



PPC Action Alert

Tell Congress: Oppose the Separation of Children and Parents at the Border

Academic Pediatricians:

Last month, the Trump Administration announced a new policy that forcibly separates children and parents at the border, a practice that the Administration has already been carrying out for months as a way to deter families from migrating to the United States. Since that time, the policy has been responsible for nearly 2,500 children from Central America being separated from their parents.

The pediatric community has been unified in its opposition to this policy. Pediatric experts have conducted dozens of media interviews in recent days highlighting the harms of separating children from their families. This issue has now captured the attention of policymakers and the public in a way that creates an opportunity to help end this inhumane policy.

Studies overwhelmingly demonstrate the irreparable harm caused by breaking up families. The PPC has [joined](#) over 500 organizations in demanding that the current administration abandon this ill-conceived practice. Academic pediatricians will continue to speak out in opposition to this horrific policy.

Call your members of Congress and urge them to oppose the separation of children and parents. To find out who your legislators are, go to www.house.gov and www.senate.gov and click on the corresponding boxes to “find your representative” or “find your senator.” D.C. office phone information should follow. Use the talking points below to urge your federal legislators to oppose the separation of children and parents at the border.

- As an academic pediatrician and a member of the {[Academic Pediatric Association/American Pediatric Society/Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs/Society for Pediatric Research](#)}, I urge you to oppose the separation of children and parents at the border.
- Please tell the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to immediately end this policy once and for all.
- Most of these parents are fleeing violence in order to protect their children and find for them a safe haven in our country. To have these parents watch us brutally violate their children once they arrive is the ultimate cruelty.
- Forcible separation from parents is a form of child abuse. Studies overwhelmingly demonstrate the irreparable harm to children caused by this separation.
- As children develop, their brains change in response to environments and experiences. Highly stressful experiences can disrupt the building of children’s brain architecture. Prolonged exposure to serious stress – known as toxic stress
 - can harm the developing brain and harm short- and long-term health.
- A parent or caregiver’s role is to mitigate stress. Family separation robs children of that buffer, which can lead to toxic stress, impair brain development and learning and contribute to chronic conditions like depression, post-traumatic stress disorder and heart disease.
- Academic pediatricians strongly oppose the separation of children and parents. I am urging you to do the same and tell DHS to immediately end this policy.
- Thank you for everything you do for children.

Thank you for your commitment to advancing child health.

Sincerely,

Paul Chung, MD, MS
Chair, Pediatric Policy Council

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Chair-Elect, Pediatric Policy Council