

“So Many Layers of Trauma”

Call for Action Regarding the Retention and Separation of Immigrant Children and Families in the U.S. Early Childhood Education Assembly (ECEA) of the National Council of Teachers of English June 27, 2018

They put us in a room . . . then they brought two kids in. One was eleven and one was five. The five-year-old started crying. He was looking for his mom. He said, “They took my mama away from here.” We called an immigration officer . . . They told him, “Your mom is there. She will come later.” The 11-year-old boy said, “No his mom is not coming back because she was deported to Guatemala.” And they left this child there by himself . . . We were so many that we were overlapping with each other and they kept bringing more people . . . Some of the people had to sleep standing or just stand. – Edmilson Aguilar Punay, 15-year-old (USA Today, June 22, 2018)

The Board of Directors and Affirmative Action Committee of the Early Childhood Education Assembly of the National Council of Teachers of English, as experts and national leaders in the field of early childhood education, *strongly denounce policies and practices that lead not only to the separation of children of any age from their parents but to the conditions they endure and the immediate deportation without due process and/or long-term detention of families who request asylum in our country.* It is very clear that, as Patrick Reynolds-Berry, a case manager for the Su Casa Hispanic Center in New York, said, this results in “so many layers of trauma.” In a country that is still debating reparations for the inhumane acts of separating Native American children from their families well into the 1970s, African children torn from their parents’ arms during enslavement, and the internment of Japanese families and children, *we see history repeating itself in the inhumanity of current events and we stand strongly against it.*

The ECEA urges educators to take action now by **providing support for families in need of legal representation** (see link for donations on p. 2) and working to pass long term, humane immigration policies. At the same time, **there is much we can do in our classrooms.** Recognizing that these circumstances will have long-lasting impact on children who are immediately affected as well as those who are watching from afar, **we see our responsibility as early childhood educators as four-fold:**

1. Gather and utilize resources to support the psychological and academic well being of children in our classrooms knowing that, whether or not they have been detained, children from a range of backgrounds are traumatized watching the horrors of current events.
2. Engage in - never shy away from - conversations about injustices with even our youngest children. They are watching. They know, they hear, they witness, and they experience; they will be brilliant and insightful.
3. Transform our teaching of all children so they come to appreciate the rich resources (language, cultural traditions, heritage, knowledge) brought to our communities and classrooms by people in our historically diverse country; take responsibility for our role in raising new generations who will find joy and gratitude in diversity.
4. Help children learn strategies for taking action against injustices so they can stand for humanity and against any brutal treatment of their fellow human beings. Children’s fears can be lessened when they know they can play a role in effecting change.

Toward these goals, the Early Childhood Education Assembly offers the following resources for your classroom, your contributions, and your activism:

Contributing support for children and families who are detained and separated:

***PRIMARY & IMMEDIATE NEED!** While books and classroom support are helpful, *what is really needed right now* is money to help families and children receive legal representation. Please consider:

The Texas Civil Rights Project:

<https://texascivilrightsproject.org/donate/>

REFORMA Children in Crisis Project: This project delivers books in Spanish to children and youth in detention centers, shelters, law offices and group homes around the country where immigrant youth are sent after being processed. Donations at their website are preferred so they can avoid the cost of shipping the books to the places they serve. They purchase NEW books in Spanish, bilingual and indigenous languages for toddlers to youth in their late teens and skillfully match the content to the language, social/emotional needs of the reader. <http://refugeechildren.wixsite.com/refugee-children/donate>

KIND (Kids in Need of Defense). This organization gives books to unaccompanied children as they go into court proceedings for deportation. These kids and teens read Spanish, bilingual, and indigenous languages but books in English are welcome too. <https://supportkind.org/>. You can send NEW books to two locations that serve immigrant children and youth in those areas.

Alejandra Tovar, Paralegal and/or American Hernandez, Social Services
Coordinator
KIND (Kids in Need of Defense)
UC Merced Fresno Center
[550 E. Shaw Avenue, Suite 240, Room 10](#)
Fresno, CA 93710

Katie Annand and/or Alejandra Tovar
KIND (Kids in Need of Defense)
[200 Pine Street, 3rd Floor](#)
San Francisco, CA 94104.

Rafael Lopez: You can learn more from Rafael Lopez who has provided guidance to those interested in donating books for the detained youth separated from their families. https://www.facebook.com/rafael.lopez.75470316?hc_ref=ARR57DIhHeSFjsD1iqlwsg62EgCyXiHrGzF21OX6HwYxiu46sZRIx4uvi-LSO8Xeeik&fref=nf

Website with tools and resources for teachers:

<https://unitedwedream.org/tools/>

Children's books to initiate classroom discussion:

Website: *Worlds of Words*: International Collection of Children's and Adolescent Literature can be a powerful resource to search for books about immigration and the refugee experience from local and global perspectives www.wowli.org

Anzaldúa, G. (1997). *Friends from the Other Side/Amigos del otro lado*. New York, NY: Children's Book Press.

Argueta, J. (2016). *Somos como las nubes/We are like the clouds*. (A. Ruano, Illus.). Toronto, ON: Groundwood Books/House of Anansi Press.

Buitrago, J. (2015). *Two white rabbits*. (R. Yockteng, Illus.). (E. Amado, Trans.). Toronto, ON: Groundwood Books/House of Anansi Press.

Grande, R. (2017). *The Distance Between Us: Young Readers Edition*. New York, NY: Aladdin.

Herrera, J. F. & Tapia, H. R. (2003). *Super-Cilantro Girl/La Superniña del Cilantro*. New York, NY: Children's Book Press.

Laínez, R. C. (2004). *Waiting for papá/Esperando a mi papá*. Houston, TX: Piñata Books

Lainez, R. C. (2016). *Mamá the alien/Mama la extraterrestre*. (L. Laucamara, Illus.). New York, NY: Lee & Low Books.

Laínez, R. C., & Cepeda, J. (2010). *From north to south/Del norte al sur*. (J. Cepeda, Illus.). New York, NY: Children's Book Press.

Laínez, R. C. (2010). *My shoes and I*. (F. Vanden Broeck, Illus.). Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mills Press.

Mateo, J. (2014). *Migrant: The journey of a Mexican worker*. (J. Martínez Pedro, Illus.). New York, NY: Abrams Books for Young Readers.

Mills, D. (2018). *La frontera/The Border: el viaje con papá/My Journey with Papa*. Cambridge, MA: Barefoot Books.

Morales, Y. (2018). *Dreamers*. New York, NY: Dreamscape Media.

Tonatiuh, D. (2013). *Pancho rabbit and the coyote: A migrant's tale*. (D. Tonatiuh, Illus.). New York, NY: Abrams Books for Young Readers.

Children's Books About Activists

Asim, J. (2016). *Preaching to the Chickens: The Story of John Lewis*

- Atkins, L. & Yogi, S. (2017). *Fred Korematsu Speaks Up*
- Bollinger, M. & Tran, D. X. (2012). *101 Changemakers: Rebels and Radicals Who Changed U.S. History*
- Brann, S. K. & Morales-James, C. (2017) *ABCs of Black Panther Party*
- Cohn, D. (2005). *¡Si, Se Puede!/Yes, We Can!*
- Giovanni, N. (2007). *Rosa*
- Krull, K. (2003). *Harvesting Hope: The Story of Cesar Chavez*
- Mulholland, *She Stood for Freedom: The Untold Story of a Civil Rights Hero, Joan Trumpauer*
- Myers, W. D. (2017). *Frederick Douglass: The Lion Who Wrote History*
- Nagara, I. (2013). *A is for Activist*
- Pinkney, A. D. & Pinkney, B. (2009). *Sojourner Truth's: Step-Step Stride*
- Pinkney, A. D. (2013). *Let it Shine: Stories of Black Women Freedom Fighters*
- Pinkney, A. D. (2010). *Sit-in: How Four Friends Stood Up by Sitting Down*
- Shabazz, I. (2014). *Malcolm Little: The Boy Who Grew Up to Become Malcolm X*
- Turk, M. C. (2000). *The Civil Rights Movement for Kids*
- Warren, S. E. (2012). *Dolores Huerta: A Hero to Migrant Workers*
- Weatherford, C. B. (2015). *Voice of Freedom, Fannie Lou Hamer, Spirit of the Civil Rights Movement*

Books About Children Taking Action

- Gandhi, A. & Hegedus, B. (2016) *Be the Change: A Grandfather Gandhi Story*
- Leitch Smith, C. & Hu, Y. (2000). *Jingle Dancer*
- Levinson, C. (2017). *The Youngest Marcher*
- Karusa. (1985). *The Streets are Free*. Toronto, Canada: Annick Press.
- Tafolia & Teneyuca *That's Not Fair! Emma Tenayuca's Struggle for Justice*
- Thompson, L. A. & Qualls, S. (2015). *Emmanuel's Dream: The True Story of Emmanuel Ofose Yeboah*
- Tonatiuh, D. (2014). *Separate is Never Equal*
- Winter, J. (2014). *Malala: A Brave Girl from Pakistan/Iqbal, a Brave Boy from Pakistan*

Websites:

- Embrace Race: Raising a Brave Generation. www.embracerace.org
- The Conscious Kid Library. www.theconsciouskid.org

Resources for educators' discussion and pedagogical transformation:

BOOKS

- Baines, J., Tisdale, C., & Long, S. (2018). *"We've been doing it your way long enough:" Choosing the culturally relevant classroom*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Long, S., Souto-Manning, M., & Vasquez, V.M. (Eds.) (2016). *Courageous leadership in early childhood education: Taking a stand for social justice*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Souto-Manning, M., Llerena, C., Martell, J., Salas, A., & Arce-Boardman, A. (2018). *No more culturally irrelevant teaching*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

ARTICLES

Allen, E. G. (2015). Connecting the immigrant experience through literature. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 97(4), 31-35.

Braden, E. (2016). "What can I do?" *The possibilities of agency in elementary classrooms: When teachers design critical spaces for young children*. Handbook of Research on Teacher Education and Professional Development. IGI Publishing.

Braden, E. *Do you have papers?: Latinx third graders analyze immigration policy through critical multicultural literature*.

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Blackledge, A., & Creese, A. (Eds.). (2013). *Heteroglossia as practice and pedagogy*. Berlin: Springer.

Garcia, O. (2009). *Emergent Bilinguals and TESOL: What's in a name?* *TESOL Quarterly*, 43(2), 322–326. doi:10.1002/j.1545-7249.2009.tb00172.x

García, O., Woodley, H. H., Flores, N., & Chu, H. (2012). *Latino Emergent Bilingual Youth in High Schools*. *Urban Education*, 48(6), 798-827. doi:10.1177/0042085912462708

Gonzalez, M. C. (2017). *When a Bully is President: Truth and Creativity for Oppressive Times/Cuando El Presidente es un Bulí: La Verdad y la Creatividad en Tiempos Opresivos*. New York, NY: Reflection Press.

Gonzalez, R. (2006). *Papalotzin and the Monarchs: A Bilingual Tale of Breaking Down Walls*. *Teaching Tolerance*. Retrieved from <https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/fall-2006/papalotzin-and-the-monarchs-a-bilingual-tale-of-breaking-down-walls>

López-Robertson, J. (2017). Diciendo cuentos/Telling Stories: Learning from and about the Community Cultural Wealth of Latina Mamás through Latino Children's Literature. *Language Arts*, 95, (1), 7-16.

López-Robertson, J. (2016). *No más quería entrar con nosotros: Understanding Immigration through Children's Life Stories*.

Retrieved from: <http://wowlit.org/on-line-publications/stories/v1/>

López-Robertson, J. (2015). 'No sabía que tenía valor': Uncovering Latina mothers' multiple literacies. *Journal of Family Strengths* 15(2),

Available at: <http://digitalcommons.library.tmc.edu/jfs/vol15/iss2/2>

López-Robertson, J. (2012). "Oigan, tengo un cuento": Crossing la frontera of life and books. *Language Arts*, 90(1), 30-43.

López-Robertson, J. & Reeves, L. (2011). "What?! That happened in America?": Learning about U. S. History through Multicultural Literature *WOW Stories* 3 (2)

Retrieved from <http://wowlit.org/on-line-publications/stories/storiesiii2/6/>

López-Robertson, J. (2010). "Lo agarraron y lo echaron pa'tras": Discussing critical social issues with young Latinas/ Discutiendo críticas y temas sociales con niñas Latinas. *Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal* 12(2), 43-54.

López-Robertson, J. (2003). Tomás and the library lady: A call to social action. *Arizona Reading Journal* 29(2),10-17.

Martínez-Roldán, C. & López-Robertson, J. (1999/2000). Initiating literature circles in a first-grade bilingual classroom. *The Reading Teacher* 53(4), 270-281.

Martínez-Roldán, C. & López-Robertson, J. (1999). "Stop, think, and listen to the heart": Literature discussions in a primary bilingual classroom. *The New Advocate* 12 (4), 377-379.

Osorio, S. (2018). No room for silence: The impact of the 2016 presidential race on a second-grade dual-language (Spanish-English) classroom. Occasional Paper Series #39: Supporting Young Children of Immigrants in PreK-3.

<https://www.bankstreet.edu/scholarly-initiatives/occasional-paper-series/39/part-i/no-room-for-silence/>

Osorio, S. (2018). Multicultural Literature as a Classroom Tool. Multicultural Perspectives. DOI:10.1080/15210960.2018.1408348

Osorio, S. (2018). Towards a humanizing pedagogy: Using Latinx Children's Literature with Early Childhood Students. *Bilingual Research Journal*.

DOI:10.1080/15235882.2018.1425165

Osorio, S. (2016). Border Stories: Using Critical Race and Latino Critical Theories to Understand the Experiences of Latino/a Children. *Race Ethnicity and Education*. DOI: 10.1080/13613324.2016.1195351

Osorio, S. (2015). "Qué es deportar?" Teaching from students' lives. *Rethinking Schools*. Volume 30, pp.28-32.

Rodriguez, S. & Braden, E. (in press). What does it mean to be an immigrant? A Critical Content Analysis of the Representation of Immigrants and Immigration in Latinx Children's Picture Books. *Journal of Children's Literature*.

SCHOOL LIBRARY JOURNAL 2018 DAY OF DIALOGUE KEYNOTE: Yuyi Morales, author, illustrator, 5 times winner of the School Library Association's Pura Belpré Award:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HF8Qb6S2RME>