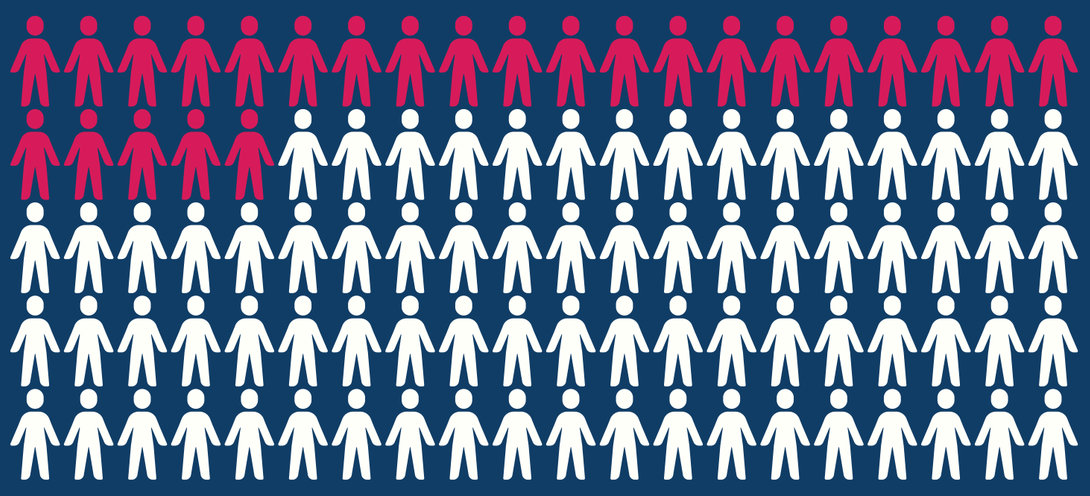
A Path to Citizenship is Essential for Children in Massachusetts to Thrive

Nationwide, 25% of all children have an immigrant parent & over 5 million children have an undocumented immigrant parent—a majority of those children are U.S. citizens. In Massachusetts, over 81k children have an undocumented parent.

A path to citizenship would lift over 3,000 children out of poverty in Massachusetts.[1]

25% of children with an undocumented parent in Massachusetts live in poverty—higher than the 16% national child poverty rate.



What Does a Path to Citizenship Mean for Children in Immigrant Families?

Success in Schools

The harmful effects of immigration enforcement on children—such as lower academic achievement & increased absenteeism—would decrease. Undocumented students would also be better able to pursue higher education, including more access to financial supports.

Access to Critical Supports

Anti-immigrant policies can make it less likely for children to be enrolled in health & nutrition programs. Without fear of immigration-related consequences, families would have greater access to supports that are critical to their healthy development.

Better Physical Health

Uninsured rates are double for U.S. citizen children with an immigrant parent, and undocumented children are almost completely barred from accessing health care. Expanded health care access & removed social stressors related to undocumented status would improve health outcomes for children and families.

Better Mental Health

The fear of separation has serious long-term developmental impacts on children & Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder symptoms are significantly higher for children of detained & deported parents. A path to citizenship would ensure that children & families do not have to deal with the anxiety related to being undocumented or having an undocumented parent.

Economic Stability

U.S. citizenship means greater access to income supports that help lift families out of poverty, like the Child Tax Credit. Parents would also be able to obtain more stable, higher-paying jobs with greater work protections to better support their families.

Keeping Families Together

A safe & stable household and connections to a caregiver are essential to a child's wellbeing, yet many families live in fear of separation due to detention or deportation. Removing this fear would provide long-term security for children & youth who are undocumented or have an undocumented family member.

State demographic data calculated by Dr. James Bachmeier, Associate Professor at Temple University, Dr. Chloe East, Assistant Professor of Economics at University of Colorado, Denver & Dr. Heather Koball, Co-Director, National Center for Children in Poverty. The analysis examined the influence of work authorization on earnings using data from the American Community Survey and the Survey of Income and Program Participation.