



## ***The Kid Angle***

*Kid-focused news from First Focus on Children*

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### **How Title 42 weighs down the nation's children May 19, 2022**

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#### ***And how Congress could make it right***

Lawmakers may have abandoned the pretense that the border expulsion policy known as Title 42 has anything to do with public health, but they are still calling for its continuation. **Why? And what does it mean for kids?** [First Focus on Children immigration lead Miriam Abaya has the answers](#), which we're condensing for you here:

#### **Why does Congress want to continue Title 42?**

Because members on [both sides of the aisle](#) view the policy — which misuses the pandemic and U.S. law as an excuse to turn back asylum seekers — as a deterrent to migration, including the **legal** right to seek asylum that Congress itself passed. Bills introduced in the [House](#) and [Senate](#) would maintain the expulsion policy by tying it to the end of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.

#### **So what?**

Start with the facts that:

- The CDC last month [declared the measure unnecessary](#) in the face of widely available vaccines and other COVID mitigations, and made a decision to terminate the policy on May 23

- Lawmakers are using the policy as a **pawn to block critical funding** for COVID-19 mitigation

## What does this have to do with kids?

[No one needs COVID mitigation more than children](#). Cases of childhood COVID continue to rise and children remain the largest unvaccinated group in the country.

In addition, **Title 42 subjects children to physical and emotional violence:**

- [29,000](#) **children in families were expelled** in just the first five months of 2021
- More than [2,100](#) **children experienced family separation** during those first five months
- Human rights organizations have recorded **more than [10,000](#) reported cases of kidnapping, torture, rape** and other violence against people expelled, including children. This number is likely a gross underestimation.

## What needs to be done?

Lawmakers must decouple immigration policy from public health decision-making. COVID-19 funding must be voted on **without** harmful amendments that would keep Title 42 in place.

**And lawmakers, finally, must ask “What policy is best for children?”**

The answer would yield clear, common-sense border solutions that advance the health, safety, family unity, and development of children and that, in fact, create a fair, orderly, and humane immigration system. **Border policies must:**

- Welcome and process children, families, and individuals seeking asylum in a manner that **keeps families together, provides humanitarian assistance, and connects them with government-supported organizations** providing shelter, reception, and support for people’s immigration cases and final destinations
- Allow children and their families to **pursue their immigration cases in the community** with access to community-based services that help them understand the immigration system and recover from their trauma
- Grant children and families a **fair opportunity to make their claim for protection** within a meaningful timeframe, and with legal and social services to develop their immigration case

## In other news, child care gets a boost in the Senate:

Sens. Pat Murray (D-WA) and Tim Kaine (D-VA) offered a [child care and preschool reconciliation proposal](#) this week that acknowledges the fragile state of our child care system and meets the need to include in any reconciliation package funding to support child care providers, teachers and parents. [Read more here.](#)

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