



# Stop Terrorizing Our Kids: How Immigration Operations are Harming Children and What Policymakers Can Do to Stop It

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**Children's advocacy organizations from the Children Thrive Action Network (CTAN) are calling on Congress to reject additional funding for ICE and CBP to harm families, detain parents, and traumatize children.** Among these organizations are the Child Welfare League of America, Children's Defense Fund-Texas, National Association of Social Workers, National Women's Law Center, Early Childhood Funders Collaborative, Center for Law and Social Policy, Child Care for Every Family Network, The Children's Partnership, Children's HealthWatch, MomsRising, National Newcomer Network, Corridor Community Action Network, National Parents Union, and Young Center for Immigrant Children's Rights.

**Over the past year**, children have borne the consequences of federal agents' raids of **schools, child care centers**, neighborhoods, and homes. ICE's **violence** has **left children without parents**, including the children of **Renee Good, Geraldo Lunas Campos**, and **dozens of others** whose lives have been needlessly taken by ICE in the agency's **deadliest year in two decades**. Between **deaths in detention** and **extrajudicial killings**, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is responsible for at least eight deaths so far in 2026. Tens of thousands more are being subject to inhumane conditions in detention; ICE is detaining 73,000 people—**6,000 of whom are in family units** and include underage children.

**Through these escalating tactics and atrocities, ICE has done irreversible harm to children across the country in just the first weeks of 2026:**

## **ICE agents are abducting children and using them as bait.**

- ICE **abducted and detained 5-year-old Liam Ramos and his father** as they returned home from his preschool, attempting to use Liam as bait to arrest his mother. While **the father and son have since been returned home** by court order, **Liam is traumatized** and **hundreds of other children and parents remain** in the Texas facility, where a **measles outbreak** has been reported.
- At least six children from Liam Ramos's school district have been taken into ICE custody this year, with a **second grader and fifth grader** from Liam's elementary school being taken into ICE custody, just days after Liam's abduction.
- They abducted **entire families** who were resettled to the United States as admitted refugees.
- **Two-year-old Chloe Renata Tipan Villacis** and her father were abducted near their home. Agents shattered the window of their car to detain them and transported the child and her father to Texas within hours of apprehension, despite court orders. The family has active asylum cases.

## **ICE agents are physically assaulting children and youth, conducting enforcement actions with no regard to child well-being.**

- ICE violently **arrested** 17-year-old **Jonathan Aguilar Garcia**, who was working at the time; they assaulted him and then threw him out of their SUV a mile away from where they kidnapped him.
- **A family driving home with six children** in their car were surrounded by ICE agents who threw tear gas at them. This resulted in three of the children having to be hospitalized, including a six-month-old.
- They **rear-ended a car with two teenagers** and abducted them both, despite being shown identification.

- Their [pursuit of an immigrant](#) led them into a school zone, where they deployed tear gas while students were being let out of classes and arrested high school staff and students.
- They are [raiding homes with young children inside](#), in one instance using a battering ram to break down the door of [Garrison Gibson](#) and abduct him without a judicial warrant, while his 9-year-old child and 11-year-old niece were present.
- They detained a parent who was waiting at the [school bus stop with their child](#), tearing the parent away from their child as other children watched in horror.
- 16-year-old Xochitl Soberanes [became the single parent of her three younger siblings](#) in an instant after their father Victor was abducted and detained by ICE. The two-year-old grandson of ChongLy Thao—a U.S. citizen who was arrested and pulled from his home in his underwear—[witnessed](#) his grandfather's abduction and now has trouble sleeping.

**This is not just happening in Minnesota. ICE has spent the first few weeks of the new year assaulting children and families across the country.**

- In Texas, [16-year-old](#) Arnoldo was getting breakfast with his dad when masked agents pulled up to their car and violently assaulted and arrested them both.
- In New Jersey, [six-year-old](#) Annabella was left completely alone after her father was detained on the way to grab dinner. [Two other parents](#) were detained after dropping their children off at school. JuanDaniel Mendoza, a [17-year-old](#) was abducted while doing laundry.
- In Oregon, ICE detained a family, including [seven-year-old](#) Diana [Crespo, outside a hospital](#) where the family had gone to get emergency care for the child.
- In Maryland, Kevin Martinez, a [15-year-old](#) with cancer, passed away days after his mother was detained by ICE. DHS refused to let them be reunited before his death.
- In Maine, [a mother of four](#) was followed by ICE agents after she dropped her children off at school and was detained. Agents [told a father](#) they would come back for his entire family after he would not let them enter his home without a warrant. The single mother of [five-year old](#) [Keyli Camila Espin Vaca](#) was detained by ICE, separating her from her daughter for days.
- In Washington, [ten-year old](#) Karla Tiul Baltazar and her father were deported, despite having an active asylum case. Two siblings, a seven-year-old and an 11-year-old, were [forced to flee](#) their apartment after ICE abducted their father and threatened to take them days later.
- In California, a [13-year-old's](#) only foster parent was detained by ICE.
- In Michigan, multiple [parents of students](#) were abducted from a bus stop during student drop-off times.

These are stories just in the first weeks of the new year in which children are impacted—but there are countless more ways the Trump Administration is terrorizing individuals and families. **This harm will continue to escalate across the country unless Congress takes action now.**

[Research repeatedly](#) shows the harms of these actions on children. There is no appropriate amount of time for children to be detained. Separation from a parent and even the fear alone of separation harms a child's development, in particular among young children. Children need their parents and loving caregivers, a safe place to call home, and the ability to safely go to child care, school, medical appointments, and community engagements without government terror or interference.

**For the sake of our kids, Congress must publicly speak out against these harms against children and refuse to give ICE and CBP more money to terrorize and detain our neighbors and families. Congress and state and local officials must launch investigations and hold accountable those who have violated children and families' human and constitutional rights.**

