

ECE 210-110 (W)

Shaina Guinansaca

Professor Virginia K. Lee

May 17, 2021

### Immigration and Separation of Children from their Families

Immigration is a serious issue in the United States. Immigration means people moving from their native regions into another country to live. Former President Trump has often claimed the US has become overcrowded through the illegal entry by undocumented, dangerous immigrants. In 2017 the Trump administration instituted the new zero tolerance immigration policy. His policies included separating undocumented parents from their children at the U.S Mexico border. According to in the article, “Family Separation May Have Hit Thousands More Migrant Children Than Reported” (2019), it was reported that nearly 3,000 children were forcibly separated from their parents under last year’s “zero tolerance” immigration policy, under which nearly all adults entering the country illegally were prosecuted, and any children accompanying them were put into shelters or foster care. Many families began to face all this trauma starting 4 years ago. Children were put in jail cell-like rooms, and they were treated like prisoners as well, and as the years progressed the rooms kept filling up with more children. They were not given any food, any water and they were treated like animals. On February 15, 2019, Trump signed a \$328 billion spending bill that included \$1.375 billion in funding for barriers on the southern border. In my opinion Trump was very unprofessional with his job and duties as president, he has separated parents from their children for racist reasons. I.C.E will knock on peoples doors and take away children’s parents, while children would watch as their parents were taken away, which is very traumatizing and painful to watch. “The mission of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is to protect America from the cross-border

crime and illegal immigration that threaten national security and public safety.” Yet, they allowed innocent children to watch as their innocent parents were unexplainably ripped from their home.

My main topic is to help prevent immigrant families from being separated from their loved ones. Joseph Biden stepped into office this year, 2021. Policies have changed in a good way. Biden wants undocumented people that live and come to the U.S to feel safe. He promised to fix our long-broken and chaotic immigration system. His strategy is centered on the basic premise that our country is safer, stronger, and more prosperous with a fair and orderly immigration system that welcomes immigrants. It will also keep families together, and allow people across the country both newly arrived immigrants and people who have lived here for generations to fully contribute to our country and the community more. According to the article “ Top 5 takeaways from Biden’s American Families Plan” (Long 2021) it states “ President Biden formally announced his American Families Plan on Wednesday, a \$1.8 trillion proposal to give all Americans access to community college, preschool, affordable child care and paid leave, among other initiatives. He wants to fund it by increasing taxes on the rich.” Biden is helping many people especially undocumented families and their children, he’s helping them financially and with this it will help them have a better life style. In an attempt to deter illegal immigration, President Donald Trump's administration separated undocumented adults from children as they crossed the US-Mexico border. Mr. Biden's orders will set up a task force to try to reunite the estimated 600-700 children who are still apart from their families. With Biden's help we can change how society treats undocumented families and with that immigrants won't be scared to walk the streets and think they're going to get arrested by I.C.E, and children won't be afraid of losing their parents. So many children were affected by this, children can become very insecure. Parental separation can result in multiple negative effects, including perceived guilt, blame,

stressors, and diminished resources for the children.

This issue should be addressed immediately because more and more kids are getting disconnected from their parents. Separation of families causes communities to panic and be worried about their own kids. Families born here are worried for their family members from other countries coming to the U.S. Families are being torn apart, being killed by border officers. I believe that the target audience in my topic would be the communities, including the President of the United States as he is the only one with the power to change the immigration laws; he has the power to stop separating family members from each other.

#### Research Source Summaries

In the first article published January 20, 2021 by White House “President Biden Sends Immigration Bill To Congress As Part of His Commitment To Modernize our Immigration System”. It states “ President Biden is sending a bill to Congress on day one to restore humanity and American values to our immigration system. The bill provides hardworking people who enrich our communities every day and who have lived here for years, in some cases for decades, an opportunity to earn citizenship. The legislation modernizes our immigration system, and prioritizes keeping families together, growing our economy, responsibly managing the border with smart investments” Biden is making a change in this society, he’s helping immigrant families and children. This can bring so much trauma into a child's life.He has made clear that reversing the Trump Administration’s immigration policies that separated thousands of families at the border is a top priority. According to President Biden The U.S. Citizenship Act of 2021 establishes a new system to responsibly manage and secure our border, and with this act he is helping many families. It will provide pathways to citizenship & strengthen labor protections for undocumented individuals. Which is a big step of change for this society that was sadly ruined by Trump.

In the Second Article published on March 22, 2021 by the Pew research center “ Key facts about U.S. immigration policies and Biden’s proposed changes” it says “The Biden administration is acting on a number of fronts to reverse Trump-era restrictions on immigration to the United States. The steps include plans to boost refugee admissions, preserving deportation relief for unauthorized immigrants who came to the U.S. as children and not enforcing the “public charge” rule that denies green cards to immigrants who might use public benefits like Medicaid.” Biden is allowing more new immigrants into the U.S while giving millions of unauthorized immigrants who are already in the country a pathway to legal status. Biden's proposal is to help immigrants and make change for the better and wants to see people happy. He doesn't want immigrant people to be afraid to come to the U.S he wants to let families know he won't separate them from their families and children, especially because he knows these individuals come to this country for a better future for their families and children. The Biden administration is expected to review policies that led to increased denial rates of H-1B visa applications under the Trump administration.

In the third article published on February 2, 2021 by ABC News “Biden creating task force to reunite families separated at the border” published by abc news on Ben Gittleston and Quinn Owen states “Chaired by the homeland security secretary, the task force will work to identify all families broken apart under the various forms of the Trump administration's "zero-tolerance policy," which separated children from relatives at the U.S. border, even before it became an official policy, a senior Biden administration official said.” President Biden is eliminating bad policies and making it better and equal. Biden is welcoming immigrants in our communities. Joe Biden understands the pain felt by every family across the U.S. that has had a loved one removed from the country.

### Small Advocacy Action

To create awareness on this issue I would donate to organizations that are helping immigrant children to reunite with their family and that are these children's voices to be heard. I would spread the word to my family members & friends to donate to the Young Center for Immigrant Children's Rights. Every donation allows us to serve more children, recruit and train more volunteers, provide support to families during this time of tremendous uncertainty and stress, and continue to advocate for an immigration system that treats children as children. The Young Center is the only organization in the United States that provides independent Child Advocates to separated and unaccompanied children in federal custody. I will then try to write possible solutions that the state can consider to solve this issue and then send it to the official in charge in this case it would be Mayor De Blasio and Governor Cuomo.

### Large Advocacy Action

My goal is to spread the word in social media and with that I will use my social media platform to share awareness and talk about the negative effects that this issue brings to a child and how much trauma it will cause, I'm glad that we have social media because there are many more social media influencers that spread awareness about this issue and educate individuals and motivate others to do the same. Thanks to social media, now it is easier to spread the word out to everyone. All the people out there who have access to these platforms have a greater chance of making a positive change in immigration and helping out families and kids who are in need of help. Furthermore, another way to spread awareness is to begin writing articles about this issue and spread information on how much immigration separations of families affect millions of children around the globe. I would be sending letters discussing this topic to Mayor De Blasio and Governor Cuomo. Then I would invite them to the Cayuga

Center in NYC. In this center they have immigrant children in their care. After we check in with these children. We will then discuss what solutions we can do to help these children reunite with their families. I will persuade them to sponsor a bill that can help these innocent families and children. With this children won't have to suffer, and having the thought of their parents to be taken with them. These are innocent children with so many dreams, but for them to be separated from their parents is not right and is cruel.

### Commentary

I choose this topic because as someone who comes from an immigrant family and community. I've seen and heard many children getting ripped apart from their parents. It is very painful to watch children cry and suffer. It breaks my heart to see children from being happy, innocent to becoming depressed, and scared for their life. Some immigrant children are put in jail just for coming to this country with their parents for a better life. They are not given water nor food. They don't even have space to sleep. As an educator you work with all kinds of children. Just to see children in my classroom makes me want to spread awareness about this issue. We can do so much to help children and their families but we need to work harder for this change to happen. I believe this issue should be addressed now because children/families are suffering and they need our help. They came to this country for a better lifestyle and a better future for their children. The United States is supposed to be a country of many opportunities yet the U.S is not letting them conquer their dreams. With the help of Biden's administration children will be back with their loved ones and never be separated again. This country should welcome these immigrant families and children with open arms, respect, and love.

## E.P.I.C Message Section

Dear President Biden,

E- My name is Shaina Guinansaca, currently studying to be a professional of Early Childhood Education. I just want you to sit down and think of the faces of children getting separated from their families, don't you ever wonder if these children are being treated well in detention centers, don't you ever wonder if these innocent children will ever see their parents again? There are many immigrant families and children that are still separated from their loved ones and they need our help immediately. President Biden you, have the power to make sure the children are reunited with their families.

P- This problem has to do with immigration and separation of families at the Mexican border.. Your administration is working to reunite entire families who were separated during the Trump administration. It is a good thing that you stopped the separations with an Executive Order on your first day in office. However, children will and are still being affected mentally because the process is a slow one.

I- Since some children are returning home to their families they still need help and protection. Your Administration is making a big change by reuniting families that were separated from 2017-2018. It is a difficult task and it estimated that 600-700 children are still apart from their families.

C- This issue should be addressed now because the longer we wait, children will suffer. I call on you and your team to please take the action needed to reunite the separated families as soon as possible and to provide protection and necessities for children who are currently housed in the detention centers. Thank you.

Sincerely,

## References

- Gittleson, B., & Owen, Q. (2021, February 2). *Biden creating task force to reunite families separated at the border*. ABC News.  
<https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/biden-create-task-force-reunite-families-separated-border/story?id=75619761>
- Jordan, M. (2019, December 17). *Family Separation May Have Hit Thousands More Migrant Children Than Reported*. The New York Times.  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/17/us/family-separation-trump-administration-migrants.html>
- Krogstad, J., & Gonzalez, A. (2021, January 22). *Key facts about U.S. immigration policies and Biden's proposed changes*. Pew Research Center.  
<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/03/22/key-facts-about-u-s-immigration-policies-and-bidens-proposed-changes/>
- Long, H. (2021, April 28). *Top 5 takeaways from Biden's American Families Plan*. The Washington Post.  
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2021/04/28/top-takeaways-american-families-plan/>



