



Ohio Psychological Association: Official Statement

The Traumatic Effects of Separating Immigrant Families

June 19, 2018

Written by: Ohio Psychological Association Board of Directors

The Ohio Psychological Association (OPA) is a membership organization representing psychologists in Ohio. Our members work in private practice, at colleges and universities, schools, in the public sector, hospitals, and in integrated care programs. Ohio psychologists work with children, adolescents, adults and the elderly.

Our Mission is “To advance the creation, communication and application of psychological knowledge to benefit society and to improve people’s lives in Ohio.” Our values include:

- Championing human rights and mental wellbeing for all
- Modeling diversity and inclusiveness

We strongly endorse the statements made by the American Psychological Association President, Dr. Jessica Henderson Daniel, regarding the harmful impact on the mental health of immigrant children and families, who are fleeing violence in their countries by coming to the United States, only to be separated and interred.

(<http://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2018/05/separating-immigrant-families.aspx>) Our profession’s scientific literature documents that separating children from their parents often leads to anxiety and depression, as well as possible attachment difficulties and trauma, which can adversely affect academic performance and the developmental sequence.

As psychologists we are bound by a Code of Ethical Conduct and these actions by our Government are inconsistent with our Ethical mandates. We call on all psychologists in Ohio to contact Trump Administration officials, your member of Congress and our Senators and tell them to rescind this ill-conceived policy. OPA urges all healthcare professionals to petition the Trump Administration and Congress to end this harmful and unethical practice and keep families intact. We can and should have a practical, moral, and humane border policy.

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The Ohio Psychological Association, in Columbus, Ohio, is membership organization of approximately 1,500 Ohio psychologists. Its mission is to advance psychology as a science, as a profession and as a means of promoting human welfare. For more information or for a psychologist referral, visit www.ohpsych.org.