



The Center for the Children of Immigrants is an initiative of First Focus that informs and engages policymakers, advocates, the media, and other key stakeholders to ensure that federal and state policies promote the health, well-being, and success of children in immigrant families.

Children in immigrant families now comprise one quarter of all children in the United States and account for nearly the entire growth of the U.S. child population between 1990 and 2008. Statistics such as these confirm that the healthy development of this rapidly growing segment of the child population will be critical to the nation's future prosperity. Yet, children of immigrants are more likely to live in low-income families, lack health insurance, and experience high levels of food insecurity. Furthermore, often the same policies and programs aimed at safeguarding vulnerable children also impose significant barriers to children of immigrants, particularly when issues such as immigration status and cultural competency are not considered. Likewise, many immigration policies, such as immigration enforcement measures, further undermine the well-being and safety of immigrant children and their families.

The Center for the Children of Immigrants aims to specifically address the comprehensive needs of children in immigrant families through the development and promotion of policy solutions in the following areas:

- **Immigration Laws:** Ensuring that legislative and administrative proposals uphold the interests of children, including immigrant youth, U.S. citizen children of immigrants, and unaccompanied minors.
- **Humane Enforcement:** Ensuring that immigration enforcement laws do not unnecessarily harm children and that families are able to remain together whenever possible and out of institutional settings.
- **Child Welfare:** Addressing the intersection of child welfare and immigration policies to increase collaboration and understanding across the two systems to promote the best interest of the child.
- **Health & Basic Needs:** Expanding access to health insurance coverage, nutrition assistance, and other critical safety net programs for children regardless of immigration status.
- **Economic Security:** Protecting and expanding access to income supports and tax credits for children in low-income immigrant families.
- **Early Childhood:** Expanding access to high-quality pre-K programs and childcare programs for children of immigrants, including dual language learners.
- **Education Access:** Ensuring access to a high quality education that meets the needs of children in immigrant families, including English language learners, and promoting access to higher education for immigrant youth.
- **Child Rights:** Protecting the fundamental rights of children of immigrants, such as protecting birthright citizenship and advocating for legal representation for unaccompanied children.
- **Racial Equity:** Reducing racial disparities caused by policies that discriminate against children and families due to immigration status.

Please visit the First Focus website to view reports and briefs developed by the Center, and follow the Center on Twitter at @KidsImmigration.