COUNSELING PARTNERS OF LOS ANGELES

SPECIAL NEWSLETTER

Helping Students & Families with Deportation Anxiety

- *Guidelines and Resources for Teachers*

In this current political climate, immigrant children and families are scared more than ever. As an educator you undoubtedly play a huge role in your students' lives, and can assist with the anxiety and stress that ICE raids and deportation anxiety can cause. In this newsletter, we will go over ways you can support families facing this stress and provide resources to students struggling in this critical time.

Did you know? The American Psychological Association states that 50% of undocumented immigrants experience symptoms of depression or anxiety, which are often worsened by fears of deportation.

"Nearly 10% of US families with children have at least one member without citizenship, and 5.9 million US citizen children have at least one caregiver who does not have authorization to reside in the United States." - Silva Mathema, "Keeping Families Together Report"

What you and your school community can do to help.

PROVIDE REASSURANCE TO STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

Students, no matter their immigration or documentation status, have a right to receive an education. Assuage parents' fears of schools "outing" their students by assuring them that their school will do everything in its power to protect its students' rights to this education.

ENCOURAGE FAMILIES TO EXPLORE THEIR IMMIGRATION OPTIONS

The protections and options for obtaining immigration status can differ from one family to another and among individual family members. It is crucial for every undocumented immigrant to undergo an immigration "checkup" at this time to discover the protections and options that may be available to them.

There are agencies that provide low-cost immigration legal services. Your families can search the directory at: https://www.immigrationlawhelp.org or http://ready-california.org.

INFORM FAMILIES OF THEIR RIGHTS

Immigrant families might not be aware that everyone in the United States possesses rights, regardless of their immigration status. Everyone has the right to decline communication with an immigration official until they have consulted with an attorney. Additionally, they can refuse to open their door to an immigration official unless that official presents a warrant issued by a judge. Families can visit https://www.ilrc.org/know-your-rights-and-what-immigrant-families-should-do-now.

Resources used in this newsletter:

Lhttps://www.ilrc.org/sites/default/files/resources/school_resource_v3.pdf

https://www.communitypsychology.com/effects-of-deportation-on-families-communities/

https://www.informedimmigrant.com/resources/educators/educators/

https://www.informedimmigrant.com/resources/educators/educators/#accordion__heading-Providing-behavioral-health-services

ENCOURAGE FAMILIES TO MAKE A PREPAREDNESS PLAN

It's crucial for immigrant families to prepare for the possibility of stricter immigration policies, all while avoiding unnecessary panic. Mixed-status families, in particular, face the risk of separation if any members are undocumented. Parents should be aware that they cannot be deported before a hearing before a judge. However, it's wise to have a childcare arrangement and an emergency plan ready in case parents are taken into immigration custody. Families should ensure their emergency contacts are current, so their wishes regarding their children's care can be followed if a parent is detained or deported. The ILRC offers a family preparedness plan that can assist in these situations. For more information, families can visit https://www.ilrc.org/family-preparednessplan.

BE READY TO PROVIDE RESOURCES & INFORMATION

You can provide the following resources:

- Know Your Rights flyers & red cards (https://www.ilrc.org/red-cards).
- Referrals for legal services (https://www.immigrationlawhelp.org)
- Anti-fraud brochures (https://www.ilrc.org/anti-fraud-flyers)
- Family preparedness toolkits (https://www.ilrc.org/familypreparedness-plan)
- Immigration options flyers (https://www.ilrc.org/immigrationoptions-undocumented-immigrantchildren)
- To check recent ICE sightings in your area (www.juntosseguros.com).

Ensure that families can easily access this information without needing to reveal their immigrant status. Consider distributing it through various methods that reach all families at your school.

MAKE SCHOOL A SAFE PLACE

Supporting Immigrant Families in Schools

Immigrant families might decide to keep their children home if they are concerned about the possibility of an immigration raid or enforcement actions taking place at school. It is crucial to provide reassurance to parents, emphasizing that policies are in place to protect children and their families.

In today's political climate, it is prudent to establish a protocol for responding in the event that ICE arrives at your school. This plan should encompass:

- **Designating a point person** who is prepared to engage with ICE agents.
- **Displaying signage** to clearly mark private areas of the school where individuals other than staff and students cannot freely enter; ICE agents can only access these areas by presenting a judicial warrant.
- **Implementing a system** for an attorney to review any documents presented by ICE, including warrants.
- **Observing and documenting** any actions taken by immigration agents on school property, as well as making copies of officers' identification documents and any warrants or subpoenas.
- **Providing comprehensive training** for all school personnel, ensuring they understand the policy to follow it and address questions from parents and students.

Both state and federal laws prohibit educational agencies from sharing personally identifiable student information with law enforcement without parental or guardian consent, a court order, or a lawful subpoena, except in health emergencies.

While immigration enforcement actions can occur at schools, ICE typically uses an "administrative" warrant during these operations; however, **only a judicial warrant** allows entry into private property. A judicial warrant is issued by a court, signed by a judge, based on a finding of probable cause, and specifies the location and date range for the search. If an ICE agent presents an administrative warrant signed by an immigration officer, you have the right to refuse entry.

For more information:
https://unidosus.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/firm_resourcesforeducators.pdf
https://www.aclupa.org/en/news/schools-must-protect-students-and-follow-law-if-ice-shows