



The American
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Press Release:

Headline: Over 200 organizations demand end of ‘child abuse’ at border and in detention

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Forty-five national organizations and 157 statewide groups have endorsed a [letter to Congress](#) deploring the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s treatment of children trying to migrate with their parents into the U.S., calling it child abuse.

The letter, sent by [The National Child Abuse Coalition](#) and addressed to Senate and House Leadership said, “Many of the conditions faced by these children violate child abuse statutes all around the country.”

The letter cites “separation, detention, cages, deplorable physical and hygiene conditions, bullying and intimidation by guards” as practices that are “in direct conflict with what science tells us about healthy child development.”

The national organizations signing the letter include Child Welfare League of America, The American Psychological Association, The Children’s Defense Fund, Prevent Child Abuse America, The National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners, and The American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children. Many of these professional societies and organizations, who also belong to the [National Health Collaborative on Violence and Abuse](#) have also endorsed a statement calling for proper care of immigrant children in federal custody and offering their expertise and support to Congress.

“The frustration of professionals dedicated to promoting the health and welfare of children has never been higher,” said Janet Rosenzweig, APSAC executive director. “To see so many principles of child welfare practice ignored is astonishing.”

“Science has shown the devastating impact that trauma can have on the developing brains of children,” said David Corwin, APSAC president. “I believe that most Americans do not condone our government causing permanent psychological injury to these children just as they do not condone child abuse by anyone in this country – it is totally unacceptable that our government is creating conditions that threaten the long-term mental health of these children.”

Despite the official end to the Administration’s zero tolerance policy, hundreds of children are still being separated and detained, the letter to Congress says. Warren Binford, an APSAC member and one of the legal experts who in June discovered hundreds of children being warehoused at the Clint Border Patrol Facility in Texas, warned, “We are at a crossroads in our nation’s history. Hundreds of interviews show that children are being routinely and systematically abused and neglected at the hands of our government. We cannot allow the mistreatment of children to be normalized or ignored. It is critical that every person in the U.S. who cares about children speak out against these inhumane practices.”

In yet another effort to spur Congressional action and raise public awareness, on September 11 and 12, some of the nation’s top pediatric experts in medicine, psychology, law, and social work will conduct briefings for the House and Senate to support Congressional leadership in ending the systematic maltreatment of these children in U.S. custody.

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[The American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children](#), founded in 1986, is a nonprofit, national organization focused on meeting the needs of professionals engaged in all aspects of services for maltreated children and their families. Especially important to APSAC is the dissemination of state-of-the-art practice in all professional disciplines related to child abuse and neglect. APSAC membership includes physicians, attorneys, social workers, clinicians, educators and researchers, all dedicated to excellence in practice in child maltreatment.