

NO LONGER FEELING SAFE: Perspectives on immigration policy from early childhood professionals

Policymakers must prioritize the wellbeing of children in our laws and policies. Yet the Trump Administration has been indifferent to—and even emboldened by—the harmful consequences of its immigration policy priorities for up to 7.5 million young children in immigrant families across the country. CLASP surveyed nearly 200 early care and education professionals in 17 states regarding perceived changes among children and parents in their programs. This is what we learned.

Children in immigrant families are a large and growing share of the young child population

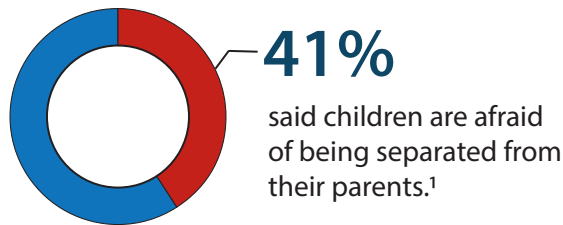
1 in 4 children under age 8 have an immigrant parent



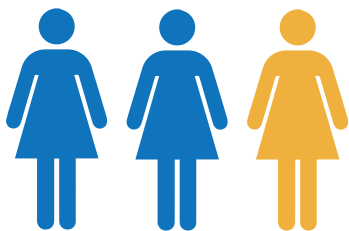
Source: CLASP analysis of 2018 American Community Survey data

FAMILY SEPARATION IS PREVALENT IN OUR OWN BACKYARDS

Among respondents who work directly with children,

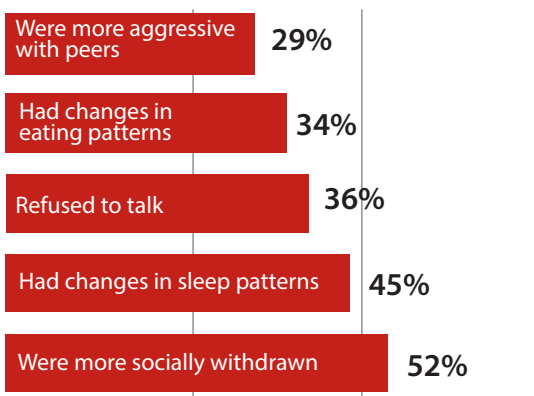


"I noticed the children did not feel safe anymore... Children seem to feel like they were next to have to leave."
– Home Based Child Care Director from New York

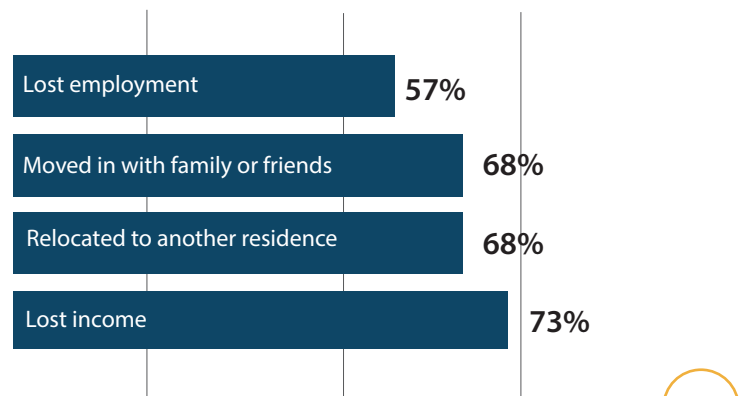


Nearly 1 in 3 respondents were aware of at least one child in their program who had a family member that was arrested, detained, or deported.

Respondents said children:²

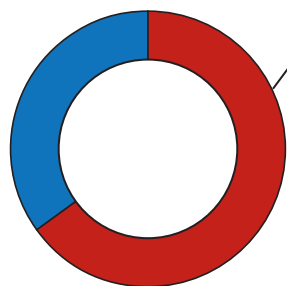


Respondents said families:²



CHILDREN ARE LOSING ACCESS TO VITAL SERVICES

Among respondents working with parents and children,

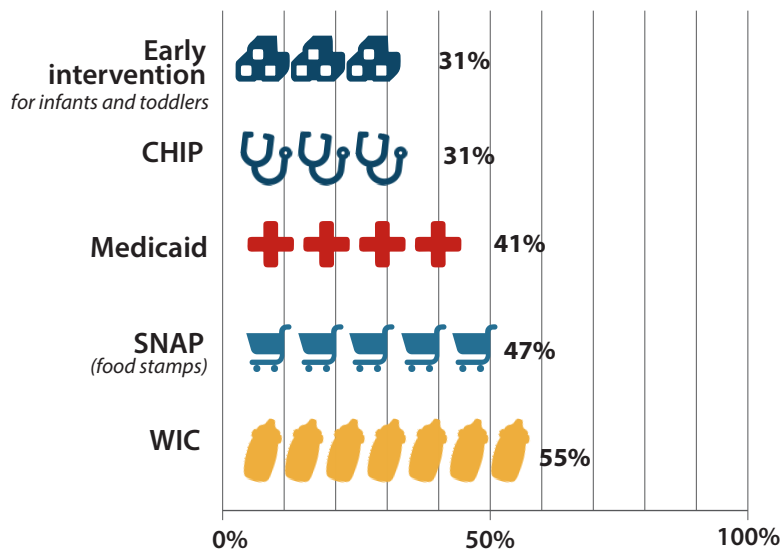


65% said parents have refused at least one publicly-funded program for their children in the last year.³

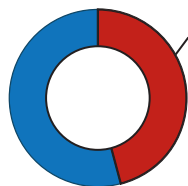
"About 15-20 families [of more than 100] currently enrolled have dropped from SNAP."

– Head Start provider from Texas

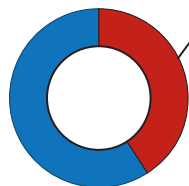
Providers report parents are refusing:



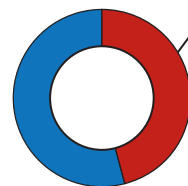
Children are also losing out on early educational opportunities. Program administrators reported:⁴



46% have difficulty meeting enrollment goals



41% not having a waiting list this year



46% frequent absences when there is real or rumored immigration enforcement nearby

About this survey

As part of our continued efforts to document the harm of immigration policy changes on children and families, the Center for Law and Social Policy conducted a web survey of early care and education providers between July and October 2019. A total of 188 respondents from 17 different states participated in the survey. Just under half of all respondents identified as program administrators or directors; the remaining 52 percent work directly with children and/or their parents. For detailed sample descriptives, see clasp.org/nolongerfeelingsafe. The findings in this brief reflect the characteristics and beliefs of the respondents and are not nationally representative of early care and education programs or immigrant families with young children.

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¹ Represents the share of respondents who work directly with children (n=87) who agreed or strongly agreed.

² Represents the share of respondents who knew of one or more children affected by immigration enforcement (n=56) who checked the enumerated economic or behavioral impacts.

³ Represents the share of respondents who work with parents and children (n=51) who checked one or more programs that parents have refused for their children.

⁴ Represents the share of program directors or administrators (n=76) who agreed or strongly agreed.