as the immigration resource advocate in your building or on your campus.
11. Provide support to students at risk of a fast-track deportation process called expedited removal. Schools can help provide students with school ID cards with a date of issuance, school registration records or other certified paperwork to show proof of residency. For additional information on expedited

removal, visit NILC's fact sheet, "Know Your Rights: Expedited Removal Expansion," at www.nilc.org/resources/know-your-rights-expedited-removal-expansion.

12. Work with parents to develop a family immigration raid emergency plan.
13. Make your school an ICE-free safe zone by pushing for policies that protect student privacy and records.
14. Work with your school board to pass a resolution affirming schools as safe havens and welcoming places of learning for all students, distancing the schools

from enforcement actions that separate families.

15. Issue statements condemning raids and calling for the immediate release of students.
16. Get involved with local civil, human and immigrant rights groups and create a list of resources to help undocumented students access private scholarships, fellowships and job opportunities.
17. Pledge to support and work with undocumented students, immigrant youth and families.

Resources to Create Welcoming Classrooms and Schools

Share My Lesson

www.sharemylesson.com/collections/immigration

Explore Share My Lesson's collection of immigration lesson plans and resources designed to spark meaningful classroom discussions, build understanding and foster empathy. These materials explore the deep historical roots of immigration in the United States and the complexities of current immigration policy, providing educators with tools to engage preK-12 and higher education students in thought-provoking ways. Additionally, these resources support the creation of inclusive school communities that address students' social, emotional and health needs.



**sharemy
lesson**

Colorín Colorado: ELL Resources

www.colorincolorado.org/immigration

In response to requests from educators working with English language learners of all backgrounds, Colorín Colorado has compiled a comprehensive collection of resources to help schools address the concerns, fears and questions surrounding immigrant students and their families. "Serving and Supporting Immigrant Students: Information for Schools" provides essential guidance on students' legal rights, social-emotional support and the impact of immigration policies on families and school communities. These resources equip educators with the tools they need to create a safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment for all students.



Supporting Immigrant Students and Families at School and in Our Communities

The power of knowing your rights

Every individual in the United States, including undocumented immigrants, has protections under the U.S. Constitution. Undocumented students and their families deserve to have access to this crucial information. As an educator, you can be a direct resource for students and families.

For tools and resources, explore United We Dream's "#HereToStay Toolkit" at bit.ly/4isfCIP.

Taking action beyond the classroom: Ways in which schools can protect their entire communities

Aside from helping students and parents learn their rights and make plans in case of immigration detention, educators and school support staff can work with community allies to be more proactive to keep students and their families safe from deportation.

Schools can adopt sanctuary, safe space and welcoming policies that create learning environments free from the threat of deportation. Cities, counties and states can also adopt sanctuary and community trust policies and terminate 287(g) agreements to limit local law enforcement's ability to enforce federal immigration laws.

Advocate to stop immigration enforcement actions

Educators play an important role in protesting immigration enforcement actions and halting deportation proceedings. Partner with immigrant rights organizations, faith-based networks, students, parents and the broader community to develop a rapid response plan

in case there is an immigration enforcement action. Contact your elected officials and those who have successfully advocated for individuals in removal proceedings for years and continue to employ this process to help immigrant communities even today.

What are sanctuary and safe zone policies?

There's no universal definition for sanctuary and safe zone policies, but these policies limit local and state law enforcement officers from implementing federal immigration laws. They bar local law enforcement from asking for proof of citizenship and arresting immigrants who lack proof of citizenship, and they allow local law enforcement to disregard requests from ICE to indefinitely hold immigrants beyond their detention date unless they are suspected of committing other criminal offenses. Sanctuary and safe zone policies are not meant to offer safe harbor to criminals.

Schools, campuses, cities, municipalities and states have adopted a wide range of sanctuary and community trust policies to build trust between communities and local law enforcement. Sanctuary policies provide safe places of learning and communities to live free from discrimination, hate and the threat of deportation. It's important to note that sanctuary policies cannot prevent federal enforcement actions from taking place, but they can limit the degree in which immigrants are unfairly targeted and criminalized. Sanctuary policies can help protect the constitutional rights of students and educators, offer support and a sense of community, ensure that families understand their rights and can prepare for any

emergencies, help address concerns and avoid unnecessary disruption to children's education.

Adopt resolutions

School districts are responsible for ensuring the safety and well-being of all their students while they are in school. One way to create a welcoming school environment and protect undocumented students while in class and on school grounds is to pass a resolution that restricts ICE agents' access to school property, similar to the one the Los Angeles Unified School District passed in February 2016 and reaffirmed in November 2024. The LAUSD resolution:

- ▶ Forbids immigration enforcement agents from going on campus without approval from the superintendent and the LAUSD law office.
- ▶ Forbids school staff from asking about a student's immigration status or that of family members.
- ▶ Provides teachers, administrators and other staff with training on how to deal with immigration issues and how to notify families in multiple languages of issues.
- ▶ Asks all schools to treat students equitably, including those receiving free and reduced-price meals, transportation and other services.
- ▶ Requires the superintendent to come up with a plan to provide assistance and information for students and families "if faced with fear and anxiety related to immigration enforcement efforts."

LAUSD reaffirmed its support for immigrant students in November 2024 outlining measures that the district is taking as a "sanctuary district" and safe zone for families threatened by immigration enforcement. The district has protocols for responding to immigration personnel requests for information about students, families and staff. To learn more

about the policy, see the LA Unified 2025: We Are One campaign at bit.ly/4hQRuyt.

Several other school boards, municipalities and states have passed resolutions and issued statements supporting undocumented immigrants and refugees from the threat of deportation.

For additional information about what actions cities and counties can take to protect immigrants and make communities welcoming places for all, visit Cities for Action (www.citiesforaction.us), a coalition of more than 200 mayors and county executives who are advocating for pro-immigrant public policies and launching innovative, inclusive programs and policies at the local level.

Public statements

Educators, administrators, students and community allies can make public statements denouncing immigration enforcement actions to reassure students and families that their local school remains a safe haven.

A statement from New York City Schools Chancellor Melissa Aviles-Ramos emphasized that federal immigration officials are not allowed to access schools without a valid legal order. "New York City Public Schools is dedicated to protecting the right of every student to attend public school, regardless of immigration status, national origin, or religion," Aviles-Ramos wrote. "Our policies remain the same, and I encourage you to continue to send your children to school." To read the full statement, see <https://bit.ly/3EvZC9F>.

In a statement from Fairfax County Public Schools Superintendent Michelle Reid, she wrote that FCPS vows to protect students to the fullest extent allowable by law. Reid reassures families that any ICE request for access to a FCPS school will go through a thorough review process. To read the full statement, see <https://bit.ly/4ieHH5d>

North Carolina's largest school district, Wake County, sent practical guidance to principals on protocols when addressing immigration enforcement issues. For example, one of the reminders to school administrators was that schools should not ask about or document the immigration status of students and parents and should take no action that would chill or deter undocumented immigrants from enrolling in school. To see the guidance, visit <https://bit.ly/42NJCtd>.

Create an online petition to prevent a student's deportation

Online petitions are powerful tools for building public awareness and community support.

Organize a rally or walkout opposing immigration enforcement actions and family separation. Public actions like this help to support individuals fighting deportation cases and protesting immigration enforcement actions.

In January 2025, labor, parents, community members and school officials responded to a mistaken report of an ICE visit to Hamline Elementary School in Chicago. While this was a false alarm, it activated the communitywide response to support immigrant students and families. The community actions that followed emphasized school safety protocols and the city's commitment to protecting students. To learn more, watch "CPS, CTU Claim ICE Agents Denied Entry to School" at <https://bit.ly/4iPYLPU>.

Hundreds of high school students in cities like Los Angeles and Fresno held walkouts in February 2025 to take a stand against President Trump's immigration enforcement policies. Their advocacy called on school districts to adopt protective policies that shield immigrant youth from enforcement actions in schools, ensuring that campuses remain safe spaces for all students. Their collective action underscores the urgent need for policies that



Marshall High School students demonstrated in support of immigrant rights on Feb. 4, 2025, in Los Angeles.

MARIANA DALE / LAIST

prioritize student safety and educational access, regardless of immigration status. To read more, see <https://bit.ly/4lvMrGu>

While these moments are important, any interaction with law enforcement—even at peaceful demonstrations—carries potential risks, including detention or deportation. This includes possible involvement from agencies like Customs and Border Protection, even if official statements suggest otherwise. To protect yourself and others, arrive grounded, informed and equipped with a plan that prioritizes safety and unity. Explore UWD's guidance on risks and steps to take during



Students and supporters march around the campus of the University of North Texas on Feb. 12, 2025, in Denton to protest President Trump's mass deportations.

CHITOSE SUZUKI / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

protests, "For UndocuLeaders Participating in Protest," at <https://bit.ly/4lwld5>.

What's the role of educators and school support staff in protecting and supporting undocumented and refugee students?

Educators, school support staff, community-based organizations and other service providers play a key role in defending the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program and protecting undocumented students, refugees and their families from the threat of deportation.

Passing a school board resolution in support of immigrant youth and families is an effective way to reaffirm the district's commitment to the educational success of all students, create welcoming places of learning and protect undocumented and refugee students from the threat of deportation. These resolutions also help to protect educators and school support staff from being used as de facto immigration officers and provide governance protecting students now that the Department of Homeland Security's "sensitive locations" and "protected areas" guidance, which limits ICE activity in schools and other locations critical to community well-being, has been terminated.

What if the school has a contract with a service provider?

Like school employees, it is equally important for all service providers to be trained and informed of school board resolutions and protocols in place when there is law enforcement presence. The best way of doing this is to insert specific language into their contracts. For example, bus service providers hired by the school should receive training on the model resolution and protocols in place. They should be instructed that if their bus is stopped by law enforcement going to or from school, a field trip or an extracurricular activity,

they should ask for a judicial warrant signed by a judge. If they are not provided with one, they should deny the officer entry onto the bus and take immediate notes of the surroundings (e.g., Were the officers blocking the exits? Where was the bus stopped? What did the officers say?). This can help establish whether a reasonable person would feel free to leave or to terminate the encounter.

Here is sample resolution language that puts the safety and well-being of children first:

DECLARING THE [NAME OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT] AS A WELCOMING, SAFE AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOL DISTRICT, COMMITTED TO PROVIDING A SECURE ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL STUDENTS, EDUCATION PERSONNEL AND FAMILIES

WHEREAS, the U.S. Supreme Court held in *Plyler v. Doe* (1982) that, under the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment, no public school district can deny children access to free public education based on their immigration status or the immigration status of their parents; and

WHEREAS, it is the right of every child in [NAME OF THE STATE] to access a free public K-12 education free from discrimination, and the [NAME OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT] should affirm its position as a district that welcomes and supports all students, regardless of immigration status, race, color, religion, gender or country of origin; and

WHEREAS, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) prohibits public schools from sharing educational records with outside agencies without parental consent, a court order, a subpoena or other exception as provided by law; and

WHEREAS, the [NAME OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT] is a district with a large immigrant and foreign-born population, including mixed-status families; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Homeland Security's January 20, 2025, memo rescinding the Protected Areas enforcement policy and thus allowing immigration enforcement actions in schools, college campuses, playgrounds, hospitals, places of worship and social services facilities is causing concern among educators, students and families served by the school district; and

WHEREAS, federal immigration law enforcement activities and raids on or around district property and transportation routes, whether by surveillance, interview, demand for information, arrest, detention or any other means, harmfully disrupt the learning environment to which all students, regardless of immigration status, are entitled and significantly interfere with the ability of all students, including U.S. citizens and students with lawful presence in the United States, to access a free public K-12 education; and

WHEREAS, through its policies and practices, the [NAME OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT] has made a commitment to a quality education for all students, which includes a safe and stable learning environment, means of transportation to and from school sites, the preservation of classroom hours for educational instruction, screenings of who may enter the school and the requirement of school attendance; and

WHEREAS, educational personnel are often the primary sources of resources and information to assist students and support their emotional and physical health:

RESOLVED, that the [NAME OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT] declares the district to be a safe haven for its students, meaning that the district is a place free from discrimination, harassment and bullying, and that it does not participate in immigration enforcement activities. The [NAME OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT] is a place for students to learn, thrive and seek assistance, information and support, including responding to threats

related to any immigration enforcement or other activity that interferes with their learning experience; and

RESOLVED, that immigration enforcement activities on school campuses shall be prohibited unless a judicial warrant is presented and follows the protocols established by [NAME OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT]; and

RESOLVED, that U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, federal, state or local law enforcement agencies acting on behalf of ICE, and agents or officers for any federal, state or local law enforcement agency attempting to enforce federal immigration laws, are to follow district policy [NAME OF POLICY], attached to and incorporated in this resolution, to ensure the district meets its duty to provide all students, regardless of immigration status, access to a free public K-12 education; and

RESOLVED, that the district prohibits immigration enforcement agents or other federal, state or local law enforcement agencies acting on behalf of ICE from visiting a school site without a judicial warrant and approval of the superintendent's office; given the likelihood of substantial disruption posed by the presence of ICE or other federal, state or local law enforcement agencies acting on behalf of ICE, any request by ICE or other agencies to visit a school site should be presented to the superintendent's office for review as to whether access to the site is permitted by law; and

RESOLVED, that, in its continued commitment to the protection of student privacy, the district shall review its record-keeping policies and practices to ensure that no data are being collected with respect to students' immigration status or place of birth, and that the district shall cease any such collection, as it is irrelevant to the educational mission and is potentially discriminatory; and

RESOLVED, that, should ICE or other law enforcement agents request any student information, the request should be referred to the superintendent's office to ensure compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, student constitutional privacy, standards for a judicial warrant, state and local privacy or confidentiality laws, and any other limitation on disclosure; this review should be conducted expeditiously, but before any production of information is made; and

RESOLVED, that the [NAME OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT] shall post this resolution at every school site and on the district website, and distribute it to district staff, students and parents using the usual means of communication, and that the resolution will be translated into all languages spoken by students at home; and

RESOLVED, that the [NAME OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT] shall provide teachers, administrators, school counselors and other school personnel with training opportunities on how to support the educational success and mental health of immigrant students, including undocumented

students, refugee students, DACAmented students and students with temporary protected status (TPS), and on their rights and responsibilities in the event of ICE presence in or near schools; and

RESOLVED, that the board affirms that certified district employees have the academic freedom to discuss this resolution during class time provided it is age-appropriate, and that students are to be made aware that district counselors are available to discuss the subjects contained in this resolution; and

RESOLVED, that after-school providers and other vendors and service providers that contract with the district shall be notified of this resolution within 30 days and required to abide by it; and

RESOLVED, that the [NAME OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT] hereby extends its support of the resolution and urges all schools, worksites, centers and departments within its jurisdiction to support the districtwide observance.

For more ways to protect undocumented and refugee students and their families, visit www.aft.org/immigration.

“ ”

Americans know that our strength has always been built on the simple notion that America is a place where many become one.

Americans know that our strength has always been built on the simple notion that America is a place where many become one. The AFT, as the representative of those who teach and care for our next generation, is working to open the path to opportunity and the American dream for the next generation of immigrants and citizens. The time for commonsense, comprehensive and compassionate immigration reform is long overdue.

—Randi Weingarten, AFT President



Resources to Create Welcoming Classrooms and Schools

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**sharemy
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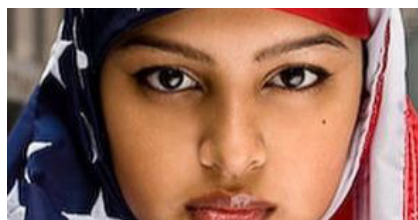


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Teach Human Rights

www.teachhumanrights.com



their historical connections. These ready-to-use resources empower educators to engage students in meaningful discussions about taking action.

Learning for Justice

www.learningforjustice.org/classroom-resources

From film kits and lesson plans to the building blocks of a customized learning plan, these robust, ready-to-use classroom lessons offer breadth and depth, spanning essential social justice topics and reinforcing critical social-emotional learning skills. Search by keyword or browse the lesson bank—you can filter lessons by grade level, subject, topic or social justice domain.



“ ”

Let me make one final plea, Mr. President.

Millions have put their trust in you. And as you told the nation yesterday, you have felt the providential hand of a loving God. In the name of our God, I ask you to have mercy upon the people in our country who are scared now.

There are gay, lesbian and transgender children in Democratic, Republican and independent families—some who fear for their lives.

And the people, the people who pick our crops and clean our office buildings, who labor in poultry farms and meatpacking plants, who wash the dishes after we eat in restaurants and work the night shifts in hospitals. They may not be citizens or have the proper documentation. But the vast majority of immigrants are not criminals. They pay taxes and are good neighbors. They are faithful members of our churches and mosques, synagogues, gurdwara and temples.

I ask you to have mercy, Mr. President, on those in our communities whose children fear that their parents will be taken away. And that you help those who are fleeing war zones and persecution in their own lands to find compassion and welcome here.

Our God teaches us that we are to be merciful to the stranger, for we were all once strangers in this land. May God grant us the strength and courage to honor the dignity of every human being; to speak the truth to one another in love and walk humbly with each other and our God. For the good of all people in this nation and the world.

—Bishop Mariann Budde

INMIGRANTES Y REFUGIADOS



ART BY FAYANNA.COM

SON BIENVENIDOS AQUÍ!

www.aft.org/Immigration



UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN

"No matter how they got here, no matter how frustrated we are with our government, we can't forget that these are children of God who are also just kids. No different than our sons and daughters, our nieces and nephews and cousins. We need to protect these children at our borders and keep them from falling into the hands of human traffickers. We need to give them guidance and warmth and a sense of welcome. No matter what, we need to remember these are innocent children who are lonely and frightened and far from home, caught up in circumstances they did not create and they cannot control."

— **Jose H. Gomez, Archbishop of Los Angeles**

"In my illustration, I wanted to evoke the sensations of feeling trapped and suffocated to show that immigration detention is not a humane place for anyone to exist in, let alone a child. ... Our society needs to be reminded that being an immigrant does not make you any less human."

DOLLY LI

Resources for unaccompanied children

All children in the United States are entitled to free, equal access to a public elementary and secondary education, regardless of their parents' actual or perceived national origin, citizenship or immigration status. This includes newly arrived unaccompanied children who are in immigration proceedings while residing in local communities with a parent, family member or sponsoring family. Title I and Title III funding may be used to meet the educational needs of these children.

The legal journey ahead for unaccompanied children seeking protection who entered the United States without a parent or legal guardian is long and hard. Following time in government custody, a child may be released to the care of a sponsor, most often a parent or other family member. Nevertheless, unaccompanied children often have to navigate complex immigration court (deportation) and legal proceedings alone. Children are not automatically provided government-appointed lawyers. Data shows that immigration judges are almost 100 times more likely to grant legal relief for unaccompanied children with counsel than those without legal counsel.

Most common types of immigration relief that unaccompanied children are eligible for

Unlike children who arrive to the United States as refugees, until unaccompanied children are able to apply for and obtain immigration relief, they remain undocumented and are often excluded from many benefits and services.

Unaccompanied children are often eligible for one or more of these forms of immigration relief, for which an attorney assisting them in the legal process is invaluable:

1. **Asylum:** Asylum is a form of international protection for individuals who flee their home country in search of safety from serious harm or threats to their lives and who are seeking safety in another country. To qualify for asylum in the United States, a person must demonstrate a well-founded fear of persecution, based on one of five grounds: race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group.
2. **Special Immigrant Juvenile Status:** SIJS is a humanitarian form of relief available to noncitizen children and youth. The first step in applying for SIJS requires a state juvenile court to find that the unmarried child or youth under 21 years old cannot be reunified with one or both parents because of abuse, abandonment, neglect or similar mistreatment, and that it is not in the child's best interest to be returned to their country of origin. The second step requires the child or youth to submit an immigration petition to the federal U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.
3. **T visas:** T visas are available to individuals who have been victims of labor and/or sex trafficking.
4. **U visas:** U visas are available to victims of certain crimes. To be eligible, the person must have cooperated with law enforcement or other authorities in the investigation or prosecution of the crime.

Immigrant and Refugee Children

A Guide for Educators and School Support Staff



Immigrant and Refugee Children

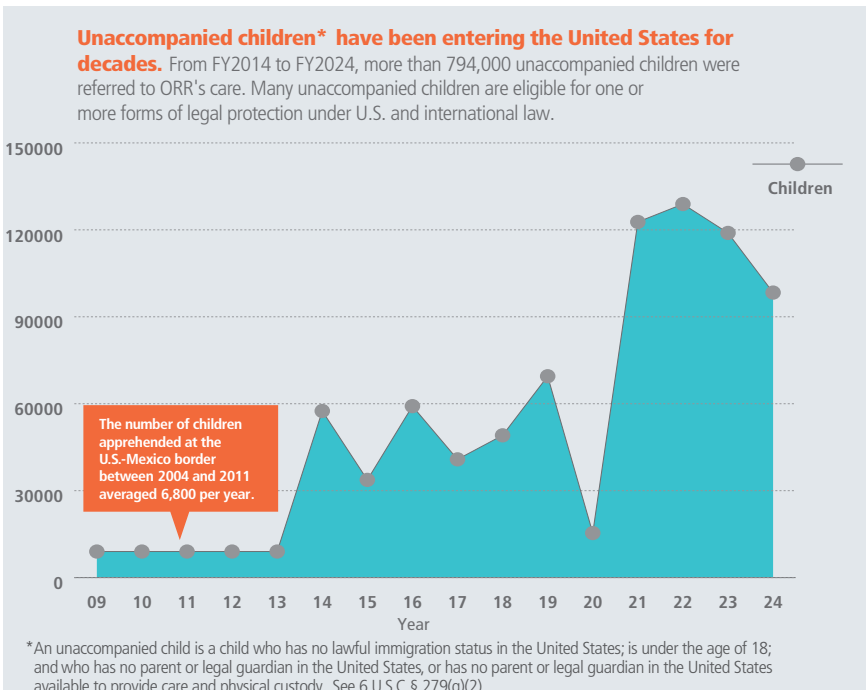
A Guide for Educators and School Support Staff

Process at the U.S. border

Unaccompanied children arriving from all over the world who are apprehended at the border or who turn themselves in to U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents are taken into custody by CBP and are required under the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008 to be transferred within 72 hours to the custody of the Office of Refugee Resettlement within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

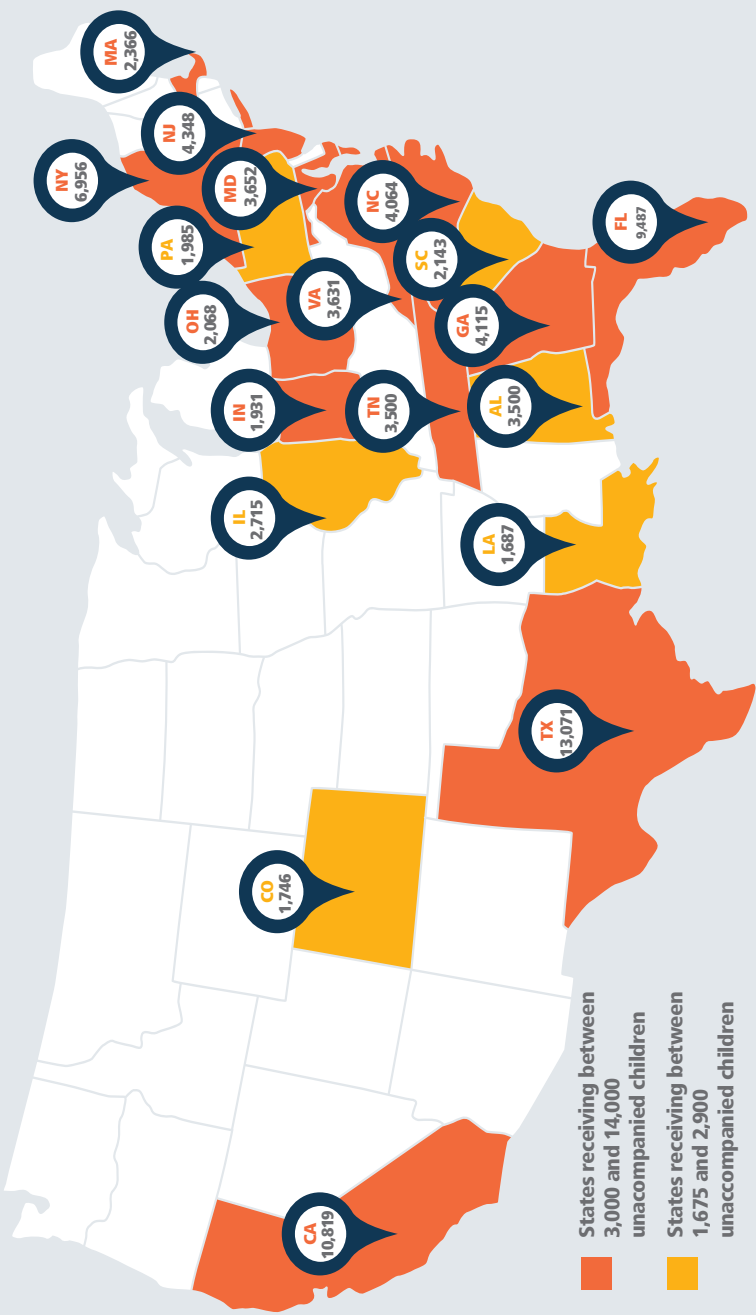
The Office of Refugee Resettlement is required to care for unaccompanied children until the department is able to place them in the care of a parent, legal guardian, close friend or federal foster care. Upon entering ORR custody, all children receive tuberculosis screening and any needed vaccinations, as determined by ORR. The length of stay and type of shelter varies by child, and most children are reunited with a family member.

From FY2014 to FY2024, more than 794,000 unaccompanied children were referred to ORR care.



TEAR AND SHARE!

Top receiving states of unaccompanied children. (FY 2024)



*To review a complete list of state-by-state data of unaccompanied children released to sponsors visit, <https://acf.gov/orr/grant-funding/unaccompanied-children-released-sponsors-state>

National Organizations Supporting Unaccompanied Children

In March 2025, the Trump administration eliminated crucial, federally funded legal services for unaccompanied children, leaving more than 26,000 children without legal assistance and straining organizational resources. Join one of the organizations listed below to support the safety and well-being of unaccompanied children and families.

Kids in Need of Defense envisions a world where every unaccompanied and separated child on the move has their rights and well-being protected as they migrate alone in search of safety. KIND works to ensure that no child appears in immigration court without high-quality legal representation; advances laws, policies and practices that ensure children's protection and uphold due process; and promotes durable solutions to child migration that are grounded in the best interests of the child. www.supportkind.org

The **Acacia Center for Justice** is a nonprofit, nongovernmental organization that supports and partners with a national network of human rights defenders who provide legal defense to immigrants at risk of detention or deportation. Acacia's programs include the Unaccompanied Children Program Legal Services Network. www.acaciajustice.org

The **Young Center for Immigrant Children's Rights** is a nonprofit organization that protects and advances the rights and best interests of immigrant children and advocates for an immigration system that treats children as children first. The center's unique Child Advocate Program trains and appoints volunteers to serve as independent child advocates, ensuring that each child's safety, well-being and rights are prioritized in legal proceedings. www.theyoungcenter.org

Global Refuge, formerly Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, is a nonprofit serving newcomers seeking safety, support and a share in the American dream. They walk alongside individuals, families and children as they begin their new lives in the United States through their work in refugee resettlement, welcome and respite services for asylum seekers, economic empowerment and employment, and family unification for unaccompanied children. www.globalrefuge.org

The **Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc.**, is a national organization that provides legal services, advocacy and training to support immigrants, including unaccompanied children. Through its advocacy efforts, it promotes policies that protect the rights and dignity of immigrants and works to expand access to legal services across the United States. www.cliniclegal.org

The **National Newcomer Network** is a coalition of educators, advocates, researchers and community-based organizations in over 40 states committed to educational equity for newcomer immigrant and refugee students. Through community-building, skill-building, sharing best practices and multi-level advocacy and narrative change, NNN members push to realize a safe and welcoming public education system where all newcomer students can succeed and thrive academically, socially and emotionally in every classroom where they learn. www.tcf.org/nnn

Immigrant and Refugee Children

A Guide for Educators and School Support Staff

Connect students and families with resources

As educators and caregivers for the next generation, it's critically important to ensure students' health, education, safety and legal needs are met. Collaborate with community partners and allies to foster inclusive, supportive environments where all students, including newcomers and unaccompanied children and their families, feel welcome and valued.

1. For resources and social, health and legal services offered in your state, see the Office of Refugee Resettlement webpage at www.acf.gov/orr. You can also call its National Call Center at 800-203-7001 for information on local community resources, available in English and Spanish.
2. Download Colorín Colorado's "Unaccompanied Children in Schools: What You Need to Know" fact sheet at www.colorincolorado.org/unaccompanied.
3. Visit the U.S. Department of Justice's directory of free legal service providers by state at <https://bit.ly/4cvdOMO>.



Additional resources

Articles, guides, and infographics

- ▶ United We Dream: Preparedness Packet (<https://bit.ly/42y9CY7>)
- ▶ CLASP: A Guide to Creating Safe Space Policies for Early Childhood Programs (<https://bit.ly/4iBxf8X>)
- ▶ Immigrant Legal Resource Center: Step-by-Step Family Preparedness Plan (<https://bit.ly/3Er3V6d>)
- ▶ NILC: Trump's Rescission of Protected Areas Policies (<https://bit.ly/42K1Z1U>)
- ▶ NILC: Understanding *Plyler v. Doe* SCOTUS Case Protecting Access to Public Education (<https://bit.ly/3Gr7s4Y>)
- ▶ NILC: *Plyler* and Data Collection (<https://bit.ly/4iwO5G0>)
- ▶ NILC: Education Providers and Immigration Enforcement Know Your Rights and Your Students' Rights (<https://bit.ly/4jE88Tb>)
- ▶ Massachusetts Statewide Family Engagement Center: Talking to Students and Families About Increased Immigration Enforcement (www.masfec.org/immigration_enforcement)

U.S. Department of Education

- ▶ "Resource Guide: Supporting Undocumented Youth"
<https://bit.ly/42JZUmB>
- ▶ January 8, 2025, Dear Colleague Letter: Resources for Ensuring Equal Access to Education for Immigrant Students
<https://bit.ly/42HSBfj>
- ▶ Fact Sheet: Protecting Access to Education for Migratory Children
<https://bit.ly/4cA82ts>
- ▶ OELA Newcomer Toolkit
<https://bit.ly/4imOgCZ>
- ▶ Undocumented Students and Financial Aid
<https://bit.ly/3RimDzO>

U.S. Department of Homeland Security's statement rescinding the sensitive locations memo

- ▶ <https://bit.ly/4jrKp8C>

To download these reports and other resources to support immigrant youth, unaccompanied and refugee students visit AFT's immigration webpage at www.aft.org/immigration.

Stay connected and informed

United We Dream is the largest immigrant youth-led organization in the nation, with a multi-racial and multi-ethnic network of 1.2 million members and a reach of over 4 million per month. UWD's vision is to push for just policies that allow everyone to thrive regardless of immigration status. United We Dream is fighting for a multi-racial democracy that works for everyone by building a movement of young people who organize and advocate for the dignity and justice of immigrants and communities of color. www.unitedwedream.org

The National Immigration Law Center is the only national legal advocacy organization in the United States exclusively dedicated to defending and advancing the rights of low-income immigrants and their families. The center envisions a United States in which all people—regardless of their race, gender, or immigration or economic status—are treated equally, fairly and humanely; have equal access to justice, education, government resources and economic opportunities; and are able to achieve their full potential as human beings. www.nilc.org

The Center for Law and Social Policy is a national, nonpartisan nonprofit advancing anti-poverty policy solutions that disrupt structural and systemic racism and remove barriers blocking people from economic security and opportunity. We work at the federal, state and local levels, supporting policy and practice that makes a difference in the lives of people living in conditions of poverty. CLASP also co-leads the Children Thrive Action Network, which mobilizes child-focused advocacy and direct service organizations to defend and protect immigrant children and children in mixed-status families. www.clasp.org | www.childrethrivemotion.org

The AFT is a national labor union representing 1.8 million pre-K through 12th-grade teachers; paraprofessionals and other school-related personnel; higher education faculty and professional staff; federal, state and local government employees; nurses and other healthcare workers; and early childhood educators. The AFT is one of the leading organizations in the country influencing policy and charting the course of public education. www.aft.org

Kids in Need of Defense, founded in 2008, is an international organization focused on providing unaccompanied and separated immigrant children in the United States with pro bono legal and psychosocial services. In all their work, they envision a world in which every unaccompanied child on the move has access to legal counsel and has their rights and well-being protected as they migrate alone in search of safety. To achieve this vision, KIND works to ensure that no child appears in immigration court without high-quality legal representation; advances laws, policies and practices that ensure children's protection and uphold their right to due process and fundamental fairness; and promotes, in countries of origin, transit and destination, durable solutions to child migration that are grounded in the best interests of the child so that no child is forced to migrate involuntarily. www.supportkind.org

Visions from the Inside is a project of CultureStrike, in partnership with Mariposas Sin Fronteras, the Detention Watch Network and 15 artists from across the country. Visions from the Inside is a visual art project inspired by letters penned by detained migrants. By visually illustrating these letters, they aim to bring awareness and a better sense of the realities that people are experiencing inside of for-profit detention facilities, what led them to migrate in the first place and, most importantly, the resiliency of the migrant spirit.



Education
Healthcare
Public Services

DREAMers Welcome • 歡迎 • Bienvenido • Chào mừng • الودعو • Byenvinit • bem-vindo • လာကူ



Artist: Favianna Rodriguez
www.culturafine.org

Tools and resources for educators, school support staff and parents to support the educational success of undocumented and refugee students.
American Federation of Teachers • Casa del Maestro • Clases Colando EL Bilingüe

Citizens of the World: "I originally developed this piece for a Mama's Day card project. The original character was based on a photograph taken at one of my butterfly workshops in Santa Ana, Calif., where a boy was happily focused on painting his butterfly. I wanted to show a migrant mother alongside her son. Yet, she can also be a school teacher working with her pupil, or an older sister with her sibling."

FAVIANNA RODRIGUEZ

[illegible]





AFT members and allies: UWD, NILC and CLASP are here to help!

United We Dream: www.unitedwedream.org

National Immigration Law Center: www.nilc.org

Center for Law and Social Policy: www.clasp.org

Kids in Need of Defense: www.supportkind.org

Learn more about the AFT's work on immigration: www.aft.org/immigration



This guide was compiled by UWD, NILC, CLASP, KIND, and the AFT.



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