Supporting Immigrant Families in a Time of Fear and Uncertainty

Counselors for Social Justice Webinar Series

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- Welcome – Laura Pignato, CSJ Professional Development Chair
  - CEUs
  - Q&A
  - Technical Issues
  - Speaker Introduction
Objectives

- Participants of this webinar will be able to
  - differentiate between recent legislative and policy changes and how they affect individuals of national and foreign origin;
  - identify empowerment interventions for clients and students who may be affected; and
  - recognize opportunities to join with larger advocacy groups focused on immigrant rights for the purpose of influencing law makers and community leaders toward a more just and inclusive ecology.
Executive Order: Border Security and Immigration Enforcement Improvements

- Construction of an "impassable" southern border
- Increased use of detention at the border and in the interior
- Expansion of detention capacity
- Expansion of expedited removal
- Authorization for local law enforcement to act as immigration officials under 287(g) agreements
- Conduct removal proceedings outside of the U.S.
- Limit humanitarian protection
- Prioritize criminal prosecution of unlawful entry
Executive Order: Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States

- Prioritize **all** undocumented immigrants for removal
- Increase the use of state and local police to enforce immigration law
- Hire additional ICE agents
- Punish "sanctuary" jurisdictions
- Increase immigration prosecutions
- Revive Secure Communities
- Pressure countries to accept their nationals
- Creation of the office for Victims of Immigrant Crime Engagement (VOICE)
- Changes to DHS’s privacy policies
Executive Order:
Protecting the Nation From Foreign Terrorist Entry
Into the United States

• Original
  • Suspension of U.S. Refugee admissions program (USRAP)
  • Ban on Syrian refugees
  • Ban on entry of nationals of Muslim-majority countries, with
    exceptions for religious minorities (Christians)
  • Requires in-person interviews for most nonimmigrant visa applicants
  • Screening of all immigration benefits
  • Biometric-entry exit

• Revised Order issued on March 6, 2017
  • No express preference to religious minorities
  • Excluded the “indefinite” ban on resettlement of Syrian refugees
  • Removed Iraq from the list of targeted countries
  • Does not apply to legal permanent residents or current visa holders
“Sanctuary” Laws

- **H.R. 3003: No Sanctuary for Criminals Act**
  - Imposes mandates on states to comply with federal immigration laws
  - Forces states to collect people’s immigration status and report to the federal government
  - Repossesses grant money related to law enforcement, terrorism, national security, immigration, or naturalization from states that do not comply

- **Texas SB4**
  - Allows local law enforcement officers to question the immigration status of people they detain or arrest
  - Punishes local government officials who don’t cooperate with federal immigration "detainers" — requests by agents to turn over immigrants subject to possible deportation.
  - Law is set to go into effect Sept. 1
  - Current lawsuit against SB4 includes Dallas, Austin, San Antonio, El Paso and Houston
Effects of Anti-immigrant Laws & Policies

- Vargas, Sanchez, and Juarez, 2017
  - Culture of fear created by anti-immigrant laws produce feelings of anxiety, fear, and depression
  - WHO recognizes political context and public policy as social determinants of health/mental health
  - Latinx report an increase in worry and anxiety for undocumented friends/relatives in their networks

- Hatzenbuehler, et al. 2017
  - Anti-immigrant policies create a climate of social exclusion and deprive individuals of a sense of belonging
  - Latinos living in states with a more exclusionary immigration policy climate had a higher rate of poor mental health days than Latinos living in states with a less exclusionary policy climate
Effects of Anti-immigrant Laws & Policies (cont’d)

• Hipolito-Delgado & Mann, 2012
  • Undocumented Mexican immigrants experience **negative sociopolitical challenges** in securing adequate housing, employment, and education
  • Changes in gender roles, racism and discrimination, the constant threat of deportation, and social isolation make undocumented immigrants more **vulnerable to depression, substance abuse, and occupational stress** than documented immigrants

• Salas, Ayón, & Gurrola, 2013
  • Immigrants experience **trauma** at all phases of the migration experience, including post-migration discrimination resulting from anti-immigrant sentiment
  • Despite the anti-immigrant laws and policies, conditions in the home country are worse and people are not going to stop coming
Empowerment

• Provide **Know Your Rights Resources**
  • PowerPoint Presentations
  • Pocket Cards
  • Flyers

• Deportation Preparedness
  • Family Plan
  • Safe Places

• Awareness of Changing Policies
  • Refugee Center Online
    • Information and Updates on the Executive Order

• Access to Legal Resources
  • Compile and make available a referral list of qualified, local non-profit immigration legal service providers in your community
Empowerment (cont’d)

• Create a Safe Space in Your School or Community
  • Distribute a statement from the superintendent or community leader affirming support for all students or members
  • Hold group meetings to discuss current policies
  • Engage students and families in discussing and addressing all forms of bullying, hate-related incidents, and possible immigration enforcement activities, as well as their potential impact on mental health and education outcomes
  • Develop a crisis response plan for immigration raids in the community
Advocacy on Behalf of Clients

• Support National Movements
  • Informed Immigrant
  • National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
  • American Civil Liberties Union for Immigrants’ Rights
  • International Rescue Committee

• Organize your community
  • Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC) Guide to Organizing an Immigration Community Meeting

• Legislative Advocacy
  • ACA Government Affairs Action Center
Stay Informed

- American Immigration Council
- Informed Immigrant
- American Civil Liberties Union

Additional Resources
Additional Resources
Questions & Comments
References


