

Broken Families, Broken Souls: The Impact of the U.S. Immigration System on Children and Families

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National
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Association
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WHAT IS TRAUMA?

What is Trauma?



- Trauma
- Complex Trauma
- Developmental Trauma
- Historic Trauma
- Vicarious Trauma
- PTSD

A close-up photograph of several dandelion seed heads, showing the intricate, feathery structure of the seeds. The lighting is warm, creating a golden-orange and yellow color palette. The background is softly blurred, emphasizing the sharp details of the foreground seed heads.

TRAUMA IN THE CONTEXT OF IMMIGRATION

Immigration Traumas



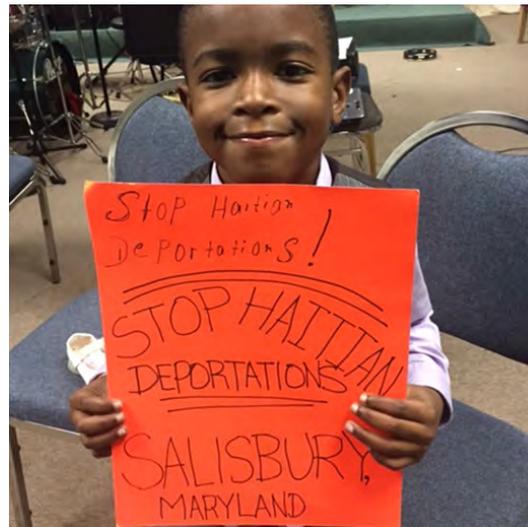
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U.S. Immigration's Broken System

What's broken about America's legal immigration system?

1. Designed to separate families
 - a) Separated children often spend, on average, about a quarter of their lives without one of their parents
2. Detention bed quotas = wealthy companies
3. Process for legalization, or "the line," unfit
4. What is TPS?
5. What is DACA?



Impact on Mental Health

1. "Crimmigration" treats undocumented immigrants (refugees/asylum seekers) as criminals, unwanted immigrants, and easy targets for exploitation
2. Immigration = higher prevalence of anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and substance abuse
3. Violated human rights / unmet basic needs (food, shelter, health, education...)



The background is a monochromatic teal image featuring several dandelion seed heads. The seed heads are in various stages of maturity, with some showing the delicate, radiating structure of the seeds. The stems are dark and extend upwards from the bottom of the frame. The overall composition is soft and ethereal.

WOUNDS OF THE JOURNEY

Resilience



"They tried to bury us. They didn't know we were seeds."

- Mexican Proverb

Wounds of the Journey

- **Pre-Migration**

- Political and governmental violence and unrest

- **During Migration**

- Safety concerns, lack of resources, human trafficking, sexual assault, loss of supports

- **Post-Migration**

- Unemployment / poverty, parentified children, substance abuse, domestic violence, religious abuse trauma



Sense of Loss

- Loss of status
- Loss of physical proximity to loved ones
- A great challenge with identity
- Concern and guilt of leaving family members in places of origin
- Difficulty in adaptation: language acquisition, etc.
- Loss of parental figures



Stories of the Journey





**WHAT CAN THE
CHURCH DO?**

As the Church, What Is Our Calling?

**“The strangers who stay with you, shall be to you as the natives among you, and you shall love them as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt”
*Leviticus 19:33-34***

Jesus commands us to welcome the stranger, “for what you do to the least of my brethren, you do unto me” *Matthew 25:40*



Resolution GA-1723: HEALING

1. Encourages the church to **deepen its commitment to building unity and integration** among all our Disciples congregations by “becoming immigrant-welcoming congregations”
2. Engage in congregational **prayer, listening conferences, and action** around immigration policies
3. Offer **mental health training and resources** to immigrants, immigrant families, and those from communities providing support and solidarity, such as clergy and other leaders
4. Support **immigrant families when facing and experiencing separation**
5. Promote **ministries of healing from trauma** resulting from immigration travel and trafficking



Resolution GA-1723: PREVENTION

1. Establish **preventative measures** that help immigrant families and individuals avoid fraud and obtain credible legal resources and guidance
2. Offer **planning and resource materials** for individuals and families in the face of detention and deportation risks
3. Offer support for those immigrants and families **living in border communities and beyond**
4. Offer support for those **with families in detention**
5. **Connect with local organizations doing the work**

Resolution GA-1723: PROTECTION

1. **Build solidarity** between immigrant and non-immigrant congregations
2. Consider becoming/assisting congregations **offering sanctuary protections**
3. **Develop community protection and response models** for families facing separation due to detention or deportation

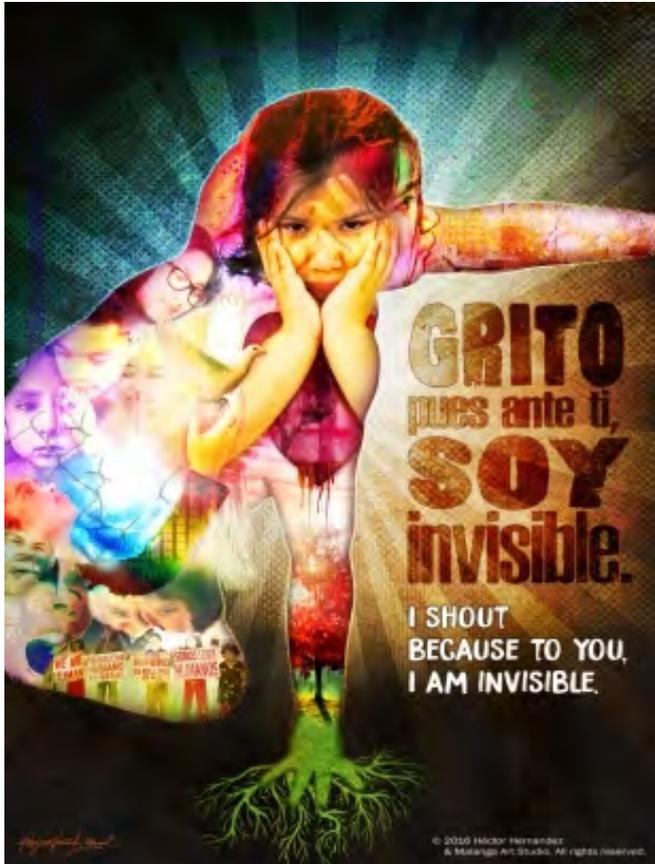


Resolution GA-1723: PROTECTION

4. Educate ourselves and others about those immigration policies that support the rights of immigrant families
5. Offer support for current DACA recipients, border communities, and victims of hate crimes, fraudulent activity, and trafficking



Encourage and ACT



- Host prayer vigils and region-wide prayer services
- Host listening conferences of immigrant stories
- Connect immigrant and non-immigrant congregations to build relationships
- Host a webinar or workshop on local immigration policies and rights



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Closing

Broken Families, Broken Souls: The Impact of the U.S. Immigration System on Children and Families

Join us for our next webinar:

**Lock Up Your Neighbors? How the United States
Deals with Immigration**

Thursday, February 15, 2018 at 1:00pm ET

Register at:

<https://www.nbacares.org/events/webinar-immigration-detention>