

**CHILD WELFARE  
SYSTEM  
CHALLENGES &  
BEST PRACTICES  
FOR SERVING  
IMMIGRANT  
FAMILIES**

April 21, 2023



**THE CENTER ON  
IMMIGRATION  
AND CHILD WELFARE**



# ABOUT THE CICW

The Center on Immigration and Child Welfare (CICW) is housed in the School of Social Work at New Mexico State University. The CICW works to promote the welfare of children of immigrants and their families through original research, resource development and circulation, training and technical assistance, and national leadership, including sponsoring cross-sector conferences, workgroups, and advocacy.

For more information about our mission and work:

- Visit our website at [www.cimmcw.org](http://www.cimmcw.org)
- Find us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.
- Sign up for monthly e-newsletter!



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# INTRODUCTIONS

**Megan Finno-Velasquez, PhD, LMSW**, is an Associate Professor and Director of the Center on Immigration and Child Welfare in the School of Social Work at New Mexico State University. She has spent 15 years working at the intersection of child welfare and immigration issues, as a child welfare practitioner, administrator, and researcher. Her research centers around the impact of immigration policy on child welfare system experiences, culturally competent maltreatment prevention strategies, and improving child welfare service system response to the needs of immigrant families.



# OBJECTIVES

- ✓ Overview of children in immigrant families + recent migration trends and policies
- ✓ Impact of immigration on children & families + providing support
- ✓ Recent research on child welfare system approaches to serving immigrant families
- ✓ Common challenges of child welfare practice with immigrant families
- ✓ Key policies and best practices for addressing these challenges
- ✓ Resources





# AGENDA

- ❑ **9:00am-9:15am: Welcome & Introductions**
- ❑ **9:15am-9:45am: Immigration 101**
- ❑ **9:45am-9:55am: The Impact of Immigration Policies on Children & Families**
- ❑ **9:55am-10:05am: Providing Support to Children in Immigrant Families**
- ❑ **10:05am-10:15am: Break**
- ❑ **10:15am-11:45am: Child Welfare System Challenges & Best Practice**
- ❑ **11:45am-12:00pm: Resources & Wrap Up**



# CHAT

**What initial question(s)  
do you have that we  
can address throughout  
the workshop?**



# **IMMIGRATION 101**

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# CHILDREN IN IMMIGRANT FAMILIES

## IN THE U.S.<sup>1</sup>

- **18,214,000 (25%)** children in immigrant families\*
  - **90%** are citizens
  - **3%** are foreign born
  - **61%** have at least one citizen parent
  - **39%** have only non-citizen parents

## IN WISCONSIN<sup>2</sup>

- **145,000 (11%)** children in immigrant families
  - **91%** are citizens
  - **11%** are foreign born
  - **61%** are citizens with at least 1 citizen parent
  - **30%** are citizens with only non-citizen parents

\*Children in Immigrant Families = Child was born outside the U.S. or has at least one foreign born parent.

<sup>1</sup>Urban Institute. (2019). *Part of Us: A Data-Driven Look at Children of Immigrants*. <https://www.urban.org/features/part-us-data-driven-look-children-immigrants>

<sup>2</sup>Urban Institute. (2021). *Children of Immigrants Data Tool*. <https://children-of-immigrants-explorer.urban.org/pages.cfm>



# MAJOR IMMIGRATION CATEGORIES

- **U.S. Citizen** (born here, derived or acquired citizenship, or applied & granted citizenship) – ONLY category which cannot be deported
- **Legal Permanent Resident** (i.e., “green card” holders, eligible to apply for citizenship in 3-5 years)
- **Temporary visa** (travel, student, or work visa)
- **Humanitarian visa** (asylum, TPS, DACA, SIJS, T-visa, U-visa, VAWA)
- **Undocumented** immigrant (border crosser or lapsed temporary visa)
- **Unaccompanied minor** (under 18 with no legal status and no parent/guardian in U.S.)
- Most immigrant households are “**mixed status.**”

# What Part of Legal Immigration Don't You Understand? *Mike Flynn and Sbikba Dalmia*

*Illustrated by Terry Colon*

Opponents of illegal immigration are fond of telling foreigners to "get in line" before coming to work in America. But what does that line actually look like, and how many years (or decades) does it take to get through? Try it yourself!



Do you have family in the USA?  
 Yes  
 Is your relative a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident?

Are you skilled?  
 Yes  
 Do you have a college degree in a specialty occupation?  
 Yes  
 Can you prove that you are a genius? How about a star athlete? Or an investor with \$1 million?

Sorry! There is virtually no process for unskilled immigrants without relations in the U.S. to apply for permanent legal residence. Only 10,000 green cards are allotted every year, and the wait time approaches infinity. (Those who receive H-2A or H-2B temporary visas for seasonal work cannot transition to a green card.)

### UNITED STATES CITIZEN

Are you that relative's parent, spouse, or minor child? **Yes**

Congratulations! You've found one of the easiest ways to become an American. There is no annual cap on the number of spouses, minor children, or parents of U.S. citizens who can enter, and they generally can receive green cards.

After five years (three if you're a spouse), a green card holder is eligible to become a citizen.

After you file your naturalization papers and endure six to 12 months of processing delays, you can take a language and civics test. Pass it, and you're a citizen.

Total time to immigrate and become a citizen: **BEST CASE: SIX TO SEVEN YEARS**

Adult children and siblings of U.S. citizens can apply for a green card. **No**

Wait time depends on home country and marital status.

Single adult children: six-to-14-year wait.

Married adult children: seven-to-15-year wait.

Siblings of U.S. citizens: 11-to-22-year wait.

With a green card, you likely can become a citizen after six years.

Total time to immigrate and become a citizen: **12 TO 28 YEARS**

### LAWFUL PERMANENT RESIDENT

Are you the spouse or child of a lawful permanent resident? **Yes**

If you're the child, are you a minor? **Yes**

Spouses and minor children of lawful permanent residents can apply.

Wait time depends on home country. Wait time: five to seven years.

With a green card, you likely can become a citizen after six years.

Total time to immigrate and become a citizen: **11 TO 13 YEARS**

Are you single? **No**

Sorry, you don't qualify to apply.

Wait time depends on home country.

Wait time for a single adult child of a lawful permanent resident: nine to 14 years.

Total time to immigrate and become a citizen: **14 TO 20 YEARS**

OK. Then you have a shot, if... you have a job offer.

Is your employer willing to file the paperwork for a labor certification? And conduct a new job search for your position? And pay up to \$10,000 in legal and other fees? **Yes**

The wait time for a green card is typically six to 10 years.

After your green card, count on another five to six years for citizenship.

Total time to immigrate and become a citizen: **11 TO 16 YEARS**

Can you prove that you are a genius? How about a star athlete? Or an investor with \$1 million? **No**

Congratulations! You have found the quickest way to get a green card, taking 12 to 18 months. But you would have made it anywhere, Mr. Beckham.

With your green card you can become a citizen in five to six years.

Total time to immigrate and become a citizen: **SIX TO SEVEN YEARS**

Sorry, you're out of luck.

Sorry, you're out of luck.

Then you have a 50/50 chance of getting your H-1B, because these visas are capped at 85,000 per year, well below the total demand. They run out on the first day they become available. If you are lucky enough to get one, you can start working in the country and your employer can apply for your labor certification and green card.

Sorry, you're out of luck.

Sorry, you're out of luck.

**DOWNLOAD HERE!**



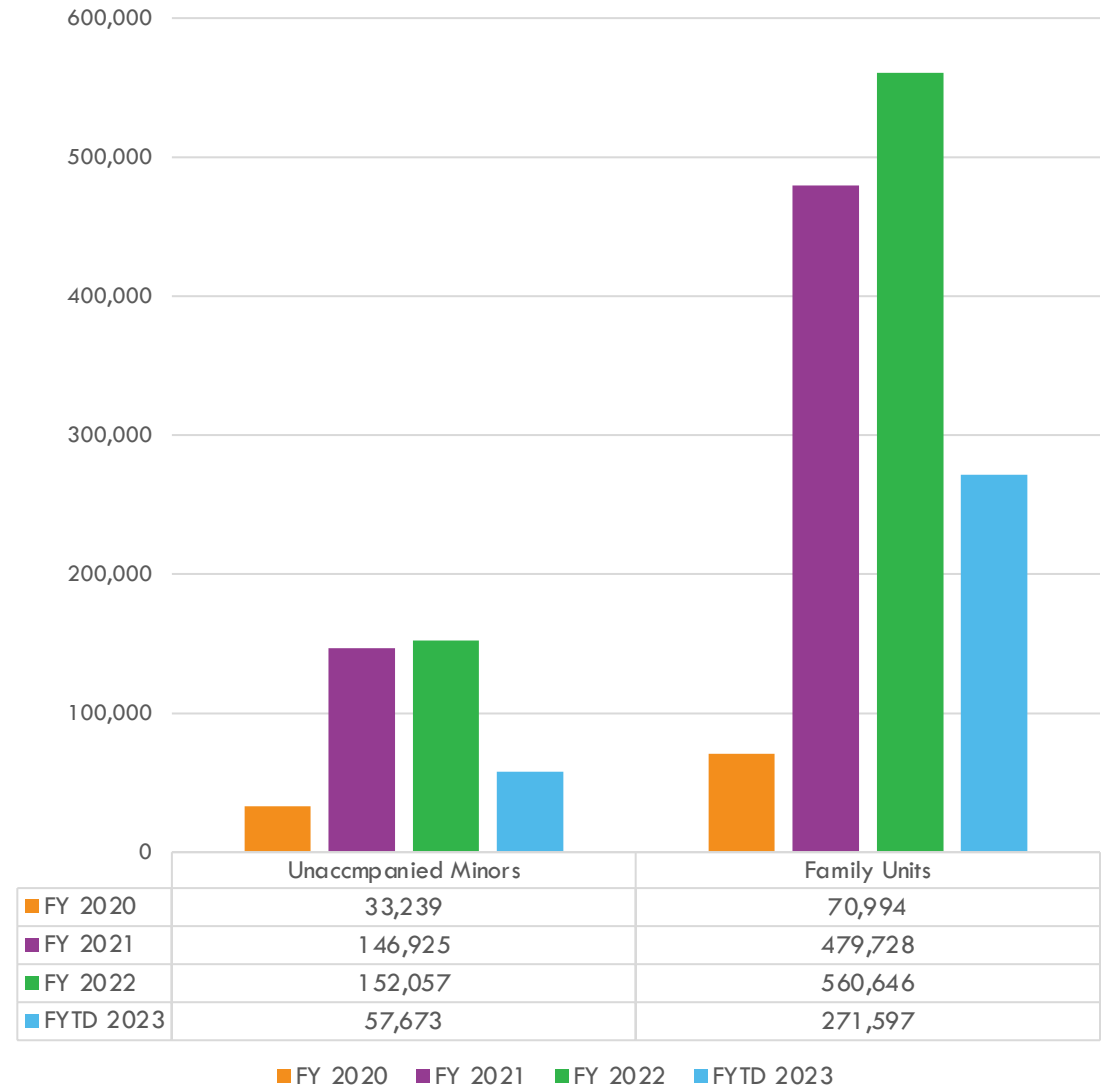


# RECENT MIGRATION TRENDS

In February 2023 (most recent data):

- ❑ **154,998** people encountered at southern border
- ❑ **72,591 (47%)** expelled under Title 42
- ❑ **10,870 (7%)** were unaccompanied children
- ❑ **33,191 (21%)** were family units

MIGRATION TRENDS AT U.S.-MEXICO BORDER

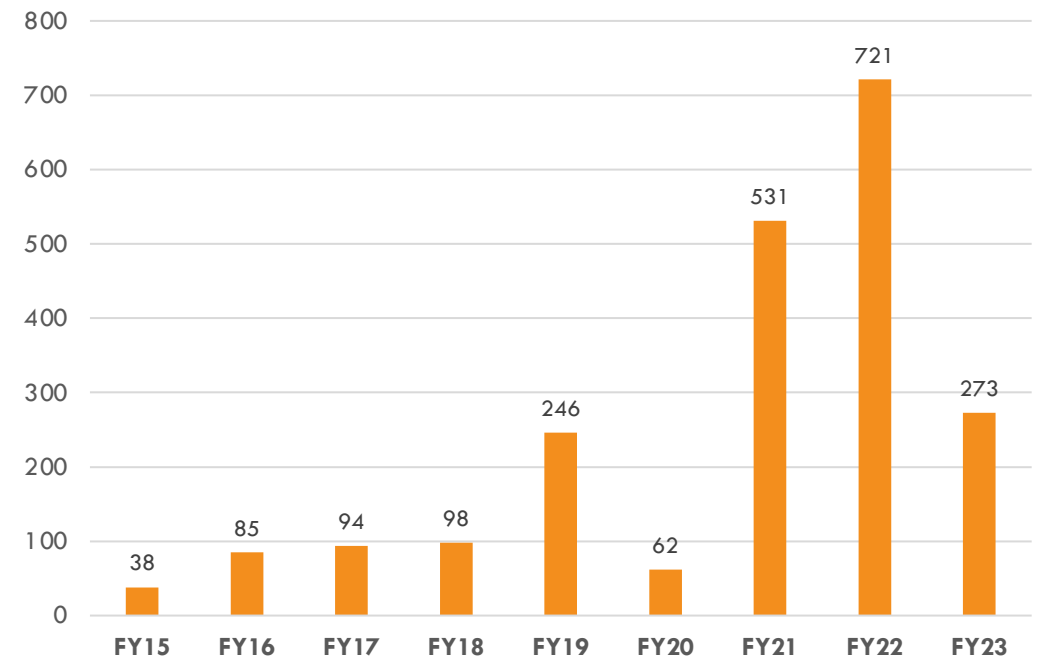


# OFFICE OF REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT

## UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILDREN (UAC) PROGRAM

- ORR is the federal program responsible for the care and placement of “unaccompanied alien children”
- Children may go into ORR custody if they cross the border
  - Unaccompanied OR with a family member other than a parent
- Placed in “least restrictive setting” via a network of state-licensed, ORR-funded care providers (e.g., shelters, group homes, etc.)
  - Temporary as possible until a sponsor is found
- Services provided include legal, education, recreation, health, mental health etc.

TOTAL NUMBER OF UC RELEASED TO SPONSORS IN WISCONSIN





# DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FEDERAL & STATE CHILD WELFARE

## Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR)

Temporary shelter/care to **unaccompanied immigrant children** while locating sponsors and resolving immigration case.

Children remain in **federal custody** until reunified with a parent in ICE detention, released to a parent/ sponsor, or removed from the U.S.

ORR's oversight of care ends upon release to sponsor or removal from the country. This has **no bearing on parental rights**. Sponsor does not have legal guardianship.

Federal immigration authorities can deport a parent, but **cannot terminate parental rights or make a child available for adoption**.

## State/County Child Welfare

Temporary care to **abused or neglected children** who cannot remain safely with parents or primary caregiver.

Children remain in **state foster care** while parents engage in court-approved plans to change circumstances that led to abuse or neglect.

The **state retains custody** while child is in care and reasonable efforts are made toward family reunification. State child welfare agencies can ask state court to terminate parental rights

Child **may become available for adoption** if parental rights are terminated by state courts, only with a finding that the parent is unfit.

# WHY DO PEOPLE MIGRATE?

## PUSH FACTORS

### **VIOLENCE**

- Homicide, gang, gender-based, LGBTQ-related violence
- Homicide rates in Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala are ranked 1<sup>st</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> in the world.

### **POVERTY**

- 43% of Mexicans, 61% of Hondurans, 59% of Guatemalans, and 38% of Salvadoran live below poverty line

### **ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS**

- Honduras = hardest hit by natural disasters past 20 years; Guatemala and Nicaragua in top ten
- Crops failure and pollution

## PULL FACTORS

### **OPPORTUNITY**

- Work and economic opportunity
- Educational opportunities

### **FAMILY REUNIFICATION**

- 36% of unaccompanied children prior to 2014 had at least one parent already in the U.S.

### **QUALITY OF LIFE**

- Services (e.g., medical treatment)

# U.S. IMMIGRATION POLICY & ENFORCEMENT CONTEXT

## OBAMA ADMINISTRATION

- More deportations than any previous administration
- A few protective policies: ICE Protected Areas & ICE Parental Interests Directive
- Since 2011, more than 400,000 parents of U.S.-born children have been deported

## TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

- Increased focus on enforcement – in interior & at the border
  - Zero Tolerance Policy → family separation
- Elimination & reduction of relief options
- Restrictions on immigrant use of public benefits via public charge rule changes
- Continued “chilling effects” even after administration change

## BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

- Preservation of DACA and reinstatement of some temporary legal relief
- Continued use of Title 42 at the border - using COVID-19 to deny entry to asylum seekers
- New proposal to penalize immigrants who do not seek asylum before entering the U.S. + potential renewal of family detention





# **THE IMPACT OF IMMIGRATION ON CHILDREN & FAMILIES**

# VIOLENCE AND TRAUMA EXPOSURE BEFORE & DURING MIGRATION

## COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

- Globally, 4 of 10 **homicides** occur in the region of El Salvador, Venezuela, Guatemala and Mexico, with more than a quarter of victims under the age of 20 (UNICEF, 2014).
- High rates of **femicide** often go unprosecuted.

## MIGRATION JOURNEY

- Vulnerable to **human trafficking, drug trafficking, kidnapping**, and being held for **ransom**.
- 60% of women and girls crossing the U.S.-Mexico border experience **sexual assault** (Amnesty International, 2010).

## AT THE BORDER

- At least **1,544 cases** of **murder, rape, torture, kidnapping**, and other **violent assaults** against asylum seekers and migrants due to the Migration Protection Protocols.
- At least **6,356 kidnappings, sexual assaults**, and other **violent attacks** due to Title 42.



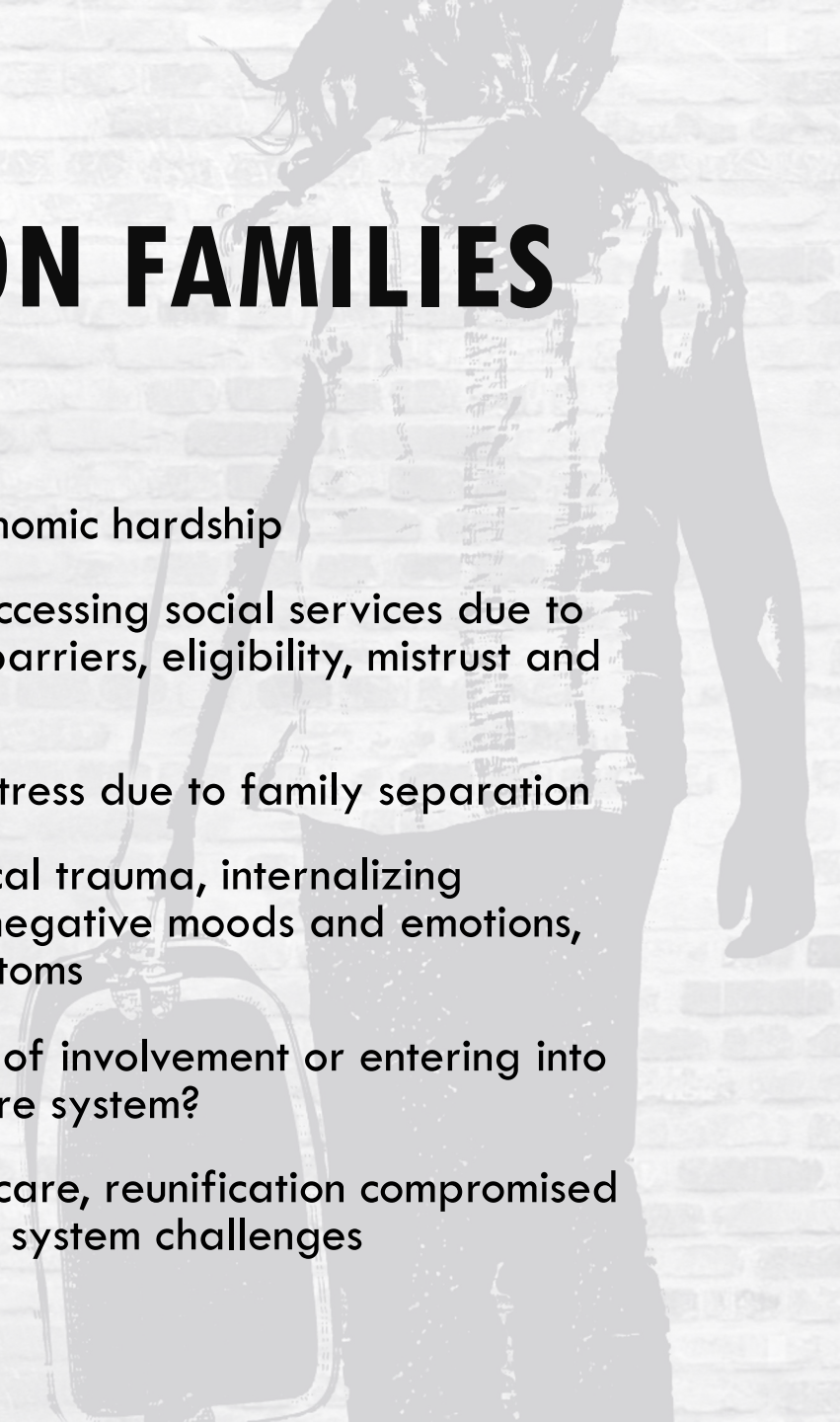
# IMPACT OF IMMIGRATION ON FAMILIES

## ON PARENTS

- Migration trauma (physical/sexual assault, robbery, threats, extortion, witness to murder)
- Daily concerns about detection, deportation and separation → “trust no one”
- Fear of retribution if voice concerns about unfair conditions
- Unmet physical and mental health needs, lack of access to needed services
  - Fear → Avoid public benefits/supportive services
- Acculturative stress, loss, and adaptation

## ON CHILDREN

- Family economic hardship
- Difficulty accessing social services due to language barriers, eligibility, mistrust and fear
- Traumatic stress due to family separation
- Psychological trauma, internalizing problems, negative moods and emotions, PTSD symptoms
- Higher risk of involvement or entering into child welfare system?
- If in foster care, reunification compromised due to CW system challenges








# RESILIENCE AMONG IMMIGRANT YOUTH/FAMILIES

- **Immigrant paradox** =immigrants tend to have better health outcomes than native born counterparts
- **Resilience** = when an individual can **transform trauma** and use adversity to their advantage
  - Higher levels of resilience related to lower levels of emotional problems among Latinx immigrant youth
- Protective factors among migrants
  - Social supports & community connections
  - Faith/spirituality
  - Family
  - Strength (la fuerza) - personal fortitude, courage, and tenacity



**PROVIDING  
TRAUMA-INFORMED  
SUPPORT TO  
CHILDREN IN  
IMMIGRANT  
FAMILIES**



# TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICE WITH IMMIGRANT POPULATIONS

Key points to consider:

- ✓ Understanding the cultural context
- ✓ Addressing barriers to care
- ✓ Developing cultural humility
- ✓ Incorporating global mental health principles





# BEYOND ACES

- Unique trauma challenges for immigrant children
- Under-identification of immigrant children's trauma experiences
- Instruments like the ACEs inventory focus more on experiences within the household environment as opposed to external factors e.g., acculturation, resettlement, political environment

Source: Migration Policy Institute, 2019



# IMMIGRANT-FOCUSED INTERVENTIONS

Full article on  
prevention  
interventions for  
Latinx immigrant  
populations!

## CLINICAL INTERVENTIONS

- ✓ Mindfulness and self-compassion
- ✓ Somatic interventions
- ✓ Trauma Systems Therapy for Refugees (TST-R)
- ✓ Child-parent psychotherapy
- ✓ Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- ✓ Multilevel Model (MLM) of Psychotherapy, Social Justice, and Human Rights
  - Level I: Mental Health Education
  - Level II: Individual, Group, or Family Psychotherapy
  - Level III: Cultural Empowerment
  - Level IV: Indigenous Healing
  - Level V: Social Justice and Human Rights

## CHILD MALTREATMENT PREVENTION

### Family/Parenting Issues

- ✓ Attachment, Regulation, Competency (ARC) Trauma Treatment (Client-Level Interventions [Child & Adolescent])
- ✓ Bridging Cultures
- ✓ GenerationPMTO
- ✓ Kovler Center Child Trauma Program
- ✓ Parenting Journey
- ✓ Strengthening Families Program
- ✓ Terra Firma

### Adult and Child Mental Health Issues

- ✓ Refugee Well-Being Project
- ✓ Modulo de Salud Mental

### Child Mental Health Issues

- ✓ Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy



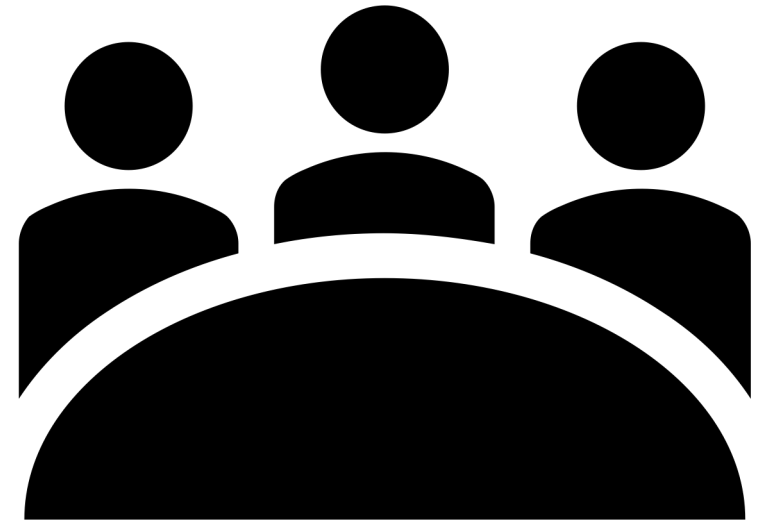
# DISCUSSION

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Are there organizations that you know of that provide trauma-focused services in your community?

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Have you had any experience providing trauma-informed care to immigrant populations?





**BREAK (10 MIN)**

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# **CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM CHALLENGES & BEST PRACTICE**



# RISK FOR CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM INVOLVEMENT

- Children of immigrants are underrepresented in the child welfare system
- Children become more vulnerable when:
  - Parents stop seeking benefits, reporting crimes, bringing kids to school or appointments
  - Parents no longer working and poverty levels increase
  - Unaccompanied minors have placements failures
- Cases of abuse and neglect that involve parents and children who are immigrants are much more complicated; immigrants less likely to receive needed services



# GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF CHILD WELFARE CASES INVOLVING IMMIGRANTS: LEGAL ANALYSIS

- ✓ All parents have a constitutional right concerning care, custody and control of their children, regardless of immigration status.
- ✓ Agencies are required to satisfy reasonable efforts in all cases, including those involving detained or deported parents.
- ✓ Agencies are to investigate reunification with parent in home country when aboard, and parental rights may not be terminated based on standard of living in another county.
- ✓ Parental deportation does not constitute abandonment without additional evidence of abuse or neglect.
- ✓ All parents have a right to participate in hearings and to have legal counsel represent them.
- ✓ Complications in facilitating cases involving parental detention or deportation do not nullify a parent's right to participate in proceedings.

(Beidler Carr, 2019)

# COMMON CHALLENGES IN CHILD WELFARE PRACTICE

- Lack of coordination between local ICE and CPS agencies
- Difficulty assessing immigration status of children and obtaining relief to which they are entitled
- Difficulty identifying viable relatives for placement
- Inability of parents to participate in cases that cross borders
- Difficulty coordinating reunification at the time of a parent's release/deportation
- Inability of parents to visit with child, meet child welfare case plan requirements, participate in family court proceedings
- Barriers to receipt of needed services
- Strict child welfare timelines that can result in termination of parental rights.

# KEY FEDERAL POLICIES THAT GUIDE CHILD WELFARE PRACTICE

## **CONSULAR NOTIFICATION**

→ Vienna Convention on Consular Relations

- A foreign country consulate must be notified when a minor is in the custody of the state without delay.

## **SPECIAL IMMIGRANT JUVENILE STATUS**

→ INA 101(a)(27)(J); 8 CFR 204.11

- If a child is eligible for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS), the state child welfare agency should file a petition.

## **REPORT TRAFFICKING TO OTIP**

→ Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act (TVPRA)

- 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.



# REQUIREMENTS FOR CONSULAR NOTIFICATION

- Under the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, a state child welfare agency has the duty to notify a foreign country consulate when:
  - It takes custody of a noncitizen minor
- The child welfare agency should notify the child's foreign national consulate without delay
  - There is an exception where the notification would create a risk to the child's safety.

## QUESTIONS:

- What is the process for consular notification in your county?
- Who do you provide consular notification to?
- Do you have formal relationships with consulates?

# SPECIAL IMMIGRANT JUVENILE STATUS

For an undocumented foreign national child to be eligible:

- Reunification with one or both parents is not a viable option.
- It is not in the child's best interest to return to his or her country of nationality or last habitual residence.
- The child must be under the jurisdiction of the court throughout the application process.


Also, child must be:

- In the U.S.
- Under the age of 21
- Unmarried

## QUESTIONS:

- Do you know how children are screened for and obtain SIJS?
- Who does this work in your state/county?

# SIJS + LEGAL PERMANENT RESIDENCY

- SIJS offers a path to green card/legal permanent residency
- But, there is a limit on the # of people who can get a green card through SIJS each FY + a “per country” cap.
- Each month, the State Department provides a chart with visa availability for different visa categories and countries.
- SIJS falls under Employment-Based Fourth Preference Immigrant Visa Category 

STATE DEPARTMENT VISA BULLETIN FOR APRIL 2023

Employment-based	All Chargeability Areas Except Those Listed	CHINA-mainland born	INDIA	MEXICO	PHILIPPINES
1st	C	01FEB22	01FEB22	C	C
2nd	01JUL22	08JUN19	01JAN11	01JUL22	01JUL22
3rd	C	01NOV18	15JUN12	C	C
Other Workers	01JAN20	01OCT14	15JUN12	01JAN20	01JAN20
4th	01SEP18	01SEP18	01SEP18	01SEP18	01SEP18

# HUMAN TRAFFICKING

## SEX TRAFFICKING

- The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a person **for the purpose of a commercial sex act**.
- **Commercial sex act:** any sex act on account of which anything of value is given to or received by any person.
- For a minor, commercial sex trafficking **does not need to** include force, fraud, or coercion.

## LABOR TRAFFICKING

- The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through force, fraud, or coercion **for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, debt bondage, or slavery**.
- **Involuntary servitude:** a plan where the victim believes they must work, or they will suffer serious harm.
- **Debt bondage:** the individual has a debt for which they pledge services, but their services never pay off that debt. Oftentimes, the debt continues to increase.
- For a minor, force, fraud, or coercion **are** required.



# RED FLAGS FOR TRAFFICKING

- ✓ Anyone trading sex for a place to stay or food.
- ✓ A parent who gave their child away for money or drugs.
- ✓ A business owner providing shelter and food in exchange for docked pay or sex acts.
- ✓ Large quantities of condoms, lubes, and cash.
- ✓ Inadequately dressing for the weather.
- ✓ Sign of physical abuse and neglect.
- ✓ Fear of an employer, job, or supervisor/coworker.
- ✓ Signs of tattoo/branding.
- ✓ Constant running away
- ✓ Never left alone and has restricted movement.
- ✓ The victim's answers seem "coached" or don't add up.
- ✓ Victim owes money which they can't pay back.

# REPORTING TRAFFICKING TO THE OFFICE ON TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS (OTIP)

## QUESTIONS:

- What's the process for reporting trafficking to OTIP in your county?
- Who's responsible?

## HOW?

- Report any suspected commercial sex trafficking or labor trafficking to OTIP within 24 hours of receiving the information
- Make report to OTIP for Non-Citizen Minors:  
<https://shspfm.gss.acf.hhs.gov/eaasidenntityserver/Identity/Account/Login/LoginSelection/>
- OTIP will determine if the noncitizen minor is a victim of trafficking.

## WHY?

OTIP may issue an Eligibility Letter or Interim Assistance Letter, which connects youth to case management services and benefits like:

- Social Security Number (not valid to work)
- Medicaid
- Medical services
- Food assistance
- Educational services
- Housing assistance/cash assistance
- Mental health services

# ICE PARENTAL INTERESTS DIRECTIVE (2022)

## ICE should:

- ✓ Allow parents/guardians to make alternative care arrangements for their children
- ✓ Detain parents and guardians near their children
- ✓ Facilitate parental participation in child welfare proceedings, services & programs
- ✓ Facilitate regular visitation.
- ✓ Parole removed parents/guardians into the U.S. to participate in a TPR hearing

### **ICE Detainee Locator:**

When working with parents in ICE detention, you can use their Alien Number to locate detained parents via the Online Detainee Locator System:

<https://locator.ice.gov/odls/#/index>.

### **ICE Parental Interest Coordinator:**

To coordinate with ICE to involve parents in ICE detention in case meetings, parent-child visitation, court hearings, etc. contact the ICE Parental Interest Coordinator

([parental.interests@ice.dhs.gov](mailto:parental.interests@ice.dhs.gov)).

# ICE PROTECTED AREAS POLICY (2021)

ICE should avoid immigration enforcement actions at certain “protected areas”:

- ✓ Schools, day cares, etc.
- ✓ Medical and mental health care facilities
- ✓ Places of worship
- ✓ Places where children gather
- ✓ Social services establishments
- ✓ Disaster and emergency response sites
- ✓ Religious or civil ceremonies e.g., weddings, funerals, etc.
- ✓ Public demonstrations e.g., parades, marches, rallies, etc.



You can report violations of the ICE Protected Areas policy by contacting ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) at (888) 351-4024 or at [ERO.INFO@ice.dhs.gov](mailto:ERO.INFO@ice.dhs.gov). You may also contact the DHS Office of Civil Rights and Liberties and file complaint here: <https://www.dhs.gov/publication/file-civil-rights-complaint>.





# CASE SCENARIO #1

Ricardo is 16 and is originally from Honduras. He is currently in foster care due because he was found in a local shelter after his mother's sister who he was living with kicked him out. During a visit with his caseworker, he shares that when he first arrived to the U.S. he was in an ORR shelter and was then sent to live with his mother's sister, and was forced to work on a dairy farm. He was told his family owed money to the person who brought them to the U.S., and he had to work to pay this debt.

Ricardo has not had contact with his aunt since being kicked out of the home, but he has been able to keep in contact with his mother via phone and video calls since she was deported. But both Ricardo and his mother want him to stay in the U.S. so he can complete his education and hopefully get a job after he graduates.

→ What would you do in this case?

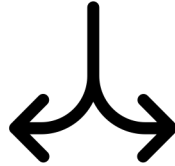
# WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

- ✓ Notify Honduran consulate
- ✓ Refer Ricardo for legal screening/connect with immigration attorney
- ✓ Connect with mom for info on other potential relatives
- ✓ Screen Ricardo for human trafficking and potentially report to OTIP
- ✓ Connect with ICE Parental Interest Coordinator for info on mom's case



# TWO STUDIES

Read the  
article!



## DOCUMENTING CHILD WELFARE AGENCY MODELS FOR SERVING IMMIGRANT CHILDREN & FAMILIES

### PURPOSE

- Document the models that child welfare agencies have implemented to provide services to child welfare-involved children and families with immigration issues

### SAMPLE

- 19 in-depth, semi-structured interviews with representatives in CA, NJ, NM, NY, & OR

## BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF CHILD WELFARE SYSTEMS TO SERVE IMMIGRANT FAMILIES DURING COVID-19

### PURPOSE

1. Explore the experiences of child welfare agencies and community partner organizations in serving children and parents in immigrant families during COVID-19
2. Identify challenges & new service needs as well as adaptations & innovations during COVID

### SAMPLE

- 31 in-depth, semi-structured interviews with agency administrators and frontline staff in CA, CO, GA, ID, IL, NC, NJ, NM, NY, OR, & PA

# CHALLENGES/BARRIERS TO SERVICE PROVISION & ACCESS DURING COVID-19

- The COVID pandemic disproportionately impacted immigrant families:
  - Basic needs stressors e.g., food, housing, and economic insecurity
  - Technological gaps due to lack of internet access and financial constraints
- Introduced new challenges to the child welfare system in serving families:
  - Court and office closures
  - Family visitation challenges
  - Transnational service barriers





# SPECIALIZATION OF IMMIGRATION-RELATED KNOWLEDGE & RESPONSIBILITIES

- Immigration-related cases require very specific knowledge, expertise, and procedures that are often beyond the capacity of general caseworkers
- Child welfare agencies have addressed this by:
  1. Implementing specialized programs/staff e.g., with
    - Specialized staff positions and/or units
    - Bilingual/bicultural staff
    - Training on immigration-related issues/processes
  2. Implementing/adhering to specialized policies
    - Federal policies
    - Agency-level policies





# IMPORTANCE OF CROSS-SYSTEMS COLLABORATION

- Working across systems and agencies helps facilitate case requirements and meet client needs, i.e., consular notification and SIJS requirements.
- Developing formal relationships & MOUs with:
  - Consulates
  - Immigration legal services providers
  - Other social services providers e.g., mental health services providers
  - ICE



# POLICIES & PROCEDURES TO FACILITATE GOOD OUTCOMES FOR IMMIGRATION-RELATED CASES

- Immigration-related cases have specific requirements that are best facilitated by codified policies/procedures
- Child welfare agencies should implement policies on:
  - ✓ Making non-citizen/undocumented caregivers eligible to be approved caregivers
  - ✓ Incorporating the ICE PID & Protected Areas policy
  - ✓ Confidentiality and info sharing with immigration authorities
  - ✓ Screening and referral for immigration relief
  - ✓ Obtaining SIJS for eligible children/youth in care
  - ✓ Translation of documents for clients + interpretation

# NEED FOR CREATIVITY, INNOVATION, AND ADAPTATION

- The unique circumstances of immigration-related cases require creativity, innovation, + adaptation to facilitate case outcomes and enhance family engagement
- Child welfare agencies can
  - Use technology to increase family engagement (e.g., FaceTime, WhatsApp)
  - Modify programming
  - Collaborate to work cases across borders





# EXAMPLE: INNOVATE + COLLABORATE

Transnational casework can be facilitated through consulates or through International Social Service USA to accomplish the following:

- ✓ Home studies
- ✓ Welfare checks
- ✓ Facilitate visits and court proceedings (e.g., through Facetime, WhatsApp, etc.)
- ✓ Community resource assessments
- ✓ Criminal background/child abuse registry check
- ✓ Evidence and documentation/document tracing (birth, death, etc.)
- ✓ DNA testing
- ✓ Drug testing
- ✓ Medical Care
- ✓ Location of family members
- ✓ Repatriation/placement of minors in another country
- ✓ Post-placement services
- ✓ Cases involving a parent leaving the country



**International Social Service (ISS)**, an international network of professionals that helps connect vulnerable children, adults and families, separated by an international border, to the services and support they need.



# CASE SCENARIO #2

**Part 1:** An undocumented father of young 2 children is working a reunification case due to issues of neglect (e.g., lack of supervision, older child was found at home alone caring for the younger child). Mother of the children passed away a year ago. The father works at a restaurant and is detained on an ICE warrant because he had entered the U.S. illegally and had been deported once previously. The two children are in foster care and were at school at the time of the raid.

→ What do you do?

**Part 2:** You find out there is an immigration hold and the father is deported 3 weeks later.

→ Now what do you do?

# WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

If parent is detained:

- ✓ Locate the parent through ICE detainee locator.
- ✓ Contact the ICE social worker to get information on status of case.
- ✓ Set up visits with the child and arrangements for him to appear in court.
- ✓ If he's sent far away, request that he be moved closer.

If parent is deported:

- ✓ Create a service plan.
- ✓ Collaborate: Work with consulate and DIF in Mexico to get services for the parent.
- ✓ Maybe enlist help of ISS to complete home study
- ✓ Continue reunification plan.





# RESOURCES

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THE CENTER ON  
IMMIGRATION  
AND CHILD WELFARE

Go to: [www.cimmcw.org](http://www.cimmcw.org)

### PRACTICE

Resources for  
Social Workers

Resources for  
Legal  
Professionals

Resources for  
Youth & Families

### LAW & POLICY

Federal Policy

State Policy

### RESEARCH

Child Welfare  
System

Immigrant Families

Unaccompanied  
Minors

### TRAINING & TOOLS

CICW Workshops

Toolkits,  
Handbooks,  
Guides & Books

Presentations

Trainings

### CICW PUBLICATIONS

Conferences

Fact Sheets

Policy Briefs &  
Analyses

Presentations

Journal  
Publications

Reports

Research Briefs

Strengthening  
Border Families  
Research Project

Toolkits,  
Handbooks,  
Guides & Books

### STATE-SPECIFIC RESOURCES

AL - GA

HI - MD

MA - NJ

NM - SC

SD - WY

### FOREIGN CONSULATE CONTACTS

China

Cuba

El Salvador

Guatemala

Honduras

India

Mexico


Philippines

Venezuela


The CICW website provides the most relevant news, practice, policy, and research resources related to the intersection of immigration and child welfare.

# CHILD WELFARE & IMMIGRATION RESOURCES


**IMMIGRANT FAMILIES AND CHILD WELFARE SYSTEMS**  
Emerging Needs and Promising Policies





By Mark Greenberg, Randy Capps, Andrew Kalweit, Jennifer Grishkin, and Ann Flagg




**THE NEW MEXICO CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES DEPARTMENT IMMIGRATION UNIT**  
A MODEL FOR CHILD WELFARE & JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEMS SERVING IMMIGRANT CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES






Prepared by:  In collaboration with: 

NOVEMBER 2022





**STRENGTHENING CHILD WELFARE PRACTICE FOR IMMIGRANT CHILDREN & FAMILIES**  
A Toolkit for Child Welfare Professionals in California  
AUGUST 2019


**PROTECTING ASSETS & CHILD CUSTODY IN THE FACE OF DEPORTATION**  
*A Guide for Practitioners Assisting Immigrant Families*


**TOOLKIT**  
**LATINO GRANDFAMILIES:**  
HELPING LATINO CHILDREN THRIVE THROUGH CONNECTION TO CULTURE AND FAMILY





 National Hispanic and Latino  
**MHTTC** Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network  
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration


**SAMHSA**  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

**TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE MODEL FOR IMMIGRANT HISPANIC AND LATINO CLIENTS**




 The National Child Traumatic Stress Network




  
**Psychological First Aid for Unaccompanied Children**

**PARENTING IN A NEW CONTEXT: STRATEGIES FOR PRACTITIONERS SUPPORTING REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT CAREGIVERS**



# TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICE RESOURCES

**FOR MORE GO TO:**

[HTTPS://CIMMCW.ORG/CATEGORY/TOPICS/TRAUMA](https://CIMMCW.ORG/CATEGORY/TOPICS/TRAUMA)

# CICW IMMIGRATION & CHILD WELFARE PRACTICE NETWORK

Platform for ongoing communications among child welfare agency representatives who work with families around immigration issues across the country.

If you work directly with immigrants or on immigration issues/policies in child welfare, please join our network.

Email: [ssepp@nmsu.edu](mailto:ssepp@nmsu.edu) to be added to the listserv!

## CICW MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER

- Sign-up for our monthly e-newsletter for news and resources on immigration and child welfare issues
- Go to [www.cimmcw.org](http://www.cimmcw.org)

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**QUESTIONS?**

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**THANK YOU!**

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