



SERVING IMMIGRANT CHILDREN & FAMILIES WITH CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM INVOLVEMENT:



PROMISING MODELS FOR MEETING
COMPLEX NEEDS AT THE INTERSECTION
OF IMMIGRATION & CHILD WELFARE

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**THE CENTER ON
IMMIGRATION
AND CHILD WELFARE**



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INTRODUCTION

The population of immigrant families in the U.S. has experienced steady growth over the past several decades. Despite the fact that children in immigrant families now make up over a quarter of all children in the U.S.,¹ the domestic child welfare system in the U.S. has remained largely unreformed over the past thirty years with respect to adapting to address the complex and unique experiences of immigrant families. When immigrant children and families become involved with the child welfare system, child welfare agencies often encounter challenges in meeting the particular case requirements and service needs of this population. Common challenges include: meeting translation and interpretation needs, screening for and obtaining immigration legal relief, working with foreign country consulates, locating relatives, coordinating relative placements, conducting family visits with detained/deported parents, and facilitating parental participation in court proceedings.^{2,3} The COVID-19 pandemic introduced additional pandemic-related barriers such as court and office closures, limitations to family visitation, and transnational service barriers.⁴

In response to these challenges, several child welfare agencies/jurisdictions across the country have implemented specialized initiatives dedicated to addressing the immigration-related elements of complex cases and providing equitable services to children and families regardless of immigration status. This guide seeks to document various models that these child welfare agencies have developed to effectively serve immigrant children and families who experience child welfare system involvement and to highlight the key components of these models so that they may be considered for adoption in other jurisdictions. There is no one-size-fits-all model as immigrant communities vary and child welfare systems and policies differ from state to state and oftentimes from county to county. Different agencies and jurisdictions may need to modify the policies, procedures, and models outlined in this guide according to the population they serve, staff availability, local jurisdiction policies and structure, and available budget and resources.

Methodology

Researchers identified child welfare agencies in jurisdictions known to have existing models, programs, and/or staff positions for serving immigrant children and families. Participants were recruited through the Center on Immigration and Child Welfare's (CICW) Immigration and Child

¹ Ward, N. & Batalova, J. (2023, March 14). *Frequently Requested Statistics on Immigrants and Immigration in the United States*. Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/frequently-requested-statistics-immigrants-and-immigration-united-states?eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=e333a24e-c902-4fcb-9083-79a2c51a4459#children-immigrants>

² Dettlaff, A. J. (2012). Immigrant children and families and the public child welfare system: Considerations for legal systems. *Juvenile and Family Court Journal*, 63(1), 19-30.

³ Finno-Velazquez, M. & Dettlaff, A. (2018). Challenges to family unity and opportunities for promoting child welfare in an increasingly punitive immigration landscape. *Advances in Social Work*, 18(3)728-744. <https://journals.iupui.edu/index.php/advancesinsocialwork/article/view/21716/22045>

⁴ Lovato, K., Finno-Velasquez, M., Sepp, S., Ramirez, J. J., Mendoza, V., & Hernandez-Mekonnen, R. (2022). The Impact of COVID-19 and Immigration Enforcement on Service Delivery for Immigrant Origin Families Involved in the Child Welfare System. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 1-14.



Welfare Practice Network, which consists of practitioners and administrators from state and county child welfare agencies, representatives from large nonprofits focused on immigration and children's issues, legal professionals, and researchers who convene regularly to discuss challenges and share best practices and resources for serving immigrant children and families with child welfare system involvement. An open invitation to participate was sent to representatives of agencies who have participated in the Immigration and Child Welfare Practice Network. Ten child welfare agency representatives from 7 different agencies in 5 states, including California (three county jurisdictions), New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, and Oregon responded to the invitation and participated in semi-structured, one-on-one interviews via Zoom video conferencing. All participants had specific roles or positions within their respective child welfare agencies, e.g., as immigration specialist, immigrant rights attorney, program manager for immigration services, international case consultant, or supervisory roles in immigration units. A semi-structured interview protocol was developed based on the researchers' expert knowledge and experience on how child welfare agencies serve immigrant children and families, the various international and federal policies that govern case requirements in immigration-related child welfare cases, and documented best practices at the intersection of immigration and child welfare work. The full interview protocol can be found in Appendix A.

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OVERVIEW OF MODELS FOR SERVING IMMIGRANT CHILDREN & FAMILIES WITH CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM INVOLVEMENT

This section will provide a general overview of the models utilized by child welfare agencies in California (Los Angeles, San Diego, and Santa Clara counties), New Jersey, New Mexico, New York City,⁵ and Oregon to serve immigrant families and includes a description of the various positions and program structure within the different agencies. As previously noted, models vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction to accommodate various demographics, needs, and resources in each area. Each jurisdiction reported adapting to support the immigrant clients they encountered; all models are characterized by creativity and flexibility in order to meet the unique needs of immigrant families. Equitable and efficient service provision for immigrant families requires recognition of the complexities not only of the experiences of immigrant families themselves, but also of the intersecting state and/or county child welfare systems and federal immigration system, in order to ensure that child welfare systems are committed to supporting immigrant families regardless of the challenges posed by immigration-related circumstances.

Los Angeles County, CA

In Los Angeles County's Department of Children and Family Services, the program for serving immigrant children and families is the Special Immigrant Status (SIS) Unit, which has been in place since 1991. The SIS Unit provides immigration services throughout the county to undocumented immigrant children eligible for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status and also assesses for potential beneficiaries U-Visas, T-Visas, and VAWA. The unit consists of 7 staff positions whose roles and responsibilities are split between the supervisor, eligibility workers, and unit staff clerks. The clerks are responsible for tasks related to Special Immigrant Juvenile Status, renewals, replacements of green cards, citizenship, and U-Visas and T-Visas.

San Diego County, CA

In San Diego County's Health & Human Services Agency's Child Welfare Services, the unit that specializes in serving immigrant children and families is the International Liaison Office (ILO). The ILO serves as a liaison between international agencies and the department's social workers, coordinating with consulates and social services agencies in other countries, most commonly with Mexico and the *Sistema para el Desarrollo Integral de la Familia (DIF)*⁶ due to their proximity to the U.S./Mexico border, and assisting social workers with various case activities for cases with immigration issues. The unit is composed of a supervisor, a senior social worker, a protective services worker, and another social worker. The staff positions at the child welfare agency are divided based on complexity of the cases. The senior protective services worker and the protective services worker handle the more complex cases related to reunification services

⁵ Visit Appendix B for links to public facing resources with additional information about the immigration models/units described below.

⁶ The *Sistema para el Desarrollo Integral de la Familia*, which translates to the System for Integral Family Development, is Mexico's child welfare agency and is commonly referred to as "DIF."



and repatriations, while the social worker there handles lower-level case management and reporting tasks.

Santa Clara County, CA

In Santa Clara County's Department of Family and Children's Services, the unit that specializes in serving immigrant children and families is the Immigration Services Committee (ISC), established in 1998. The primary functions of the ISC are to provide on-going training and support to child welfare system staff on assessing and meeting the needs of immigrant children and families, and to develop collaborative relationships with consulates, community legal services, and other community partners. The ISC is composed of a supervisor (senior social worker), a protective services worker, and a social worker. The ISC provides in-depth trainings and consultations on immigration-related issues to child welfare staff. Trainings cover topics such as the demographics of immigrants in Santa Clara County; common barriers faced by immigrant families (e.g., acculturation, language, immigration status, poverty, transportation, and education level); cultural competence; language access; key departmental, state, and federal policies governing child welfare cases with immigration issues; and immigration legal relief options.

New Jersey

New Jersey's child welfare and immigration model involves a collaborative approach between caseworkers, an immigration legal specialist, the Statewide Administrator for Domestic Violence, Human Trafficking, and Missing Youth, and attorneys from Rutgers University Law School. Caseworkers help to collect documents, make requests to a consulate, and work with immigration legal specialists to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the children on their caseloads. Lawyers from Rutgers University Law School are designated to work with immigration-related child welfare cases for screening purposes, representation in court proceedings, and filing for applicable immigration relief. Notably, New Jersey has a designated statewide administrator for domestic violence, human trafficking, and missing youth, who provides training, support, and resources to all local offices on issues of trafficking and serves as the liaison to federal, state, and local law enforcement.

New Mexico

In New Mexico, the Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD) has an Immigration Affairs Unit that is dedicated to serving immigrant and mixed-status children and families who become involved with the child welfare, juvenile justice, or children's behavioral health systems. It is comprised of an immigration attorney, and two immigration specialists for the Protective Services Division and the Juvenile Justice Services Division. The unit provides a wide variety of services for cases involving immigrant children/youth and families, including liaising with foreign entities; providing training, mentorship, and supervision to social workers; ensuring compliance with federal and state regulations on consular notification and obtaining Special Immigrant Juvenile Status for children; reporting and obtaining federal supports for non-citizen minor survivors of trafficking; conducting legal screenings and providing legal representation, and providing referrals to community based legal services organizations.



New York City

New York City's Administration for Children's Services (ACS) has an Office of Immigrant Services and Language Affairs, which provides guidance and support on immigration and language access issues impacting child welfare cases. The program is comprised of two branches, one that addresses language access and the other that addresses immigration services for children/youth in foster care. The immigration services unit consists of a director, program manager, two to three additional staff members who are either master of social work students or AmeriCorps VISTA members, as well as a contingent staff. The unit works with ACS's contracted foster care providers and with the Child Protective Service Unit to ensure that the needs of immigrant children/youth are met, especially in terms of screening for and obtaining immigration legal relief.

Oregon

In Oregon's Department of Human Services' Child Welfare Program, there is no formal unit or program that specializes in immigration-related cases. However, Oregon does have a specific staff position, the International Case Consultant, who consults with child welfare staff to provide guidance on steps that need to be taken in cases that involve immigrant children/families, such as connecting with legal representatives to assist children/youth in applying for SIJS status or working with unaccompanied minors. Oregon has also developed specific processes to address common immigration-related situations, such as when unaccompanied minors come into custody.



CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

While all jurisdictions stress the importance of maintaining privacy and confidentiality of immigration status to their employees, policies and training regarding confidentiality in child welfare cases vary across jurisdictions. These policies range from broad statements outlining strict confidentiality policies that protect families across all areas, to more specific instructions, including:

- verbal communication to staff that client information is not to be reported to immigration officials (Oregon)
We generally do not have policy. However, I do participate in the training for all the new social workers that are hired in Oregon. And in every one of those training sessions, I let them know that child welfare does not report to immigration. We do not report to let them know that, "Hey, you know what, we just removed a child, and they're here illegally from Germany or they're here from Mexico." We do not do that.
- explicit instructions not to share information with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) regarding orders of deportation (New Mexico)
-International case consultant in Oregon
- confidentiality policies related to working with undocumented families or families who are going through immigration proceedings (San Diego County)
- confidentiality policy that applies to everything, including immigration-related matters (Santa Clara County)
- operating in a sanctuary county, where there is no cooperation with law enforcement entities (Santa Clara County)

Ultimately, it is crucial for all child welfare agencies to prioritize the privacy and safety of immigrant families and children in their care.

We do have policy around confidentiality in general. And then we do have these subdivisions of other policies that are when we're working with families who are going through immigration proceedings or families who are undocumented. We do have those subdivisions of those policies that are specific to that population. So those items are covered in both.

-Child welfare supervisor in San Diego County



LANGUAGE ACCESS

All organizations that receive federal funding for health-related services are required to have written language access plans for serving clients per the [National Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services \(CLAS\) Standards](#). Therefore, all jurisdictions have a responsibility to ensure that immigrant children and families have access to services in their preferred language in order to fully understand and participate in child welfare proceedings.

Translation and Interpretation

Translation and interpretation are essential language access services. Translation refers to the translation of written material, while interpretation refers to the translation of oral/spoken language. Jurisdictions are able to meet language needs of their non-English speaking clients within their own organizations by:

- Providing in-house document translation and interpretation (e.g., by the Immigration Unit in New Mexico, SIS unit in Los Angeles County)
- Referring to other staff/units in the department for specific language needs e.g., Asian Pacific Islander unit for Chinese (Los Angeles County)
- Locating staff members in areas with high concentrations of specific language-speaking populations, such as Armenian, Mandarin, Farsi, and Spanish (Los Angeles County)
- Utilizing language determination forms when initially meeting a family to identify their language of choice (San Diego County)
- Using specific templates to translate the birth certificates from common countries like El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico (Los Angeles County)
- Providing language access training to staff (New York City)

Bilingual staff are utilized as language access assets in all of the jurisdictions interviewed, are key to providing interpretation and translation services to clients who do not speak English, and were widely favored over external interpretation services.

Jurisdictions also partner in various ways with other organizations or entities to provide additional translation and interpretation services, such as by:

- Contracting with interpretation and translation service providers (San Diego County, Oregon, New Mexico, New York City, and New Jersey).
 - For example, in New York City, the agency contracts with language service providers for in-person, telephonic, video, and remote interpretation services, as well as translation and sign language services.
- Working with indigenous organizations to provide interpretation services to indigenous populations (Los Angeles County)
- Working with consulates to find individuals who can communicate in dialects if needed (San Diego County)
- Utilizing a Spanish translation committee who completes needed translations (Santa Clara County)



- Offering cultural brokers who provide assistance to families, with a particular focus on those who are Spanish monolingual and potentially undocumented. (Santa Clara County).

Language certification

In order to ensure that clients receive accurate and effective translation and interpretation services, New York City requires that bilingual staff members seeking to provide these language services undergo a certification process for each language they intend to use. This certification process includes a language exam, even when the staff member already considers themselves to be fluent in the language. Once certified, staff members are authorized to provide interpretation or translation services for that specific language or communicate directly with clients in that language.

And even if you are a Spanish speaker, you cannot use your Spanish until you have a certification. Why? Because you will come to court with your findings during investigation, and the judge can say and who can here tell me that you really, you know, knew what was going on in terms of what the person was saying. So that's why.

-Immigrant services program manager in New York City



CITIZENSHIP DETERMINATION PROCESSES

Determination of citizenship provides crucial information for child welfare cases, including whether consular notification or legal screening may be necessary and whether clients may be eligible for public benefits or in need of legal relief. Revealing immigration status can be a very sensitive issue for immigrant families due to fears around repercussions for deportation or separation from their children if their undocumented status is discovered. These fears can contribute to a lack of trust and reluctance to disclose important information that may be relevant to their case. Approaching this issue with sensitivity and understanding is essential to helping build trust with immigrant families and encouraging them to share important information that may be critical to the child's well-being.

Proxy questions for citizenship determination

Rather than asking direct questions about citizenship that may be triggering or threatening for clients, staff are trained to use proxy questions that help determine the citizenship of the children and parent while not specifically asking about immigration status, such as:

- ✓ Where are you from?
- ✓ Where were you born?
- ✓ Where was/were your child(ren) born?
- ✓ How long have you lived here?
- ✓ Where else have you lived?
- ✓ Do you have a birth certificate?
- ✓ Do you have health insurance?
- ✓ Do you have family here?

So one question that we won't ask ever is are you here legally? Right? That's like, don't ask that. Right? But to my understanding, the best practices that we have conveyed to frontline workers is to ask, Hey, where are you from? How long have you been in New Mexico? Do you have family here? Do you have family in other places? So just other questions to try and determine where these individuals may be from.

-Immigration attorney in New Mexico

Other methods used to determine citizenship

Acquiring necessary paperwork is an important step to assist in determining the citizenship/immigration status of clients and needed resources. Documents that may help in this process include:

- birth certificates
- social security cards
- IDs
- proof of insurance
- medical records
- licenses and registrations
- employment records
- financial records
- court documents
- legal guardianship documents

Additional methods for determining the citizenship status immigrant families may include:

- considering the language that the family speaks
- consulting with foreign consulates
- checking public websites for orders of deportation or applications for immigration benefits
- interviews and conversations between social workers and the clients.



Having multiple methods of determining citizenship status allows workers to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of a family's situation and ensures that families receive necessary support and resources to ensure the well-being of the child. Furthermore, it helps to create a safe and trusting relationship between staff and clients.

Other ways staff engage families on this topic and make them feel comfortable include:

- Discussing clients' home countries to break the ice and build trust, especially if staff and clients have lived in, visited, or have family from the same country/area.
- Reassuring clients that their immigration status will not affect their case and may help staff access resources for them.
- Assuring clients that any information gained during their case will not be reported to immigration officials.
- Using a generic job title, such as "child welfare specialist," rather than their specific job title if it includes reference to immigration, such as "immigration specialist," to reduce client anxiety.

My title is Immigration Specialist, and I don't give the name of my title when I first talk to people because when they hear the word "immigration", they don't hear anything else but "immigration." So I am careful. Once I establish rapport with them in the future, maybe I will say, you know, my title is Immigration Specialist, but I don't work with immigration. It's just a name, you know.

-Immigration specialist in New Mexico



LEGAL SCREENING & SERVICES

Legal screening and services are essential for ensuring that immigrant children and youth are able to pursue potential immigration relief options that they are eligible for, which will provide them permission to stay in the U.S. and the ability to access many crucial public benefits and other supportive services, both during and after their child welfare system involvement. If a child/youth is eligible for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS), child welfare agencies should file a petition. In New Mexico, state law⁷ requires the agency to file an SIJS petition for eligible children/youth. San Diego County also has a specific policy pertaining to SIJS.

Legal representation may be facilitated either by the child welfare agency or via collaboration with a partnering legal services organization. The availability of legal services is influenced by several factors, including the demand for immigration law experts in the locality, the caseload of families with specific immigration needs, and the associated financial costs. Across the jurisdictions interviewed, immigration legal screening and representation is provided by:

- contracted individual immigration attorneys
- contracted legal services organizations
- local university law schools/clinics (New Jersey)⁸
- immigration attorney within the child welfare agency (New Mexico)
- pro bono immigration attorneys (Los Angeles County)

We find them an immigration attorney and the immigration attorney will do proper screening because no one, I mean, you know, we say immigration law is complex...no one needs to pretend they're an immigration attorney unless they are. And only an immigration attorney can do a proper assessment.

-Immigrant services program manager in New York City

⁷ NMSA § 32A-4-23.1 (1978)

⁸ Learn more about New Jersey's model for connecting immigrant children and youth with legal representation here: [A Pathway to Permanency: Collaborating for the Futures of Children who are Immigrants in the Child Welfare System](#)



TRAFFICKING PROCEDURES

Screening for human trafficking is a requirement of federal law under the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act⁹. Federal, state, and local officials with information about noncitizen minors who may have experienced human trafficking must refer cases to the Office on Trafficking in Persons (OTIP).

Screening procedures

Several jurisdictions have separate units within their agencies/departments that are responsible for screening for and addressing concerns of human trafficking.

- In Los Angeles and Santa Clara counties, the departments have a Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) unit, which assesses children for trafficking.
- San Diego County has a CSEC liaison and policy analyst for trafficking issues.
- New York City's Administration for Children's Services has a unit that is designated to address issues of child trafficking. If a caseworker identifies trafficking concerns, they notify that unit, which will conduct an assessment and provide appropriate assistance.
- New Jersey has a specific staff position within the Division of Child Protection and Permanency called the Statewide Administrator for Domestic Violence, Human Trafficking, and Missing Youth.

In other jurisdictions, child welfare caseworkers or child abuse hotline operators conduct trafficking screenings:

JURISDICTION	TRAFFICKING SCREENING PROCEDURE
San Diego County, CA	All youth 12 years-old and older are screened using the Commercial Sexual Exploitation-Identification Tool (CSE-IT). Caseworkers also ask specific questions during interviews with children/youth to assess for trafficking/exploitation concerns, such as, have you ever received something in exchange for sexual favors?
New Jersey	Every call to New Jersey's child welfare abuse neglect hotline is screened for trafficking. The screener asks questions to determine if the child has been involved in commercial sex or labor exploitation and listens for common indicators of trafficking. Screeners also utilize a tool called the Rapid Human Trafficking Assessment Tool, which is a list of additional questions used to identify whether a case should be flagged for human trafficking. New Jersey also refers children/youth to a contracted provider called Avanzar, which utilizes the CSE-IT tool.
New Mexico	An initial trafficking screening is conducted by the investigation caseworker. When staff suspects a noncitizen child(ren) may be a victim of trafficking, they refer the non-citizen child(ren) to the Immigration Unit. The Unit

⁹ William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008, Pub. L. No. 110-457, 112 Stat. 5044. (2008, December 23). <https://www.congress.gov/110/plaws/publ457/PLAW-110publ457.pdf>



	conducts a screening for commercial sex trafficking and labor trafficking using 10 pre-screen questions (see below), which were developed internally based on the CSE-IT tool and a questionnaire utilized by the Office of Trafficking in Persons (OTIP).
Oregon	Caseworkers utilize a computer program for family assessments that includes trafficking indicators, such as whether or not a child is missing, and when they're found/returned back to care.

NEW MEXICO'S HUMAN TRAFFICKING SCREENING QUESTIONS

1. Who arranged the travel?
2. Do you have a debt for your journey, and who do you owe it to?
3. Have you been pressured to do something you did not want to do for food, money, or shelter?
4. Has anyone ever tricked you into doing work that you thought was not part of your job?
5. Has anyone ever withheld your pay or kept your pay from you?
6. Has anyone ever harmed you in any way at work?
7. Were you allowed to eat and use the phone or the bathroom whenever you wanted at work or where you stayed?
8. Has anyone ever taken photos of you that made you feel uncomfortable?
9. Has anyone ever pressured you for a kiss, sex, or any kind of unwanted physical contact?
10. Has anyone ever withheld your passport, birth certificate, or other identity documents from you?

Reporting Procedures

Following screening, suspected cases involving human trafficking should be reported to the Office on Trafficking in Persons (OTIP) in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Administration for Children and Families (ACF) through their online portal (<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/otip/victim-assistance/shepherd>).

Upon receiving a report, OTIP makes a determination as to whether it is likely a minor has been a victim of trafficking in persons. The determination types are as follows:

1. Initial Determination via an Interim Assistance Letter, which provides 90 to 120 days of benefits before a Denial or Eligibility Letter is issued.
2. Final Determinations, including Denial of Assistance, Denial of Eligibility Letter, and Eligibility Letter.

If OTIP grants the request for assistance, the child/youth may be connected to case management services and benefits, including:



- a Social Security Number (not valid to work)
- Medicaid
- medical services
- food assistance
- educational services
- housing assistance
- cash assistance
- mental health services.

The letter from OTIP outlines how long services are granted for, which can be either three months, six months, or indefinitely. In New Mexico, the Immigration Specialist assists the child welfare caseworker in applying for a non-work social security number and Medicaid services for the child/youth.

Some jurisdictions have additional notification procedures in cases of suspected human trafficking:

- San Diego County notifies and works closely with the San Diego Human Trafficking Task Force.
- Oregon cross reports to law enforcement and get reports from Polaris.
- New Jersey notifies its state human trafficking hotline and the Polaris National Human Trafficking Hotline. Polaris makes notification to other entities, including the FBI and DHS. They also notify the human trafficking liaison at the county prosecutor's office. Children/youth who are identified as potential victims of trafficking are also referred to a local agency called Avanzar for preventative/supportive services. Avanzar's program called Dream Free works with the youth and the caseworkers to provide mentorship, education, awareness and engagement through various activities such as therapy and other positive restorative healing activities. Each child/youth gets an individual service plan with goals on it, and the caseworker informed on how to engage with the youth and common behavioral trauma displays.

Training on human trafficking

Some jurisdictions provide specific training to staff of identifying human trafficking. For example, in New Jersey, all staff participate in a two-day training on trafficking that was developed with help from [Polaris](#), an organization that works to address and prevent trafficking and operates the U.S. National Human Trafficking Hotline. The training focuses on recognizing signs and indicators of trafficking without using a tool, and understanding and empathetically responding to the trauma experienced by child victims of trafficking.



TRANSNATIONAL CASEWORK

Child welfare cases involving foreign national children/youth or with a parent or relatives residing in another country often require transnational casework. Foreign country consulates as well as [International Social Service – USA](#) can provide assistance with various components of transnational work, including serving court summons, obtaining birth certificates and other documents, facilitating home assessments, reunification and repatriation, and more. Memoranda of understanding and contracts with these entities are used by many jurisdictions to formalize this collaborative work.

Consular Notification Process

Consular notification is a requirement of international law under the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations¹⁰, and, with respect to Mexican nationals, under the Bilateral Convention between the U.S. and the United Mexican States, Article VI¹¹. Consulates have the right to know when their nationals are involved in custody proceedings and may contact and advise their nationals in these contexts. Under the Vienna Convention, a foreign country consulate must be notified when a minor is in the custody of the state without delay. Foreign country consulates can also serve as a helpful resource for identifying family members, locating parents, guiding families through the child welfare/juvenile justice system processes, and engaging with the family.

Under the Vienna Convention, the United States is obligated to notify foreign consulates when a non-U.S. citizen child enters state custody. Some jurisdictions also notify when:

- the child is a U.S. citizen and both parents were born in another country; and/or the child is a U.S. citizen, and one parent was born in another country (New Mexico)
- the child is a U.S. citizen, and has a parent who is a Mexican citizen per an MOU with Mexico (Oregon)
- a non-citizen child has parents of two different nationalities; each consulate must be contacted (New Jersey).

The process of consular notification and communication may vary across different jurisdictions. For example,

- In New Jersey, social workers inform the immigration legal specialist in cases where they take custody or plan to take custody of a child who is a non-citizen or may qualify for immigration relief. The immigration legal specialist, or sometimes the Deputy Attorney General handling the case, will then notify the appropriate consulate as necessary per the Vienna Convention requirements.
- In New Mexico, investigators must inform the Immigration Unit when custody is taken of a foreign national child or a child with a foreign national parent, and then the Unit

¹⁰ Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, April 24, 1963, https://legal.un.org/ilc/texts/instruments/english/conventions/9_2_1963.pdf

¹¹ Consular Convention between the United States of America and the United Mexican States, August 12, 1942, 57 Stat. 800; Treaty Series 985, <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/legal/travel-legal-considerations/intl-treaties/Bilateral-Consular-Conventions/mexican-treaty.html>



submits a form to the appropriate consulate including the information in the box on the right. They have a specific form for the Mexican consulate, and a plain one for other consulates. The Mexican consulate must be notified within 24 hours of obtaining custody and citizenship information, while other consulates must be notified within five working days.

- In San Diego, caseworkers contact the the International Liaison Office (ILO) when a child or parent who is foreign national becomes involved in their court proceedings. The ILO then submits a standardized form to the relevant consulate.

INFORMATION NEEDED FOR CONSULAR NOTIFICATIONS IN NEW MEXICO

- ✓ Full surnames of parent(s)
- ✓ Where parent(s) was born (city/town, state, country)
- ✓ Where child(ren) was born
- ✓ Date of birth of child
- ✓ Date of birth of parent(s)
- ✓ Current address of parent(s) (if provided)
- ✓ Contact information for a relative to the child

The complexity of the consular notification process also varies across different jurisdictions, as some areas serve the same nationalities repeatedly, while other regions have a more diverse population of nationalities.

Consulates are also often contacted to assist with obtaining needed documents, such as birth certificates. For example, in New York, consulates are contacted when there are foreign born children without birth certificates, and this responsibility primarily falls on the contracted foster care agency. However, immigration specialists are available to assist social workers if they encounter difficulties in contacting consulates as some countries do not have consulates in the U.S.

Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs)

Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) serve as a means of establishing formal agreements between child welfare jurisdictions and foreign consulates that outline the services and assistance that the respective entities will provide. The contents of an MOU can vary depending on the region in which it is employed and should be studied carefully to ensure compliance with local regulations. All jurisdictions interviewed, with the exception of New York City, have an MOU with Mexico to facilitate needed services and assistance. Consular services may include:

MEXICAN CONSULATE SERVICES

- | | |
|--|--|
| ✓ home assessments | ✓ obtaining documents |
| ✓ serving court summons | ✓ obtaining birth certificates |
| ✓ coordinating parent participation in court hearings | ✓ reunification/repatriation |
| ▪ providing a location to participate via Zoom or phone. | ✓ assisting with family referrals to therapy |
| ▪ assisting with technical equipment e.g., a laptop or computer. | ✓ training for local social workers |



Some jurisdictions, including New Jersey and Los Angeles County, have tried to establish MOUs with the consulates of other common countries they work with, such as Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador, but none have been successful yet. In Santa Clara County, they utilize the language of their agreement with Mexico in work with other foreign consulates as needed.

In situations where consulates are unable to provide needed services and assistance, many child welfare agencies have contracts with [International Social Services – USA \(ISS\)](#) to fill this gap. ISS provides comprehensive case management services in other countries, including home visits, home studies, document tracing, and more.

Serving parents in other countries

When a child neglect or abuse case is opened against a child's parent(s), child welfare agencies typically need to serve a summons to the parent(s) in that country through the consulate or by other means in accordance with the Hague Convention^{12,13}. Key components of the service process may include document translation and tracking. Depending on the jurisdiction, the service process may be conducted by or in collaboration with:

- the agency's immigration unit (New Mexico, San Diego County)
- the Inter-American Service Convention (for non-Hague countries) (San Diego County)
- International Social Service – USA (New Jersey)
- the Department of Justice or the Assistant Attorney General (Oregon)
- *Sistema para el Desarrollo Integral de la Familia (DIF)* (The Mexican child welfare agency) (San Diego)
- an external process server (New York City)
- via email, text message, and sometimes even Facebook (New York City).

International reunification/repatriation

In some cases, it may be in the best interest of a child/youth to reunite with a parent or relative in another country, and child welfare agencies must coordinate with foreign entities e.g., child welfare agencies in other countries, consulates, etc. to facilitate this process.

Reunification outside the U.S.

In all jurisdictions interviewed, reunification of a child/youth with a parent in another country typically involves collaboration with the foreign country's consulate and/or child welfare agency. Most jurisdictions cited Mexico as the most common country to which repatriation occurs, in which case the agencies work closely with Mexico's child welfare system, the *Sistema Nacional para el Desarrollo Integral de la Familia (DIF)*, to facilitate reunifications. Key components of the reunification process across jurisdictions include:

- conducting a home study

¹² Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption, May 20, 1993, <https://www.hcch.net/en/instruments/conventions/full-text/?cid=69>

¹³ The Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption is an international treaty that sets standards of practice to safeguard intercountry adoptions. The U.S. has been party to the Hague Convention since 2008, and there are roughly 75 other countries who are signatories.



- ensuring the child has dual citizenship if necessary
- obtaining any other needed documentation (e.g., travel documents/passports, birth records, case-related files, etc.)
- arranging for travel, including having the caseworker accompany the child.

International Social Service-USA is also often utilized to help in make arrangements in foreign countries for reunification, especially when the foreign consulate is unable to assist with needed services. ISS services may include assisting with home studies/community assessments, obtaining needed documents (e.g., birth certificates), facilitating the reunification process, and ensuring that services are set up for the child in that country.

International adoptions

In some cases, child welfare agencies may assist in facilitating international adoptions of children to relatives or other caregivers (who are not the biological parents) in another country if the foreign country is a signatory to the Hague Convention. Child welfare agencies work with the Department of State to facilitate these adoptions. For example, Oregon has placed many children with relatives (e.g., aunts, uncles, and grandparents) in Mexico via this process.

Reunification to the U.S.

In some cases, a child/youth must be repatriated from another country to the U.S. In most jurisdictions, this process requires working with the Department of State (DOS), International Social Service-USA, and/or the foreign child welfare agency. Some jurisdictions specifically noted that this occurs when a child has been improperly removed from the U.S. and must be returned. Child welfare agencies are typically contacted by the Department of State or by International Social Service-USA (ISS) when a repatriation to the U.S. is needed. See below for some examples of how this happens:

JURISDICTION	REPATRIATION PROCESS
Los Angeles County, CA	Has a specific unit that is responsible for ensuring that children who were abducted while under the custody of the department are returned.
San Diego County, CA	Has a specific policy in place for these cases. Repatriations are initiated usually either through DOS, the consulate, or ISS, and then the International Liaison Office works to facilitate the repatriation, including conducting a bio-psycho-social assessment based on information obtained from ISS, DOS, and/or DIF to determine the needs of the child.
New Mexico	The country with the child contacts the U.S. Embassy in the country requesting repatriation to the U.S. and the U.S. Embassy contacts the DOS. The DOS contracts with ISS to be the liaison between the child welfare entity in the originating country and the child welfare agency in the U.S. ISS coordinates the details of transporting the child(ren) to their final destination in the U.S.
Oregon	The DOS contacts ISS, who then collaborates with the child welfare entity in Oregon to repatriate the child.



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Family engagement is at the crux of child welfare practice to ensure that children, parents, and other relatives and kin can maintain family connections and that parents can participate fully in the child welfare case. When working with immigrant children and families, family engagement may require additional adaptations and creativity in order to facilitate these connections and participation across borders or with parents who are in Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention.

Transnational family engagement

Parent/child visits

Parent-child visits are an essential component of child welfare practice to ensure that children and parents are able to maintain connections and relationships. In cases with immigration considerations, challenges to facilitating parent-child visits may arise if a parent is residing in or deported to another country. In response, some agencies have established procedures for virtual visitation and visits at the U.S.-Mexico border.

Virtual visitation

Virtual visitation helps to facilitate parent/child visits, especially in cases where a parent lives far from the border and isn't able to travel to the border for a face-to-face visit. The common platforms for virtual visitation include: WhatsApp, Zoom, FaceTime, Teams, and Skype. Additionally, in New Mexico, virtual visits may be supervised or unsupervised and may be conducted on caseworker phones, foster parent phones, and/or youth's phones (if they have their own phone).

International visits

Jurisdictions located close to the U.S.-Mexico border are often able to facilitate face-to-face parent-child visits with parents residing in Mexico at the ports of entry at the U.S.-Mexico border by coordinating with U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and the Mexican consulate. For example:

- New Mexico works with the Mexican consulate in El Paso and with CBP to arrange visits at the immigration office on the U.S. side of the border with the caseworker, consulate representative, and CBP officers present.
- Los Angeles County conducts visits via the Mexican consulate in San Diego, which has sub office in San Ysidro. They assist in conducting visits at the San Ysidro border between Tijuana and San Ysidro by coordinating with a representative from immigration who provides space for the parents to meet with the children.
- San Diego County facilitates parent-child visits at the border via the Mexican consulate. Social workers may also coordinate with caregivers or relatives who can cross the border and take the child to the parent and supervise the visits in Mexico.

Jurisdictions located in the interior of the U.S. may also facilitate international visits for parents and children. For example:



- New Jersey sometimes facilitates visits in other countries e.g., if they are preparing to do a placement and want to ensure that the child will be safe there, a caseworker accompanies the child to that country for an extended visit. This may be coupled with an assessment of the home and meeting with the relatives.
- New York facilitates international visits on a case-by-case basis when a child has a relative or a parent in another country. This often happens through the contracted foster care agency, which arranges for transportation and conducts a virtual home study in advance. They also utilize International Social Service – USA to conduct international home clearances in these situations.

Transnational court participation

Parents residing in other countries are still entitled to participate in child welfare court proceedings. Transnational court participation may be facilitated via:

- Phone (Oregon, San Diego County, New Mexico, and New Jersey)
- Virtually/via Zoom (New York City, New Mexico)
- WhatsApp while in the Zoom meeting (New Mexico)

New Mexico noted that their judges have been very accommodating of families in other countries that do not have the resources or technology to participate in hearings or when parents have poor connection or noisy surrounding environments. Judges have also issued orders to allow for parents or family members to participate virtually if they don't have documentation to come to the U.S. to participate in-person.

Working with parents in ICE detention

In situations where parents are detained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), child welfare agencies should work to connect with parents and involve them in the child welfare case, court proceedings, parent-child visitation, etc. In order to locate parents in ICE detention, it is necessary to have their Alien Number. This identification number is assigned by the Department of Homeland Security and can be used to locate detained parents at <https://locator.ice.gov/odls/#/index>. Some jurisdictions, like Oregon and New York, may also contact the detention facility directly to confirm the parent's presence in the facility and to proceed with involving them in the case.

Typically, the ICE Parental Interest Coordinator (parental.interests@ice.dhs.gov) is contacted to facilitate the process of location, contact, and visitation with parents. Foreign consulates may also assist with connecting with parents in detention. Involving detained parents in cases may include:

- identifying a point of contact in the detention facility and communicating through them to make sure the parent is aware of what's happening with the case (San Diego County)
- making in-person contact with parents detained locally to explore services available to the parent in that facility (San Diego County)
- facilitating parent-child visits in-person, by video conference, or by phone visits (New Mexico)



- ensuring service of the petition, and participation in family court proceedings and case planning (New York City)
- extending the reunification time period with the courts when parents are in detention to ensure they have enough time to work their reunification plans (San Diego and Santa Clara counties)¹⁴
- establishing powers of attorney, emergency guardianship, emergency contacts, and/or other documents/affidavits that may be necessary if a parent is detained or deported (New York City, Santa Clara County)
- facilitating communication between parents and their immigration attorneys and/or respondent's attorneys (New Mexico)
- referring parents to resources for immigration representation (e.g., in New Jersey the NJ Department of Human Services' detention and deportation project/initiative)
- arranging for temporary release and transportation of parents to court (Los Angeles County, New Jersey)
- advocating for parents with ICE e.g., advocating for a parent's release when the Department has custody due to ICE raid and child is left without parent to provide for them (New Jersey)
- ensuring that all stakeholders are informed about the ICE Parental Interests Directive and the rights detained parents have under this directive (New York City).

San Diego County has a [specific policy](#) for working with parents in ICE proceedings, which includes information on locating detained parents, the ICE Parental Interests Directives, and making reasonable efforts to facilitate visits and contact with the children while the parents are in detention.

¹⁴ The [Reuniting Immigrant Families Act \("SB 1064"\)](#) allows child welfare agencies to extend the reunification timeline from the typical 12 months up to 18 or 24 months, depending on the situation. It was implemented in California on September 30, 2012, and is the first law in the U.S. to address the reunification challenges many immigrant families experience when they become involved with the child welfare system. SB 1064 prioritizes maintaining a child's ties to their families regardless of barriers that arise due to immigration status, detention, and/or deportation. As such, it includes provisions to ensure reasonable efforts for reunification, extend reunification periods, pursue relative placements regardless of immigration status, explore immigration relief options, and establish MOUs with foreign consulates.



UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

An unaccompanied minor is a child or youth under the age of 18 and not in the custody of their parent or legal guardian. Noncitizen unaccompanied minors may come to the attention of a state child welfare agency. Most jurisdictions, including Los Angeles County, San Diego County, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York City, and Oregon, work with unaccompanied minors if they transfer from the Office of Refugee Resettlement to the local child welfare system as a result of child abuse, neglect or abandonment or if a sponsorship breaks down. In these situations, the case proceeds as all other cases and unaccompanied minors receive the same services. The table below highlights how two jurisdictions, Oregon and New Mexico, serve unaccompanied minors that come to the attention of the child welfare system.

OREGON	NEW MEXICO
Oregon formed a work group to develop procedures and training for staff on how to work with unaccompanied minors. They have set up a process so that staff conduct staffings/case consultations about these cases to determine if the unaccompanied minors are in immigration proceedings, whether they are connected with an immigration attorney, and to ensure that all critical pieces of the case are addressed.	If an unaccompanied minor comes into care and is a noncitizen, the Immigration Unit must be notified immediately. The Unit will contact the foreign country consulate to verify the unaccompanied minor's identity, their parents/guardian's identity, and the identity of any other family members/sponsors. The Unit may screen the minor if there is any suspicion of human trafficking, labor trafficking, or commercial sex trafficking; help facilitate communication with the foreign country consulate; and help arrange travel for the minor to their sponsor. The Unit will also provide legal service resources to the unaccompanied minor.



ADDITIONAL CREATIVE & INNOVATIVE APPROACHES

In addition to the policies and procedures described above, the jurisdictions interviewed highlighted some other creative and innovative approaches that agencies and workers employ to serve immigrant children and families, including:

- engaging in advocacy and information sharing e.g., via mobile consulate events and community outreach (New Mexico)
- using cultural brokers (Santa Clara County)
- helping immigrant families access needed services when they don't qualify for government assistance (New Jersey)
- licensing undocumented caregivers as foster parents
- working with parents to create plans for the care of their children in the event of potential detention/deportation
- building rapport and trust with immigrant families
- being passionate about working with/helping immigrant children and families as integral to their work.

We have cultural brokers that are available, whether for families of color, but specifically for families who are Spanish monolingual, Spanish speaking, who might be undocumented.

-Child welfare administrator in Santa Clara County

If we have cases where we have families that can't access health care, can't access health insurance, we will frequently pay for a temporary period of time, even if the child is in-home, if they don't qualify for Medicaid.

-Immigration legal specialist in New Jersey

I would like to say that it has been a labor of love and passion for working with immigrant families and supporting immigrant families. The committee actually started in '98. I started in 2004, and the people that started that work have retired. So I'm that person now who's the chair and who's the go to person. But I continue to love that. It doesn't matter where I am or what position I'm in, I continue to be that resource and we're training other people.

-Child welfare administrator in Santa Clara County



CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

Working with immigrant children and families in the child welfare system requires specialized expertise in order to meet the unique case requirements and service needs of this population. It is critical that child welfare agencies enhance their immigration-related policies and practices not only to meet these case requirements but also to ensure culturally and linguistically relevant service provision to immigrant children and families navigating the child welfare system, especially given the current anti-immigrant climate and policy landscape.

This report has highlighted the policies and practices of jurisdictions with established models for serving immigrant children and their families. A key element of these successful models is the specialization and concentration of immigrant-related knowledge and skill sets, whether through a specialized unit or dedicated staff with expertise on the intersection of immigration and child welfare. In addition to a specialized unit and staff, child welfare agencies should implement specific policies and practices to ensure equitable service provision to immigrant children and their families, including policies and/or procedures on confidentiality and information sharing, language access, citizenship determination, legal screening and representation, trafficking, transnational casework, family engagement, and working with unaccompanied minors.

To facilitate and expedite many of these policies and procedures, the most successful models have established both formal and informal relationships as well as Memorandums of Understanding with key stakeholders, including foreign country consulates, immigration legal services providers, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, International Social Service-USA, and other local community providers. Finally, all jurisdictions described models and approaches that were characterized by a commitment to creativity and innovation in order to respond to the complex and changing needs that arise in immigration-related child welfare cases. We hope that this report may serve as a guide to other child welfare agencies across the U.S. as they seek to improve their capacity to provide equitable services to immigrant children and their families when the child welfare and immigration systems intersect.



APPENDICES

Appendix A: Interview protocol

Documenting Child Welfare Agency Services for Immigrant Clients

Model & Staff

- 1) Please describe briefly the model/structure/program that your agency has for serving children and families with immigration-related issues/concerns.

Probing question:

- a) Do you have specific staff/positions designated for working on immigration related issues? If so, what are these positions? Who is responsible for what?

Determination of Citizenship

- 2) For children in care/custody: How does your agency determine whether a child is documented or undocumented?
- 3) For other children/parents: What types of questions does your agency/your CW workers use to determine citizenship status of other children and/or parents?

Probing question:

- a) What other sources of information, if any, are used to determine immigration status of clients?
- 4) Does your agency have policies for staff about not sharing client information with immigrant enforcement officials? If so:
 - a) Does your agency train staff on these policies?
 - b) Please briefly describe these policies.

Consular Notification Process

- 5) What is your agency's process for consular notification?

Probing question:

- A) In what circumstances and in what cases do you notify a consulate?
- 6) Does your agency have an MOU with any country consulates? If so, which consulates?
- 7) What is your agency's process for serving a parent in another country?

Communication with Family Members

- 8) How does your agency work with family members in another country?

Probing questions:

- a) Do you have a process that facilitates a parent in another country to participate in court hearings?
- b) What is the process for parent/child visits if a parent is in another country?



- c) How does your agency conduct home studies and place children in other countries?

Legal Screening

- 9) What is your agency's process for screening children for immigration benefits (e.g., in which cases, at what point in a case)?
- 10) Does your agency provide legal consultation and/or legal representation?

Probing questions:

- a) Does your agency have an immigration attorney?
- b) Does your agency contract with or refer to legal services providers in the community?

Trafficking

- 11) What is your agency's process for screening for human trafficking?
- 12) What is your agency's process for reporting suspected trafficking to OTIP?

Unaccompanied Minors

- 13) Does your agency serve any unaccompanied minors? If so, how?

International Reunification/Repatriation

- 14) What is your agency's process to facilitate reunification/repatriation of a child to a country outside of the U.S.?
- 15) What is your agency's process to facilitate reunification/repatriation of a child to the U.S. from another country?

Probing questions:

- a) What are the roles of Dept. of State and of ISS (if applicable)?

Parents in ICE Detention

- 16) What does your agency do in cases where parents are in ICE detention?
- 17) How does your agency go about involving parents in detention in cases?

Translation/Interpretation Services

- 18) What translation/interpretation services, if any, does your agency offer? Do you have bilingual staff?
 - a) How are these services requested and used?

Conclusion

- 19) Is there anything else you'd like to share about your agency's approach to serving immigrant children and families that we have not covered?



Appendix B: Additional resources

National resources

- ABA Center on Children and the Law:
https://www.americanbar.org/groups/public_interest/child_law/project-areas/immigration/
- Center on Immigration & Child Welfare: www.cimmcw.org
 - [Key Immigration & Child Welfare Resources](#)
- Immigrant Legal Resource Center: <https://www.ilrc.org/>
 - [Child Welfare Screening Sheet: Determining Potential Avenues for Legal Status](#)
 - [Resources on California's Reuniting Immigrant Families Act \(SB 1064\)](#)
 - [Strengthening Child Welfare Practice for Immigrant Children & Families: A Toolkit for Child Welfare Professionals in California](#)
- Migration Policy Institute: <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/>
 - [Immigrant Families and Child Welfare Systems: Emerging Needs and Promising Policies](#)
- Young Center for Immigrant Children's Rights, Technical Assistance Program:
<https://www.theyoungcenter.org/technical-assistance-program>

State-specific resources

- CICW State-Specific Resources: <https://cimmcw.org/resources/state-specific-resources/>
- Los Angeles County: <https://dcfs.lacounty.gov/youth/immigration/>
- San Diego County: [Special Populations - International Child Welfare](#)
 - [Courtesy Home Evaluations for Desarrollo Integral de la Familia \(DIF\)](#)
 - [International Liaison](#)
 - [International Social Services](#)
 - [Repatriation of Children](#)
 - [Special Immigrant Juvenile Status \(SIJS\)](#)
 - [Undocumented Children](#)
 - [Working with Families Involved in Immigration and Customs Enforcement Proceedings](#)
- Santa Clara County: <https://cimmcw.org/resources/state-specific-resources/#california>
- New Jersey: <https://dcfpolicy.nj.gov/>
 - [A Pathway to Permanency: Collaborating for the Futures of Children who are Immigrants in the Child Welfare System](#)
 - [Human Trafficking Overview](#)
 - [International Social Services \(ISS\)](#)
 - [Investigating Human Trafficking Allegations](#)
 - [New Jersey Department of Children and Families Policy Manual - Services to Immigrant Children and Families Generally:](#)
 - [Placement of Children with Kinship Caregivers who are undocumented immigrants](#)
 - [Screening Human Trafficking Reports](#)
- New Mexico: <https://www.cyfd.nm.gov/cyfd-office-of-childrens-rights/>



- [The New Mexico Children, Youth & Families Department Immigration Unit: A Model for Child Welfare & Juvenile Justice Systems Serving Immigrant Children and Their Families](#)
- New York Administration for Children's Services - Immigrant Services:
<https://www.nyc.gov/site/acs/about/immigrant-services.page#data-policies>

Trafficking

- Office of Trafficking in Persons (OTIP) Shepherd online portal:
<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/otip/victim-assistance/shepherd>

Transnational Casework

- International Social Service – USA: <https://www.iss-usa.org/>
- Kids in Need of Defense (KIND) Child Migrant Return and Reintegration Project (CMRRP):
<https://supportkind.org/what-we-do/international/central-america-mexico/return-reintegration-project/>

Working with parents in ICE Detention

- [Fact Sheet for Child Welfare & Guardianship Stakeholders: ICE Policies and Standards Related to Detained Parents & Legal Guardians \(ICE\)](#)
- ICE Parental Interest Coordinator: parental.interests@ice.dhs.gov
- The Directive: [Interests of Noncitizen Parents and Legal Guardians of Minor Children or Incapacitated Adults](#)
- The ICE Parental Interests Directive (PID) website: <https://www.ice.gov/detain/parental-interest>
- [The ICE Parental Interests Directive: How Child Welfare Agencies Can Advocate with ICE to Ensure Fair Treatment of Detained or Deported Parents \(ILRC\)](#)
- U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Online Detainee Locator System:
<https://locator.ice.gov/odls/#/index>.

