



You are Not Alone: Supporting Dreamers and Families of Undocumented Status



**Center for
Childhood
Resilience**

Resilient Kids. Stronger Communities. Brighter Futures.



Illinois childhood trauma coalition

225 East Chicago Avenue • Box 10-B • Chicago, IL 60611 • P: 312.227.8318 • F: 312.227.9461

**NATIONAL
IMMIGRANT
JUSTICE CENTER**

A HEARTLAND ALLIANCE PROGRAM

Speakers:



Rebecca Ford-Paz, PhD
Clinical Psychologist
Center for Childhood Resilience
Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago
Co-Chair of the IL Childhood Trauma Coalition's Ad-Hoc
Committee on Refugee/Immigrant Children & Trauma



Claudio Rivera, PhD
Postdoctoral Fellow
CCR



Ruth Lopez-McCarthy, Esq
Managing Attorney
National Immigrant Justice Center

agenda

- Part I: Presentation of materials developed to help equip youth-serving adults to respond to the distress of youth of undocumented status resulting from political events and rhetoric
- Part II: Presentation on legal issues impacting youth and families of undocumented status
- Part III: Q & A regarding mental health and legal tips and resources

Response to the Presidential Election

- Marginalized children and youth are experiencing significant distress
 - There has been a dramatic increase in the number of hotline calls
 - College and community counseling centers are being flooded with calls for support
 - Schools reporting instances of:
 - Hate speech
 - Racist vandalism
 - Students fearful to attend school
 - Having to cancel classes due to safety concerns.

“Disrespect invites disrespect. Violence incites violence.
When the powerful use their position to bully others, we all lose.”-
Meryl Streep, 2017 Golden Globes

Terminology

- **Undocumented** – foreign-born non-citizen residing in the U.S., having either entered without authorization or overstayed their visa
- **Dreamers** – undocumented youth brought to the U.S. as children
- **DACA** – Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals
 - For youth
 - Brought to the US before age 16
 - Who are in school or with a high school diploma
 - Who have lived here for at least 5 years
 - Who have not committed serious crimes
 - No pathway to citizenship



Risk for Emotional Distress for Immigrant Children

- Threat of deportation
 - Centrality of family
 - Fleeing dangerous circumstances in their countries of origin
- Panic, hopelessness, and helplessness arises from:
 - Threat of separation from family and return to life-threatening environment creates
 - Threat of being removed from the only country they have ever known and returned to a country where they may not know speak the language or know anyone
 - Educational/employment disruption



Most Vulnerable Children

- Visible minorities
 - Gender non-conforming youth
 - Refugee/immigrant children and adolescents
 - Recipients of DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) or “dreamers”
 - Those whose family members also may be undocumented and experiencing the same distress
 - Those with limited English proficiency
 - Those exposed to others’ suicidal behavior
- And those with pre-existing risk factors for suicidal behavior, such as:
 - Depression and anxiety disorders
 - Prior suicide attempts or non-suicidal self-injurious behaviors
 - Substance use
 - Impulsive aggressive behavior
 - Socially withdrawn/isolated



MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS FOR DREAMERS & FAMILIES OF UNDOCUMENTED STATUS

Key points to remember:

- Uncertainty makes us all anxious!
- Their concerns are real.



Don't make
promises you
can't keep!

IMPORTANT STEPS ADULTS CAN TAKE TO SUPPORT YOUTH



1. Model positive coping and stay calm.
2. Ensure and promote safety.
3. Connect with social support and decrease a sense of isolation
4. Remind children we have a government system of checks and balances.
5. Raise awareness of organized support for refugee/immigrant rights.
6. Promote healthy coping
7. Familiarize yourself with signs of distress and potential signs of suicidality
8. Link with available services

1. Model positive coping and stay calm

- Communicate with your words and your behavior that you will keep them safe.
 - Remind children:



Adults around you
will protect you.

2. Ensure and promote safety

- Reach out to authorities and leaders who can help hold individuals accountable for promoting hatred
 - Calling 911
 - Alternatives to calling 911
 - Southern Poverty Law Center
 - Alderman
 - Clergy person
 - Refugee/immigrant serving agency: ICIRR, Alivio Medical Center, Progreso Latino, Enlace, TRP, Centro Romero



4. Remind about Checks and Balances

- There are democratic processes in local, state, and federal governments.
- Lawmakers can use democratic processes to prevent individuals from making decisions alone.
- Repealing an executive order is different than enforcement

THE SYSTEM OF CHECKS AND BALANCES



5. Raise awareness of organized support for immigrant rights

- Inform children that there are organizations who will safeguard their rights.
 - Increasing their sense of control and influence over their environment and their future promotes hope.
 - Donate
 - Volunteer
 - Get involved!
- Help youth connect with groups that are supportive of their identity



6. Promote Healthy Coping

- Keeping family and school routines
- Limiting media use to avoid repetitive images and messages that remind them of traumatic events.
- Make time to talk about it
- Relaxation practice
- Talking and spending time with family, friends, or faith communities
- Distraction
- Using /consuming humor
- Scheduling pleasant activities
- Exercising
- Writing in a journal
- Being creative or artistic
- Avoiding substance use and isolation



7. Familiarize yourself with signs of distress and signs of potential suicidality

- Withdrawing from family and friends
- Dramatic mood change
- Threatening to kill him/herself
- Talking, thinking, or writing about death or suicide
- Feeling hopeless or helpless
- Unusually reckless behaviors
- Giving away prized possessions





8. Link with available services

- Resource list to link youth, families, and professionals with crisis intervention information and providers who can offer support
- List of civil and human rights organizations in which people can become involved
- Resource Lists available online:
 - Center for Childhood Resilience luriechildrens.org/youarenotalone
 - Kennedy Forum <https://www.thekennedyforum.org/resources>



Crisis Resources

- CARES Crisis Line, SASS Services – Illinois crisis mental health services program for children and adolescents
 - 1-800-345-9049 (voice), 773-523-4504 (TTY) and <http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=64971>
- Crisis/Emergency Mental Health Providers across Illinois
 - <http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=30893>
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
 - 1-800-273-TALK (8255) and www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org
- When calling 911 in Chicago, request Crisis Intervention Trained (CIT) officer



HOPE AND ACTION



- You are not alone!
- You are part of what makes this country great!
- The fight is not over! *¡La lucha sigue!*
- There is still hope!
- There are ways for you to get involved!

Chicago is With You Task Force

- City of Chicago, Office of New Americans
- **4 subcommittees:**
 - Mental Health and Wellness
 - Legal Protection
 - Employer Relations
 - Community Outreach and Education
- **For more information:**
 - Cary.Shepherd2@cityofchicago.org

**NATIONAL
IMMIGRANT
JUSTICE CENTER**
A HEARTLAND **ALLIANCE** PROGRAM

City of Chicago Legal Protection Fund

**Ruth Lopez-McCarthy, Managing Attorney
National Immigrant Justice Center
rlmccarthy@heartlandalliance.org
www.immigrantjustice.org**

Importance of Legal Consultations

- Estimated 183,000 undocumented in the City of Chicago, most live in mixed-status families – 2014 Survey by Rob Paral and Associates
- Center for Migration Studies – 2014 Survey
 - 14.3% of individuals screened for DACA eligibility were found to be potentially eligible for a more permanent form of relief
- Beware of notario fraud/scammers
- Consult with a licensed attorney or a Board of Immigration Appeals recognized organization

Permanent Legal Options

Family
Petitions/Permanent
Residency

Protection for
Survivors of Crime
(U/T visa)

Protection for
Survivors of
Domestic Violence

Immigration Relief in
Deportation
Proceedings

Asylum

Special Immigrant
Juvenile Visas

DACA

DACA: Provides eligible immigrant youth (under 31 years of age as of June 15, 2012) with temporary status and employment authorization document (EAD)

- Discretionary relief that the President can terminate at any time
- It is unclear if the Trump administration will terminate DACA
- Concern about immigrant youth and their parents

Four potential scenarios:

- DACA continues (renewals and newly eligible)
- DACA is terminated but EADs remain valid until expiration
- DACA and EADs are terminated (requires notice to DACA youth)
- DACA and EADs are terminated and individuals targeted for deportation

Current Status

- 40,000 Illinois residents have DACA
- Applications continue to be processed

The BRIDGE Act

- Bar Removal of Immigrants Who Dream and Grow the Economy Act S.3542
- Bipartisan support- Senators Durbin (D-IL), Graham (R-SC), Murkowski (R-AK), Feinstein (D-CA), Flake (R-AZ), Schumer (D-NY)/U.S. Representatives Mike Coffman (CO-06) and Luis V. Gutiérrez (IL-04)
- Provides temporary protection to people who are eligible for DACA
- Applicants would have to meet the same requirements as they would for DACA
 - Pay a fee
 - Undergo criminal background checks
 - Demonstrate they are not a threat to public safety
 - Establish early age entry with continuous presence in the US
 - Pursued an education

Quick KYR

Regardless of your immigration status, you have the right to:

- **REMAIN SILENT**
- **SPEAK WITH AND BE REPRESENTED BY AN ATTORNEY**
 - Police/Court : Public Defender or your own attorney at your own expense.
 - Immigration Court : At your own expense
- **RIGHT TO REFUSE TO SIGN ANY DOCUMENT YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND**
- **REQUEST A LOCAL TELEPHONE CALL**
 - Memorize phone numbers of family/friends with legal status
 - **Preferably someone who knows/has your Safety & Action Plan.*
- **BEWARE OF NOTARIOS AND ATTORNEYS ACTING IMPROPERLY**
 - Report instances to the IL Attorney General or the ARDC via their websites

Prepare a Safety & Action Plan

- Identify your emergency contact and memorize their phone number
- Memorize your A number and give it to your emergency contact
- Provide your child's school or day care with the emergency contact name and phone number and provide authorization for the emergency contact to pick up your child
- Provide authorization for your emergency contact to make medical and legal decision for your child
- Keep your passport, identity information, proof of physical presence in the U.S. and financial information in a safe location. Make sure your emergency contact can access them.

Intake Hours

To schedule a general immigration consultation

- Call 312-660-1370
- E-mail immigrantlegaldefense@heartlandalliance.org

Chicago Intake Locations

- National Immigrant Justice Center
208 S. LaSalle St., Suite 1300,
Chicago, Illinois
- Heartland Human Care Services
5715 W. Belmont Ave,
Chicago, Illinois

Specialized Information:

- **Asylum Seekers:**
 - Call 773-672-6555, Thursday 9:00 am
- **Unaccompanied Immigrant Children:**
 - Call 773-672-6550, Thursday 2:00 pm – 4:30 pm
- **Detained Immigrants:**
 - Family members call 312-660-1370 ,Tuesday 11:00 am – 2:00 pm
 - Detainees call 312-263-0901 for collect calls

Questions & Answers: Moving from Ideas to Action

Resource Sharing and Questions & Answers



Moderator: Dr. Colleen Cicchetti Director, Center for Childhood Resilience

PANEL

- Rebecca Ford-Paz, PhD - Co-Chair of the IL Childhood Trauma Coalition's Ad-hoc Committee of Refugee/Immigrant Children and Trauma; Center for Childhood Resilience, Lurie Children's
- Claudio Rivera, PhD – Center for Childhood Resilience, Lurie Children's
- Mayra Chacón, MA & Virginia Quiñonez, PsyD from the Center for Latino/a Mental Health, The Chicago School of Professional Psychology
- Maria Ferrera, PhD from DePaul University, Dept. of Social Work
- Ruth Lopez McCarthy, National Immigrant Justice Center



Legal Resources

- National Immigrant Justice Center: dedicated to ensuring human rights protections and access to justice for all immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers
 - <http://www.immigrantjustice.org/>
- Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF) “Immigrants’ Rights FAQs” (English and Spanish)
 - http://www.maldef.org/news/releases/2016_11_14_Immigrant_Rights_FAQs_Under_A_Trump_Presidency/

For more information:

- Center for Childhood Resilience
 - **OUTSTANDING QUESTIONS?** Please send to ccr@luriechildrens.com
 - www.luriechildrens.org/youarenotalone
- The National Immigrant Justice Center
 - <https://www.immigrantjustice.org/>
- IL Childhood Trauma Coalition www.lookthroughtheireyes.org
 - ICTC@luriechildrens.org
- The Center for Latina/o Mental Health at The Chicago School of Professional Psychology: www.thechicagoschool.edu

