



**FOR IMMEDIATE  
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## **NNEDV Demands Immediate Return of Missing Children**

As an organization that works to end violence, the National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV) was shocked and disheartened that the U.S. government intentionally inflicted irreparable harm on the most vulnerable, including those fleeing sexual and domestic violence, and who were seeking safety for themselves and their children in the United States. The Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) practice of detaining children and separating families seeking refuge has been both cruel and inhumane.

Although the President has signed an Executive Order to reverse his Administration's decision to separate migrating children from their families, this Order does not resolve the compounding issues and uncertainty facing thousands of children and families already affected by the administration's recent "zero-tolerance" policy.

"Many of the families this administration has torn apart have come to the United States seeking asylum from extreme violence and abuse. We, as a nation, have a moral obligation to protect them," said NNEDV President and CEO, Kim Gandy.

DHS testified that over a period of just 13 days in May, 658 children were seized and taken away from their parents at the border. These children and their parents have experienced unimaginable trauma. We have seen [images](#) of the conditions in which some of the children are being held by DHS, and we [have heard](#) of parents who are unable to find or contact their children for weeks after being separated. The Administration's recent Executive Order does not include a plan to reunite these families, and it is not clear that they have any intention to do so. In addition, the Order evidences an intention to amend the Flores settlement, which established essential baseline protections for children held in detention by the American government.

The President changed this policy because of nationwide outrage, but the crisis is far from over. Thousands of children are still separated from their families, and parents still have no way to contact them. We call on Congress to pass legislation ending the cruel and inhumane treatment of families at the border, limit the length of any detentions, and set standards to ensure that all children and families are treated with respect and humanity. The incarceration of asylum-seeking families is not the answer, and adds further cruelty to the violence many have already suffered.

Legislative responses to this issue must not undermine the rights of domestic violence survivors. Congress must reject current proposals that would erode [VAWA](#) self-petition protections, deport survivors who use violence against their abusers, and make it more difficult for survivors fleeing domestic abuse to gain asylum. At this time, we must all come together to recognize the need for a more fair and just immigration system – one that treats all immigrants as deserving of respect and humane treatment, regardless of documentation.

Click here for NNEDV's [Action Alert](#) opposing the Border Security and Immigration Reform Act and the Securing America's Future Act.

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Interviews available on request.

*The National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV), a non-profit charitable organization, is a leading voice for domestic violence victims and their advocates. NNEDV members include the state and territorial coalitions against domestic violence, which include more than 2,000 local programs and serve millions of victims each year. NNEDV has been a premiere national organization advancing the movement against domestic violence for over 25 years, having led efforts to pass the landmark Violence Against Women Act of 1994 and to reauthorize and strengthen countless laws and regulations to increase safety and end violence. To learn more about NNEDV, please visit [www.NNEDV.org](http://www.NNEDV.org).*