

Anxiety of Children of Parents Who Are Undocumented In Light of the Current Political Campaign

Many of you have contacted CMI regarding the anxiety of students whose parents are in fear of being deported, depending on the outcome of the election. In cases such as this, it is probably only marginally helpful to work with their emotions. These children already know that they're feeling anxiety. They're hearing a lot about their parents' concerns when they're home.

Following is a list of possibly helpful discussion points. Choosing which of these to use and what language to use will depend on the developmental age of the child.

- So far, candidates who have spoken about deportation are not leading in the polls.
- A great number of those in congress would not support a plan of deportation, so many efforts that would start immediately to abolish any new efforts of deportation.
- Many politicians and others with authority and power would likely step in to work toward alternatives, such as creating a fast track to help those who are undocumented gain citizenship or some status that would protect those who are already here.
- Following the election, nothing could be implemented immediately, even if there were those who tried to initiate the process. It would take lots of money and a long time for such a plan to progress, which would provide time to implement alternative protective procedures as mentioned above. It would also take great increases of personnel to be able to manage increased deportations. All of this would cost the government money, which means there would likely have to be appropriations legislation passed as well.
- There will be those who recognize that our agriculture industry depends on having crops harvested. Both local farmers and big agriculture know that their whole industry would suffer greatly, so they, too, would likely mount efforts to protect these people who are a critical cog in the wheel of the industry.
- Youth who were born here are American citizens, so they have the right to be here. Youth who have relatives who have gained legal status could likely stay with relatives while their parents went through the process of immigration or documentation, which would allow those students to continue in their schools here.
- There would be many Americans who would be interested in reaching out to youth to give care and assistance. Reinforce with these students that there are some Americans who feel negatively about immigrants and there are so very many who are welcoming and would want to be supportive of efforts for their protection.
- Civic organizations and religious groups often provide support for families in these dilemmas. Before speaking with youth, check out the possible religious or civic supports in your local area so you can include that information as well.

This is not intended to be a political statement. This is specifically to address the fears of children who feel vulnerable to the deportation issue, whether for themselves, their families or their friends, given the current rhetoric. Counselors often request guidelines from us. CMI aims to respond to all requests when emotional components of current circumstances interfere with learning and disrupt a sense of safety for youth.