

Justice in Motion

Discrimination, Detention, and Deportation: Immigration & Refugees

<https://www.justiceinmotion.org/child-detention-crisis>

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The Child Detention Crisis initiative is a Justice in Motion program dedicated to freeing migrant children from U.S. immigration detention centers and safely reuniting them with their families. By deploying our unique Defender Network, we secure vital information and documents U.S. advocates need to reunite children with their loved ones quickly and securely.

Many children in detention centers today are fleeing violence or other life-threatening situations in their countries of origin. Being separated from their family leads to further traumatization. Children often spend months, or even years, in facilities operated by the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) as they wait for release options to be vetted and approved. By bringing together advocates from the United States, Central America, and Mexico, Justice in Motion ensures that justice for migrant children crosses borders too.

Julio is a twelve-year-old from Honduras who was abandoned by his mother when he was a baby and raised by his father. Julio hasn't seen or been able to get in contact with his father since they separated at the border, and all his identifying documents were water-damaged during the difficult journey north. A Justicein Motion Defender in Honduras is now working with U.S. advocates to obtain proof of his identity and get him out of detention.

Carlos is a two-year-old child with severe medical issues. He has been in detention for nine months, separated from the only father he has ever known. Advocates with the help of Justice in Motion Defenders in Central America are attempting to overcome issues that hinder his release to his father's care while doing everything we can to ensure his health is not further impacted by the prolonged detention.

Roberto is a two-year-old child from Nicaragua who spent seven months in U.S. custody after he and his stepfather were separated because they were not biologically related. Members of Justice in Motion's Defender Network collaborated with advocates in the U.S. to gather the documents needed to expedite his release and allow him to return to Nicaragua to reunify with his mother.

When Ana Ruth was just eight months old, her parents were attacked and murdered by a criminal group. She was taken in by her aunt, but after years of living in fear, they were forced to flee and seek asylum in the United States. Officials separated Ana Ruth and her aunt at the border and detained them at different facilities in different states. U.S. advocates and members of the Justice in Motion Defender Network worked together to investigate the possibility of safe housing in the country of origin. After nearly ten painful months of separation, Ana Ruth and her aunt were reunited at last.

Founder & Executive Director,

Justice in Motion

Child Advocate Program Director,
The Young Center

Collaboration is central to the Justice in Motion model and is at the heart of the Child Detention Crisis initiative. This initiative is made possible through the hard work and dedication of advocates and allies throughout the Americas.

In February 2020, Justice in Motion convened attorneys and social workers from the United States, Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras in Antigua, Guatemala. There, members of the Justice in Motion Defender Network and our partners at the [Young Center](#) strategized and shared our expertise to tackle this critical initiative. We continue to share best practices as the initiative grows and look forward to welcoming future partners to help reunite migrant children with their loved ones.

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