

# THE IMPACT OF IMMIGRATION POLICIES ON CHILDREN & FAMILIES

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# VIOLENCE AND TRAUMA EXPOSURE

## Country of Origin

- Homicide rates in Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala are ranked first, fourth and fifth in the world.
- In global standards, 4 of 10 homicides occur in this region, with more than a quarter of homicide victims under the age of 20 (UNICEF, 2014).
- Violence against women and girls often goes unprosecuted (Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, 2015).

## Migration Journey

- Human trafficking is second in profit only to drug trafficking (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2013).
- 60% of women and girls crossing the U.S.- Mexico border were sexual assaulted in the journey (Amnesty International, 2010).
- About 20,000 migrants are kidnapped each year. Estimated ransom is \$50 million each year.

# IMPACT ON PARENTS IN THE U.S.

- Daily concerns about detection by authorities, deportation and separation from family members: “trust no one”
- Fear of retribution if voice concerns about unfair conditions
- Unmet needs for physical and mental health, lack of access to needed services
- More likely to have experienced some form of trauma (physical or sexual assault, robbery, threats, extortion, witness to murder through process of immigration)
- Acculturative stress, loss and adaptation



# POLLING QUESTION



# WHAT IS CHILD TRAUMA?

- Witnessing or experiencing an event that poses a real or perceived threat.
- The event overwhelms the child's ability to cope.
- Child traumatic stress refers to the *physical and emotional responses* of a child to threatening situations. (NCTSN)
- Traumatic events overwhelm a child's capacity to cope and elicit feelings of terror, powerlessness, and out-of-control physiological arousal. (NCTSN)
- Bruce Perry: “an experience, or pattern of experiences, that impairs the proper functioning of the person's stress-response system, making it more reactive or sensitive”



# SYMPTOMS OF TRAUMA IN CHILDREN

- Difficulty sleeping and nightmares
- Refusing to go to school
- Lack of appetite
- Bed-wetting or other regression in behavior
- Interference with developmental milestones
- Anger
- Play that includes recreating the event
- Getting into fights at school or fighting with siblings
- Difficulty paying attention to teachers at school and to parents at home
- Avoidance of scary situations
- Withdrawal from friends or activities
- Nervousness or jumpiness
- Intrusive memories of what happened

# IMPACT OF IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT ON CHILDREN

- Family economic hardship
- Difficulty accessing social services due to language barriers, difficulty documenting eligibility, mistrust and fear
- Significant levels of traumatic stress, due to witnessing arrest, not knowing what happened to detained parent, unstable caregiving in the aftermath of arrest.
- Higher risk of involvement or entering into child welfare system
- When in foster care, reunification may be compromised due to lack of coordination between immigration and child welfare systems; parent's inability to attend court hearings; policy misinterpretations and biases



# **PROVIDING SUPPORT TO CHILDREN IN IMMIGRANT FAMILIES**

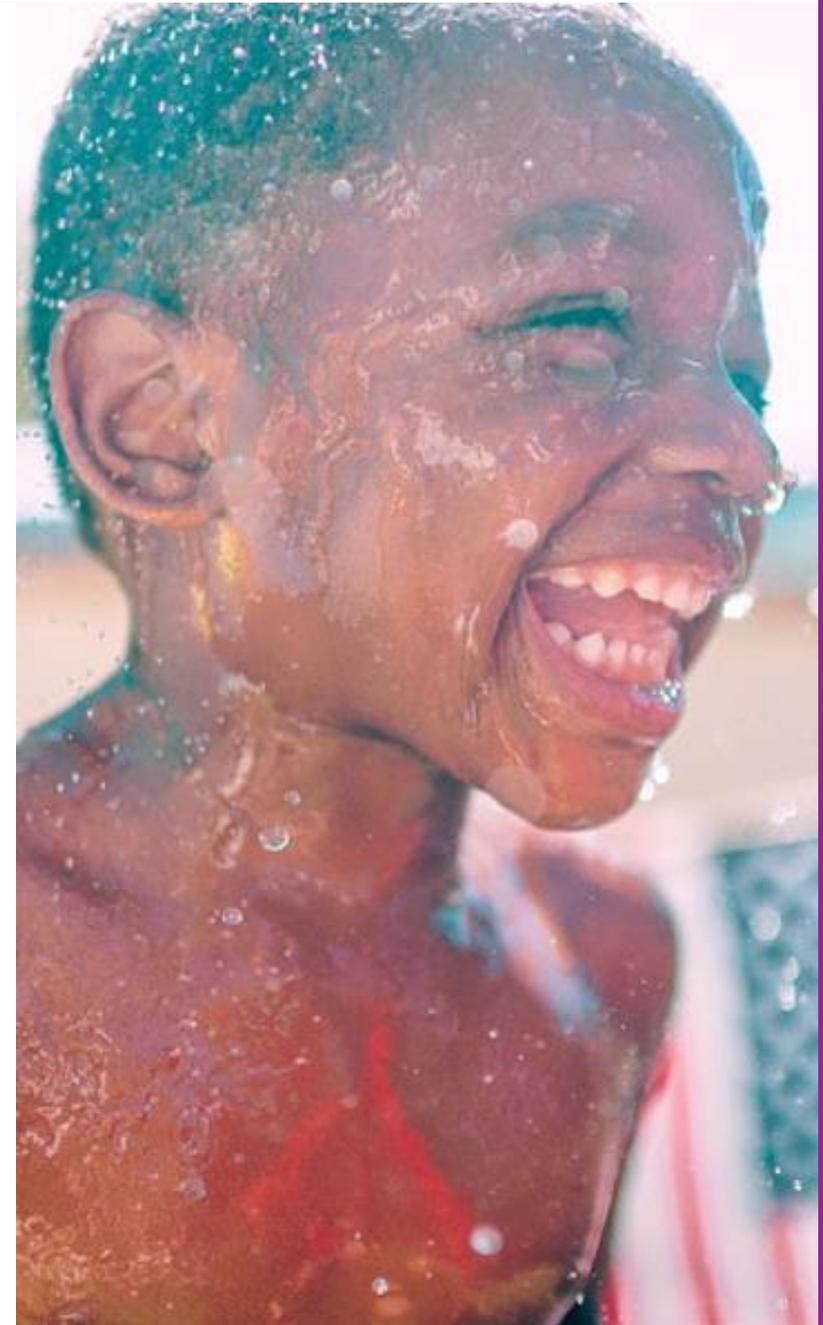
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**Trauma-Informed Approaches to Engaging  
with Children and Youth**

# MITIGATING IMPACTS OF TRAUMATIC STRESS

- Facilitating supportive adult-child relationships;
- Building a sense of self-efficacy and perceived control;
- Providing opportunities to strengthen adaptive skills and self-regulatory capacities; and
- Mobilizing sources of faith, hope, and cultural traditions

Source: Harvard Center for the Developing Child





# BEYOND ACEs

- Unique trauma challenges for immigrant children
- Under-identification of immigrant children's trauma experiences
  - Trauma instruments like the ACEs inventory are less likely to identify the types of experiences that immigrant and refugee children have because they focus more on experiences within the household environment as opposed to external factors e.g., acculturation, resettlement, political environment
  - Many mental health screening tools used to assess incoming migrants are not designed for young children

**CHAT**

**WHAT ARE SOME  
EXAMPLES OF TRAUMA-  
INFORMED PRACTICE(S)  
THAT YOU USE IN YOUR  
WORK?**

# EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACHES

- **Child parent psychotherapy**
  - Narrative building
  - Help the child use the parent as a stable and safe caretaker.
  - Support the parent's own feelings and history
- **CBT**
  - Identify a child's distortions i.e. "*It's my fault,*"
  - Support children to have a realistic appreciation of the situation
  - Identify and build coping skills
- **Mindfulness and Somatic-based approaches**
  - Creating awareness of thoughts and feeling without acting on them
  - Meditation, body-centered practices such as yoga, dance

# CREATING SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

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# PREPARING FOR ICE RAIDS

Agencies should...

- ✓ Be informed about the Detained Parents Directive
- ✓ Establish relationships with point of contact at respective ICE Field Office.
- ✓ Assist immigrant parents and students in knowing their rights.
- ✓ Help families locate legal resources and navigate immigration system if apprehended.
- ✓ Connect parents/relatives with legal providers to prepare family safety/contingency plans/powers of attorney.
- ✓ Partner with other local organizations to establish triage and rapid response teams.
- ✓ Use ICE Online Detainee Locator to locate parents or family members in ICE detention.
- ✓ Assist in locating relatives/kin to act as caregivers to prevent entry into child welfare custody.

# CREATING SAFETY PLANS

Good plans include:

- ✓ Designated, safe emergency contact
- ✓ File of important documents and contacts
- ✓ Power of attorney for care of children, prior discussion with children, and immediate plan for child pick-up
- ✓ Power of attorney for assets and businesses
- ✓ Designated “sponsor” and assets for bond
- ✓ Prior consultation with immigration attorney re possible remedies/options
- ✓ Prior preparation of travel documents and/or dual citizenship for US born children
- ✓ Caregiver's affidavit for health and educational decisions

**CHAT**

**WHAT DO YOU KNOW  
ABOUT WHAT  
IMMIGRANTS SHOULD  
DO IF THEY ARE  
APPROACHED OR  
APPREHENDED BY ICE?**

# ADVICE FOR PARENTS IF APPREHENDED:

- Exercise right to remain silent. You have the right to speak to an attorney and to make a phone call.
- To prevent immediate removal, do not sign removal or voluntary departure (which waives right to fight case in Immigration Court), and if you have a prior removal order express fear of return to country of origin.
- Contact your designated emergency contact to set your safety plan into motion.
- Contact your consulate to ask for assistance.



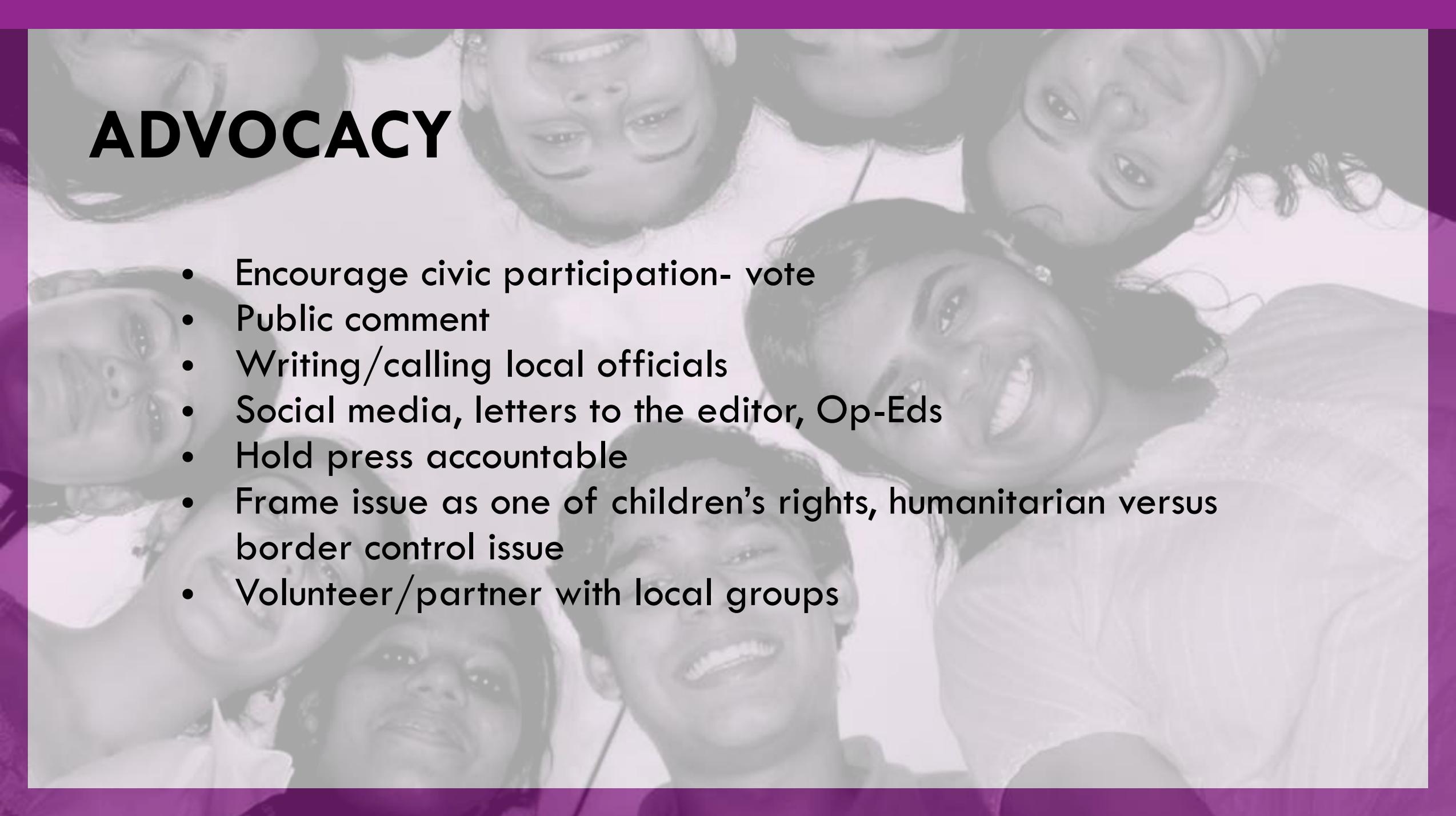
KEEP  
CALM  
AND  
KNOW  
YOUR  
RIGHTS



# ICE SENSITIVE LOCATIONS POLICY

- Directs ICE to avoid arrests at certain “sensitive locations”
  - Places of worship, weddings, funerals
  - Schools, day cares, pre-schools, early learning programs
  - Healthcare facilities, hospitals
  - Public demonstrations, marches, rallies etc.

# ADVOCACY



- Encourage civic participation- vote
- Public comment
- Writing/calling local officials
- Social media, letters to the editor, Op-Eds
- Hold press accountable
- Frame issue as one of children's rights, humanitarian versus border control issue
- Volunteer/partner with local groups

**CHAT**

**WHAT ARE SOME  
EXAMPLES OF LOCAL  
ADVOCACY INITIATIVES  
IN YOUR COMMUNITY?**

# RESOURCES

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# ABOUT THE CICW

The Center on Immigration and Child Welfare (CICW) is a national professional network with the mission to improve programs and policies related to immigrant children and families involved in the public child welfare system to achieve positive outcomes of safety, permanency and well-being. We envision a world where children of immigrants thrive in their families and communities.

For more information about our mission and work:

- Visit our website at [www.cimmcw.org](http://www.cimmcw.org)
- Find us on Facebook and Twitter
- Sign up for FYI E-News!



**THE CENTER ON  
IMMIGRATION  
AND CHILD WELFARE**

# RESOURCES: CIMMCW.ORG



## Featured Resources

Find direct links to new resources for child welfare practitioners and on current immigration issues.



## Child Welfare Resource Lists

Access resource lists on various topics for child welfare practitioners.



## Resources on Public Charge

Access resources on proposed changes to the public charge rule and impacts for immigrant families.



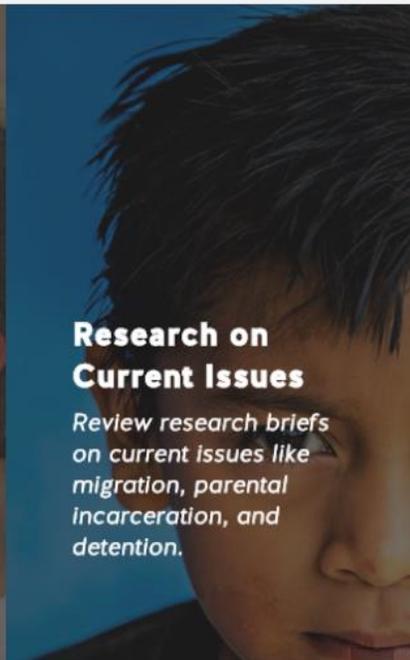
## Children in ORR Custody

Access resources related to children in the custody of the Office of Refugee Resettlement.



## Planning for Immigration Enforcement

Access resources on supporting families in the wake of heightened immigration enforcement.



## Research on Current Issues

Review research briefs on current issues like migration, parental incarceration, and detention.

# NEW: COVID-19 Resources for Immigrant Families

LEARN MORE

[WWW.CIMMCW.ORG](http://WWW.CIMMCW.ORG):

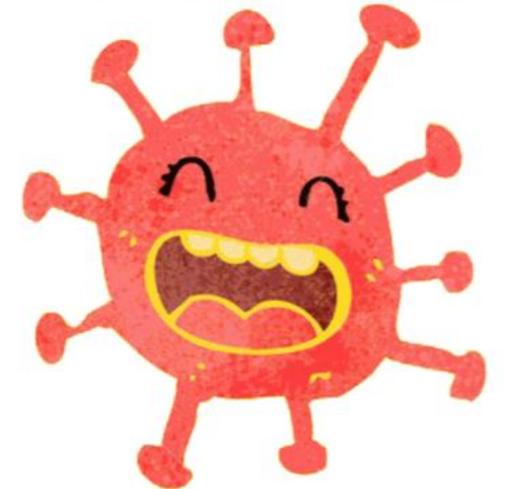
- New resources for supporting children in multiple languages
- Resources for caregiving
- Samples of state-specific resources

## REMINDER:

- COVID-19 and Public Charge
  - USCIS will not consider testing, treatment, or preventive care related to COVID-19 in a public charge inadmissibility determination, even if the health care services are covered by Medicaid.
- Access to Healthcare for Immigrant Families
  - Families First Act – additional funding for uninsured

# HELLO!

I am a **VIRUS**,  
cousin with the Flu and  
the Common Cold



**My name is Coronavirus**

MANUELA MOLINA - @MINDHEART.KIDS  
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**QUESTIONS?**

**UP NEXT**

**SPECIAL SESSION  
FOR CYFD  
PRACTITIONERS**