

Children's Rights

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<https://www.childrensrights.org/hello-america-its-time-to-look-in-the-mirror/>

Campaign and Advocacy

By Kayla Muzquiz, Children's Champion Member



When I see the never-ending news reports about the inhumane conditions children in migrant detention centers are being forced to live in, I am reminded of my own [experiences](#) growing up in foster care facilities.

[This article got it exactly right.](#) Whats happening to children at the border is a travesty. But its also happening to kids in foster care systems throughout the country. Its time to look in the mirror.

I live in San Antonio, Texas, just minutes from the border with Mexico. As a child, I lost my mother and was taken from my abusive father. I endured years of neglect and abuse as the child welfare agency moved me between residential facilities across multiple states.

I still have nightmares from my last placement in Utah. It was the worst of them all. They monitored my sleep and locked me in the basement alone for days at a time. They listened in on my phone calls and read my mail. I was told the sexual abuse I had lived through was my fault. I was put on four medications that affected my impulse control, and my moods were all over the place. I wanted to kill myself.

Staff in these facilities treated me like I was a problem to be managed rather than a young girl who needed compassion and love. If this level of mistreatment can happen to a citizen like me, its no surprise that its happening to immigrant children even as cases of abuse are kept in the shadows.

The struggles of foster youth and young people in migrant detention facilities are connected. **[Im proud to be a champion member of Childrens Rights, which is the nations conscience for how our government treats kids. They are working to \[end\]\(#\) the institutionalization of children and toward the day when all children can grow up in safe, loving homes.](#)**

As many as 80 percent of children in migrant detention have family members in the U.S. who can take them into their homes. With the proper resources, many of these children could be released from detention in a matter of days.

I know this is a complicated problem. **But as someone with lived experience, I think its [time](#) we all put kids first and find solutions that keep them safe. And that means both at the border and in cities and towns across the country where whats happening to kids is not making headline news.**

[All children deserve a healthy, hopeful future no matter where they were born. I hope youll join me in supporting Childrens Rights efforts to make this a reality.](#)

Visit our [Tales of Strength & Love](#) page for more stories like Kaylas.

Thousands of children are trapped in systems they do not understand. These systems fail to understand that children need time and space to be children and develop the foundations that allow them to be who they truly are.

Help us build a better childhood for kids everywhere and [donate to our Childhood is Our First Right](#) campaign today.

Make sure to follow our Childhood is Our First Right campaign on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), and [Facebook](#) for stories, news, events, and actions you can take to help build a brighter future for children.

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First Name	Last Name
Email Address	

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