

## **ASCA Issues Statement Condemning the Separation of Children and Families at U.S. Borders**

ALEXANDRIA, VA. (June 19, 2018) – The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) condemns the separation of children from their families at U.S. borders.

ASCA believes the role of school counselors and all educators is to eliminate barriers impeding student learning and development. ASCA is committed to supporting the academic and social/emotional development of all students so they can prepare for successful careers as contributing members of our society. The current administration’s policy of forcibly separating children from their families and detaining them in deplorable conditions is morally and ethically wrong. These actions create unnecessary and cruel hardships that constitute Adverse Childhood Experiences, which hinder positive development and have been proven to lead to a host of long-term issues including anxiety, grief and depression.

In 2017, [ASCA released a position statement](#) detailing the unique concerns of undocumented immigrant children, who are among our country’s most vulnerable students. They require critical support to feel safe and connected in their communities. These children and their parents have made sacrifices and endured adversity to reach their desired goals. Removing children from their families is an unspeakable and reprehensible action taken against the youngest and most helpless at a time when they need our care and support the most. This experience will have a lasting, possibly irreversible, impact on their long-term wellness and development.

As educators, as Americans and as human beings, we have a responsibility to support, serve and advocate for children, and we cannot allow them to be subjected to trauma that will affect them for a lifetime. We urge the administration to reverse the zero-tolerance policy as it pertains to separating children and families, and we urge Congress to change the law.