

THE CATHOLIC  
UNIVERSITY  
OF AMERICA



National Catholic School of Social Service  
Office of the Dean

Dear NCSSS Community,

June 18, 2018

More than 2500 migrant children have been taken from their parents at the US southern border as a result of President Trump's efforts to deter parents from crossing into the United States without proper documentation. As Dr. Eileen Dombo and Professor Randall O'Toole, who are faculty experts on trauma and abuse, note, the psychological harm being done to these children is lasting and severe. Without immediate relief and intervention, the children are at increased risk for developing future attachment-related emotional and behavioral difficulties. Regardless of where one stands on the politics of immigration, the reckless abuse and neglect of children as punishment of their parents is repugnant!

As Dean of the National Catholic School of Social Service, I am officially joining our school to the protestation of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops, whose members have condemned the practice of breaking apart families and separately detaining migrant children. As the USCCB declared, "Separating babies from their mothers is not the answer, and it's immoral!" The practice of punishing parents by separately detaining their children is a violation of the sanctity of life and threatens the unity of the family. Further, it is an affront to the common good of our nation, and anathema to the democratic values on which this nation is founded.

I call on the NCSSS community to act urgently to end the separation of migrant children from their families. As Dr. Linda Plitt Donaldson teaches her social policy students, "social workers must act with two feet of love; one foot steps forward to meet the immediate needs of people, and the other foot steps forward to act with justice, and in solidarity with people who are harmed by social policy decisions." I urge you to call your elected officials, write letters and op-eds to your local newspapers, and attend events in your community in solidarity with migrant families. We must act now to end the separation and detention of migrant children!

Very truly,

*Will C. Rainford*

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