

Justice in Motion

Discrimination, Detention, and Deportation: Immigration & Refugees

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Justice in Motion Announces Initiative to Address Child Detention Crisis During the Coronavirus Pandemic

BROOKLYN, NY Today, Justice in Motion announced an initiative to address the problem of child detention, a crisis further exacerbated by the coronavirus pandemic. The Child Detention Crisis initiative brings together advocates from the United States, Mexico, and Central America to enable the swift and safe release of migrant children from immigration detention and reunite them with their families or other loved ones.

Under normal circumstances, detention can exacerbate trauma. During a pandemic, it puts migrant children's lives at risk, said **Cathleen Caron, Executive Director of Justice in Motion**. While we were developing this initiative before the pandemic began, the current circumstances call for urgent action to address the needs of detained migrant children. By working together across borders, Justice in Motion and our partners can get hundreds of kids out of dangerous detention conditions and into safe and loving homes.

Children often spend months or even years in centers operated by the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) as they wait for their care options to be vetted and approved. At the same time, they face the possibility of being deported to countries where they might not be safe. Despite the objections of advocates and judges, the Department of Justice has refused to close immigration courts and children are forced to appear in court during the pandemic.

We are proud to partner with Justice in Motion to serve unaccompanied immigrant children coming to seek safety in the United States, said **Gladis Molina Alt, Child Advocate Program Director at the Young Center**. In the face of continued attacks on children's human rights, it's now more important than ever that we collaborate across borders to protect their best interests.

As part of this initiative, U.S. advocates are connected with members of the Justice in Motion Defender Network in Central America and Mexico. Through this unique, on-the-ground collaboration, advocates are able to secure vital information and documents needed to safely reunite children with loved ones and prevent the children's return to countries where their lives would be in danger.

Nothing justifies the detention of children for immigration reasons, especially in the middle of a health crisis, said **Miriam Gonzalez, Communications Director at the Instituto para las Mujeres en la Migración (IMUMI), a member of the Justice in Motion Defender Network**. Children's rights transcend borders.

The Justice in Motion Child Detention Crisis initiative is funded through a generous grant by **Together Rising** and has already helped more than 40 children in detention. To learn more about the initiative and its successes, please visit the Justice in Motion website: [justiceinmotion.org/child-detention-crisis](https://www.justiceinmotion.org/child-detention-crisis).

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Justice in Motion protects migrant rights by ensuring justice across borders. Our unique network of on-the-ground human rights defenders in Mexico and Central America partner with U.S. advocates to make sure that wherever migrants go, their rights will follow.

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