



# **A Guide to Creating “Safe Space” Policies for Early Childhood Programs**

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# About This Guide

“A Guide to Creating ‘Safe Space’ Policies for Early Childhood Programs” gives practitioners, advocates, and policymakers information and resources to design and implement “safe space” policies that safeguard early childhood programs against immigration enforcement. A “safe space” policy is a plan or set of protocols to mitigate the harm of possible immigration enforcement actions at or near early childhood programs and protect families’ safety and privacy. CLASP is available to provide technical assistance as you develop your safe space policy. If you have questions or would like us to review a draft policy, please contact Priya Pandey ([ppandey@clasp.org](mailto:ppandey@clasp.org)) and Mikayla Slaydon ([mslaydon@clasp.org](mailto:mslaydon@clasp.org)). We know this is a hard and uncertain time. Our team is here to support you and the families you serve.

While this guide was originally written in 2019, this guide was most recently updated in March 2026 to reflect changes in federal immigration policy and practices, primarily as a result of a January 2025 directive issued by Acting Department of Homeland Security Secretary Benjamine Huffman. That directive rescinded the Biden Administration’s guidelines for Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) enforcement actions in or near areas important to community well-being, also known as “sensitive locations” or “protected areas.” A memo issued by ICE a few weeks after the January 2025 directive stands as the current policy and provides only very minimal protections, essentially requiring verbal or written authorization by ICE officials for immigration enforcement actions at formerly protected areas.

As a result of rolled back protections and an aggressive mass deportation plan backed by unprecedented funding increases for ICE and CBP, communities across the country have experienced increasingly violent and indiscriminate immigration raids that have destabilized entire communities. These actions have led to the deportation of a growing number of parents of minor children; the massive expansion of immigrant detention—including reopening family detention camps; and a chilling effect that is leading to drops in attendance in child care centers and schools across the country.

As ICE and CBP continue to undermine due process and norms, early childhood providers and administrators are searching for ways to continue to protect their staff and the children under their care. It is more essential than ever to affirm the rights that all people are afforded under the Constitution, although it is not possible to guarantee that these rights will be upheld in all situations. CLASP’s updated Safe Spaces Guide and accompanying one-page overview are intended to be used by service providers and community-based organizations as a comprehensive guide and visually accessible overview to use with the populations they serve and support.

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# PART 1: OVERVIEW OF SAFE SPACES POLICIES

## IMPACT OF IMMIGRATION POLICIES ON ACCESS TO EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

Early childhood programs play an important role in families' lives. Across the country, child care and early education providers offer millions of young children a safe space to play, learn, and grow while their parents work or attend school. These programs also connect families to important community resources like nutrition, health, and parenting services. For families facing adversity, early childhood programs provide stability when everything else is uncertain. However, families cannot reap the benefits of child care and early education if they are too afraid to enroll in or attend these programs.

CLASP's field research with immigrant parents and early care and education providers has shown that many parents question whether it is safe to bring their children to early childhood programs. Families are worried about sharing their personal information; concerned that participating in publicly funded programs could affect their ability to obtain long-term immigration status; and encountering immigration agents at or near early education sites, among other worries.

These fears persist and have extended to staff as well. In conversations with providers in 2025, CLASP found that early childhood programs are experiencing hardship due to immigration concerns, including drops in attendance, lower levels of parent engagement, and difficulty enrolling new families and retaining talented staff.

Evidence demonstrates that anti-immigrant policies create a "chilling effect" in which immigrants avoid accessing benefits they are entitled to due to the fear of encountering immigration enforcement agents or other immigration-related concerns.

## HISTORY OF THE "SENSITIVE LOCATIONS" AND "PROTECTED AREAS" POLICY

In 2011, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), which oversees both ICE and CBP, established policies that restrict immigration enforcement actions in certain "sensitive locations." These locations included places of worship, schools, health care facilities, and early childhood programs such as child care, preschool, pre-kindergarten, and Head Start programs.

In October 2021, DHS announced a new "protected areas" policy that replaced the 2011 policy. To clarify and strengthen the policy, it included locations that were outlined in the previous policy but also added other locations (such as those providing social services and places where children gather, like playgrounds) and specified how the policy should be consistently implemented. The new policy explicitly stated that, except in limited circumstances, immigration agents could not conduct arrests, apprehensions, or other enforcement actions in *or near* these locations. The policy also advised ICE and CBP agents to use their judgment as to whether an enforcement action would "restrain people from accessing the area."

On January 20, 2025, DHS ended the expansive 2021 protected areas policy and replaced it with a new **policy** directing ICE and CBP officials to use “**common sense**” when it comes to enforcement. An **updated policy** issued on January 31, 2025 offered very minimal protections, specifically allowing ICE officials to authorize enforcement actions in formerly protected areas with verbal or written authorization but with no consequences for incidents lacking proof of such authorization, and requiring consultation with legal counsel only for enforcement actions carried out near public demonstrations. This lack of clarity has led to increased immigration arrests at or near formerly protected areas with little to no accountability for the harm of such actions on providers or community members. **While the protected areas policy is no longer in place and there are no guarantees for how ICE agents will operate, providers and families continue to have rights that provide some protections should they encounter immigration enforcement actions in or near early childhood centers.**

## STATE AND LOCAL EFFORTS ON PROTECTED AREAS

In response to the lack of protections for sensitive locations at the federal level, multiple states have enacted legislation since 2025 aimed at keeping families and children safe in settings such as schools, early childhood programs, health care facilities, and more. While these state laws cannot supersede what is in place at the federal level, they can offer a layer of protection against enforcement and send a message to immigrant communities that state lawmakers are working to prevent enforcement actions at these locations. As of March 2026, 18 states have introduced protected areas legislation in their state legislatures, and eight states have enacted laws on protected areas. Many localities have also passed ordinances to reassure their communities. Some examples of enacted state legislation since January 2025 include:

- **Maryland enacted HB 1222**, which requires schools, libraries, and certain government agencies to block immigration enforcement officers from nonpublic areas unless they have a judicial warrant or exigent circumstances exist.
- **Colorado’s SB 25-276** ensures constitutional protections for immigrants at public facilities and prohibits local law enforcement from detaining people for ICE without a judicial warrant.
- Illinois enacted **HB 1312**, which provides civil remedies for constitutional violations during civil immigration enforcement and strengthens protections at courts, hospitals, colleges, and child care centers by limiting civil arrests, restricting disclosure of immigration status information, and requiring proper judicial authority for access to certain facilities.
- New Jersey enacted **A6308/S506**, which requires the Attorney General to develop model policies that help ensure that services at schools, hospitals, shelters, food pantries, and other essential locations remain safe and accessible.
- California enacted a series of state laws in 2025 to strengthen protections at schools and health care facilities by limiting local involvement in federal immigration enforcement and safeguarding access to essential services.

You may consider working with state and local decision-makers to develop safe spaces policies to better protect the children and families you serve. Staying aware of what local and state governments, as well as private businesses, are doing in your area is imperative to shaping your own program's policies and empowers you to share pertinent up-to-date information with parents and families. It is also important to understand what potential new requirements these safe space policies may establish for early care and education programs.

## **EVEN WITHOUT A FORMAL POLICY, CHILD CARE PROVIDERS CAN STILL IMPLEMENT SAFEGUARDS**

With or without federal or state protections in place, child care and early education providers can still create a formal policy to protect and ensure the well-being of their children, the families they serve, and their staff to the best of their ability. A safe spaces policy should also reinforce basic constitutional protections, state and local protections, and other federal and local privacy and civil rights laws.

Having an internal policy can help programs prepare for possible immigration enforcement actions at or near their facilities. It also demonstrates that programs care about immigrant families' well-being and are taking steps to ensure their safety, even if no such actions should occur.

**A Safe Spaces Policy is rooted in the Fourth and Fifth Amendments of the constitution. The Fourth Amendment protects against unreasonable government searches and seizures, requiring warrants based on probable cause, while the Fifth Amendment offers protection against self-incrimination and ensures due process of law. ICE and other immigration officials cannot legally enter your center or home-based facility without the proper warrants, and you have the right to refuse entry.**

## WHY DOES YOUR PROGRAM NEED A SAFE SPACE POLICY?

**To protect the well-being of children, parents, and staff.** An unwelcome, unannounced visit from immigration agents or other law enforcement officials can be scary for children and adults. Having a plan in place and communicating that plan to staff and parents will help to ensure information about families or staff members isn't revealed unintentionally. It will also mitigate the disruption caused by an agent's visit.

**To communicate that immigrant families are welcome and safe.** Research demonstrates that children in immigrant families are less likely than their peers with U.S.-born parents to enroll in early childhood programs and other public programs and services that support their healthy development. This is due to a variety of barriers, including fear of immigration consequences, lack of knowledge about eligibility, and complicated application and enrollment procedures. These challenges are exacerbated by today's toxic political climate. Implementing and publicly sharing your program's safe space policy communicates to mixed-status families that you take their safety and security seriously and consider their unique needs. It also shows that your program is a trusted resource.

**To ensure staff are prepared for unexpected and stressful situations.** Effectively implementing your safe space policy goes beyond developing a set of procedures; it also means ensuring all staff are trained on the policy and prepared to act. Your plan should include expectations for initial and ongoing training to ensure staff members are always up to speed.

## KEY COMPONENTS OF A SAFE SPACE POLICY

Your program's general security and privacy protocols lay the foundation for your safe space policy. Many components of a safe spaces policy will likely overlap with other protocols and procedures that you have in place. Before getting started, revisit existing policies and protocols related to:

- Which staff members are authorized to speak with an agent of authority (e.g., a police officer, licensing representative, etc.)
- Storing and releasing private information about parents, children, and staff
- Communicating urgent information to staff and parents
- How authorized staff and parents can access the facility
- Expectations for visitors
- Establishing emergency contacts

Ensure these and other internal policies comply with relevant local, state, and federal laws and consider whether additional policy changes are needed to further safeguard your location and the personal data of enrolled families. In general, these are basic policies and procedures that should always be in place.

Your safe space policy builds on basic security protocols, considering what would happen if an immigration agent requested access to your facility or information about a parent, child, or staff member. **If your basic security protocols are thorough and consistently implemented and enforced, you will be less likely to inadvertently release information to immigration agents or allow an unauthorized visitor on the premises.**

Your policy can be as simple or as detailed as you choose. Key components should include:

- Staff roles and responsibilities:
  - Which staff member(s) are responsible for speaking with the immigration agent?
  - Who will notify other on-site staff of the agent's presence?
  - Are there off-site staff (such as an executive director, a board member, or a lawyer) or community partners (such as an immigrant rights organization) that should be notified of the agent's visit? Who is responsible for contacting them?
- Areas in your facility marked as "Private"
- How staff should interact with federal immigration agents. The designated employee should ask the agent for their credentials and authorization before permitting them access to your program's property.
  - This includes a judicial warrant and permission from a supervisor. Except in exigent circumstances of national security or other threats to public safety, you do not have to allow an agent into your program without this documentation. If the agent has the proper credentials, permission to enter the building from a supervisor, and a judicial warrant (or cites exigent circumstances), a designated employee should accompany the agent while they are present on your property and thoroughly document all events that happen while the officer is present. In any case, staff safety remains a priority. Staff members should never physically interfere with an agent.
- How you'll minimize disruption. As much as possible, staff should avoid the possibility of children or their parents seeing or encountering federal immigration agents.
- How you'll coordinate with other organizations that may share space. Some centers may be in business complexes or other shared spaces. We recommend reaching out to your neighbors and discussing how to best coordinate a response in the event of immigration action near your area.
- How you'll notify parents. In the event of an immigration enforcement action, it is important to alert parents of the agent's arrival and departure, especially if agents are present at or around drop-off or pick-up. Any notifications sent to parents should inform them of the steps being taken to protect their children and their private information.
- How often you'll update emergency contacts for both children and staff.

## PART 2: HOW TO CREATE A SAFE SPACES POLICY

### STEP 1: CREATE A BRIEF WRITTEN OVERVIEW OF THE POLICY

Provide the purpose of your policy as well as a summary. Describe how the policy fits with your program’s mission statement and goals.

If your program is housed within a public school, you may add specific information about constitutional obligations to educate all children—regardless of their immigration status or that of their parents—under the **U.S. Supreme Court ruling on *Plyler v. Doe***, which affirms their right to public education.

In June 1982, the Supreme Court issued ***Plyler v. Doe***, a landmark decision holding that states cannot constitutionally deny students a free public education on account of their or their parent’s immigration status.

## Sample Template for Safe Spaces Policy

You should use this template as a guide and adapt it to fit the specific needs of your program:

This policy provides protocols for staff in case of immigration actions at [OR NEAR] [PROGRAM NAME]. These protocols are not intended to interfere with the enforcement of federal immigration laws and are not political in nature.

The purpose of [PROGRAM NAME’s] safe space policy is to keep our services accessible to all families and uphold core constitutional principles and rights, including educational equity and access.

References to [PROGRAM NAME] property as used in this policy include... [identify areas of your center that can reasonably be considered private and belonging to the program such as a playground, staff break room, classrooms, or other areas where only children and staff may enter].

We recognize that having federal immigration agents on our property would discourage parents from bringing their children to [PRESCHOOL/PRE-K/CHILD CARE] as well as accessing services on behalf of their children. It is our responsibility as early care and education professionals to ensure our program is safe, reliable, and accessible to every family we serve or who seeks our services.

## STEP 2: IDENTIFY AND ASSIGN STAFF ROLES

In your safe space policy, you will also want to provide an overview of how staff are expected to interact with immigration agents. We recommend designating at least two staff members to be the primary individuals who talk with immigration agents at your facility. One staff member should record a video of the interaction (if they feel safe to do so) and take notes in the background while the other person asks to see the appropriate warrants and identification.

Describe key roles and responsibilities for staff members. We also recommend determining:

- Who is responsible for alerting parents and other on-site staff of agents' presence.
- Whether additional staff or partners off-site should also be contacted. This might include an executive director, a board member, a lawyer, or a local immigrant rights organization.
- If in the long term it would be helpful to foster relationships with trusted media contacts to help document any potential violations of rights.

## STEP 3: IDENTIFY WHICH AREAS NEED TO BE LABELED AS “PRIVATE” AND WHERE YOU MAY BE ABLE TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL SECURITY

While immigration agents entering your building may be unavoidable, we encourage you to take every precaution possible to mitigate harm. We recognize every program's physical space is unique. If your program has a shared entrance or common areas with other organizations, consider additional precautions you may take to safeguard your facility, such as clearly labeling your property as “private.”

If it's possible, programs can place closed-circuit cameras at the entrance with live footage to front desk staff and keep the entrance locked and monitored at all times children are present in the facility.

When it comes to your front lobby or entrance, we recommend that, to the extent possible, you have a way to triage guests coming in and out of your facility. If you can, create a secure intercom system where parents can be buzzed in; you can speak to guests through an intercom. If you can't keep your front door secure, we recommend adding a “No Solicitation” sign at the front entrance indicating that unless someone is here to pick up or drop off an enrolled child, inquire about or enroll in services, or are a member of staff, they will not be allowed in the facility.

## AREAS TO CONSIDER LABELING PRIVATE:

- Staff breakrooms
- Playrooms
- Nap rooms
- Bathrooms
- Playgrounds that are a part of the facility
- Other classrooms and areas where children may gather



## STEP 4: REVIEW GENERAL SECURITY PROTOCOLS AND PROCEDURES TO MAINTAIN FAMILIES' PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

As a licensed or regulated early childhood program, you should already have protocols for securing your facility's premises and your families' private information. Provide an overview of your general policies and procedures here. Are the doors locked during all operating hours? Are they open during pick-up and drop-off? Do parents need a passcode or key fob to enter the center? What is your policy for staffing the front desk?

You should also state program expectations and standards regarding private information:

- Indicate staff should only collect information about children and families that is necessary for enrollment or educational purposes, and which should only be available to program staff for programmatic or educational purposes.
- State that families' information should not be disclosed to non-program officials without a court order or parents' consent. If applicable, you may add information about specific privacy rules to which your program adheres (such as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act).

## PROTOCOLS AND PROCEDURES FOR INTERACTING WITH IMMIGRATION AGENTS IN THE EVENT OF AN ENFORCEMENT ACTION

### *WHAT YOU SHOULD INCLUDE:*

Provide an overview of the process if an immigration agent requests access to the program's property or is seen on private program property without permission. Ideally, you should avoid allowing the agent inside the building; instead, the designated staff member should speak with the agent outside the facility. Staff should not give the agent(s) permission to enter any part of your facility marked "PRIVATE" until you have assessed their credentials.

However, under no circumstances should staff physically interfere with an agent or take any actions that could threaten their safety or the safety of other children or adults on the premises.

## What is a Judicial Warrant?

A judicial warrant is a signed order from a judge that permits immigration agents to enter your facility.

**Valid, authentic judicial warrants will say "U.S. District Court" or "State Court" at the top.**

- Consider telling staff what they should do if children are not in the classroom (e.g., having lunch in a shared eating area, using a common restroom, or playing in an indoor or outdoor play area). You should attempt to minimize disruptions to children's routines but prioritize children's physical and emotional safety as well as limit their visibility to the agent to the extent possible.
- Your policy should also indicate how you will make information available to parents and staff; how staff will be trained on the policy; and how often the policy will be revised and updated. This resource contains additional guidance and sample language for key elements of your safe space policy. You might also consider including resources for staff members and parents, such as an overview of any relevant DHS policies.

# SAFE SPACES POLICY TEMPLATE FOR INTERACTING WITH IMMIGRATION OFFICIALS

The designated staff member should tell the agent(s) that [PROGRAM NAME] has a procedure they are required to follow for the safety of children, staff, and parents. Ask the agent(s) for their credentials and written approval from their supervisor.

**If the agent does not have the proper credentials**, permission to enter the building, and a signed judicial warrant, the designated staff member should refuse consent to enter the property and politely request that the agent leave because the officer's presence is a disruption to normal operations.

"Thank you for your cooperation. As I said, [PROGRAM NAME] is private property. Since you don't have permission and a judicial warrant to enter our building, I'm going to have to ask you to leave in order to avoid disrupting the normal operations of our center."

**If the agent does provide proper credentials** and has both permission to enter the building and a signed judicial warrant, the designated staff member should allow entrance only to areas specified in the warrant and accompany the agent(s) while they are present on program property. If the agent appears to be conducting any activity that falls outside the scope of the warrant, staff should inform the agent that they do not consent to the additional activity taking place.

In any case, staff should remain calm and take notes or otherwise document all events. Staff should never physically interfere with an agent or take any actions that could threaten their safety under any circumstances.

## Refer to SALUTE procedures:

**S - size - how many agents are there?**

**A - activity - what are they doing?**

**L - location - where exactly did you observe them and what direction are they going?**

**U - units - what types of officers are they or what words/markings can you see on their uniforms?**

**T - time - what time was the visit/sighting? How long were they there?**

**E - equipment - what do the agents have with them - weapons, vehicles, other details?**

## DOING PRACTICE RUNS WITH STAFF

As you work with your team to develop a safe spaces policy for your facility, we recommend doing some scenario planning and role-playing to prepare. If ICE agents show up at or near your facility, it is helpful to have practiced the scenario beforehand and to feel confident in your script and knowledge of your policy.

Keep in mind that it's okay to ask the agent(s) to wait while you make a phone call, evaluate their credentials, and make copies for your records. However, a staff member should always remain with the agent(s).

It's also a good idea to have a sample script or talking points for staff members who may interact with immigration agents. In the moment, it could be hard to turn away an authority figure.

## TIPS FOR HOME-BASED PROVIDERS:

We recognize that home-based providers face additional limitations and challenges in implementing some aspects of this policy. However, as home-based providers, you have a reasonable expectation of privacy under the **Fourth Amendment** within your own home. The most important thing to keep in mind **is that you are not under any circumstances required to open the door unless you are provided with appropriate documentation.**

Here some important things to keep in mind and a sample step-by-step protocol you can follow if immigration agents show up at your home-based program:

**Step 1: Do not open the door.** You can speak with agents through the door; or, if you have a security system with an outside intercom, you can use that. The priority is to maintain a physical barrier. To the best of your ability, interaction with agents should be done through a window, door, or intercom only.

**Step 2: Ask for identification.** Officers may try to intimidate or trick you into opening the door. Be firm about refusing entry and not giving them consent to enter. Ask to review their identification, like a badge, and warrants through the window or that it be put under the door.



**Step 3: Ask officers if they have a signed judicial warrant.** If they do not, you can refuse them entry and ask them to leave.

- Verify the warrant
  - Who signed it?
    - If signed by an ICE Officer, it is administrative. **Do not open the door.**
    - If an arrest or search warrant is signed by a Judge or Magistrate and has the name of a state or federal District Court ("United States District Court"), has the correct address, and the dates are valid, you must open the door.
  - Is the address correct?
  - Is the date valid?
  - Keep in mind that a warrant of removal or deportation (sometimes referred to as "ICE Administrative warrant") **does not** allow agents to enter your home. You can refuse agents' entry to your program if they present an administrative warrant and can then exercise your Fifth Amendment right to refuse to answer their questions.

## TIPS FOR STUDENT DISMISSAL AND ARRIVAL

Arrival and dismissal protocols aimed at protecting children and families against immigration enforcement should be grounded in four core priorities:

- (1) **Safety comes before everything else.** Protecting children's physical safety, staff safety, and everyone's emotional well-being supersedes any outside requests or pressures.
  - (2) **Staff should follow a non-cooperation stance.** The school does not assist federal immigration enforcement and does not share access, information, or support unless compelled to by a valid judicial warrant signed by a judge.
  - (3) **Focus on containment** by keeping any agents or unknown officials outside the building perimeter whenever possible and maintaining normal operations while designated personnel handle the interaction.
  - (4) **Staff should document and record every interaction**, including who appeared, what was said or requested, what credentials or paperwork were presented, and what steps the school took to protect staff and children.
- **If ICE is observed at or near your school or center:**
    - **Inform your staff.** Consider using a preset code word or phrase to alert staff of ICE presence and give as many specific and verifiable details on how many agents are present and where. It may also be helpful to remind staff about the protocols in place.
    - **Secure your center.** Make sure that all exterior doors are locked. If children are outside, bring them safely in. If parents or children are in a waiting area or lobby of your center, bring them to a back office or a private area where they can wait safely until proper protocols are completed.
    - **Designate a staff member to document ICE presence:** If you feel safe doing so, you can video record ICE presence from a distance and name the number of agents, the

date, and time in the video. To protect the privacy of students, parents, and staff, do not live stream or publicly share the video.

- **Dismissal protocol if ICE is present at or near your school center:**

- **If you become aware of ICE presence** at the time of dismissal or during dismissal, to the extent possible, pause dismissal immediately. **Students remain inside and supervised;** no student is sent outside to meet an adult. Keep students inside; if they are already outside, bring them back in. Release students only to authorized adults inside the building once clearance is given.
- **Secure the building** and ensure all entrances are locked and that the front office area is properly monitored and staffed. Alert parents and guardians to ensure that they do not approach if they do not feel safe.
- **Designate a staff member** to divert parents to a possible secondary location. This can be the parking lot of a trusted location such as a church, neighboring business, or other area where they can wait as you work to safely release children to their parents or guardians.
- **If an authorized adult** cannot safely approach due to ICE presence, the student remains supervised on campus until a safe plan is created.
- **In resuming pick up,** confirm that ICE has left the immediate area. Staff should remain on alert until all students are released safely. We recommend staggering pick-up times with parents to avoid congestion.

- **Arrival protocol if ICE is present at or near your school or center:**

- **Secure the arrival point.** If you have students who are dropped off outside, have a staff member bring them inside immediately. Once students are inside, immediately secure exterior doors.
- **For any parents arriving later,** have them call a staff member to be let in. Keep the front area secure and clear of student or parent traffic.
- **Keep students in classrooms** and designated private areas where only children or authorized staff are allowed to be present.

## **PART 3: KEY RESOURCES FOR PROVIDERS AND PARENTS**

**Educational access for immigrant children and families.** These resources provide additional information on protections for immigrant students and families, along with immigrant eligibility for federal early childhood programs.

- Hannah Matthews, "**Immigrant Eligibility for Federal Child Care and Early Education Programs,**" CLASP, April 2017
- "**Practice Advisory: The Legal Authority for "Sanctuary" School Policies,**" National Immigration Law Center, last updated August 2018
- "**Know Your Rights for Immigrant Students,**" available in **English** and **Spanish,** American Federation of Teachers, 2025.

- **“Protecting our Students Toolkit,”** available in **English** and **Spanish**, American Federation of Teachers, 2025.
- **“15 Things Educators Can Do to Support Immigrant Youth & Families,”** available in **English** and **Spanish**, American Federation of Teachers, 2025.

**Supporting immigrant parents in preparing for the possibility of immigration enforcement.** These resources address how to support emotional well-being, develop family preparedness plans, and talk to children about immigration enforcement.

- **“Staying Whole: A Love Letter To Immigrant Parents,”** Children Thrive Action Network, October 14, 2025.
- Wendy Cervantes and Jennifer Ibañez Whitlock, **“Know Your Rights: Five Things Parents Detained by ICE Should Know,”** CLASP, updated January 2026. Parents have a right to make decisions about the care and safety of their children, even while in ICE custody. The National Immigration Law Center and CLASP jointly developed this resource for immigrant parents, which details the rights that parents have while being apprehended and detained. Under its own policies, ICE has a responsibility to ensure that detained parents have a say in the care of their children and in keeping them safe.
- **Family Preparedness Plan,** Immigrant Legal Resource Center, February 10, 2026.
- **“Immigrant Safety Plan for Youth and Children,”** Legal Counsel for Youth and Children, January 15, 2021.

This document is a collective community resource to help parents plan for the care of their child or children (with or without status) in the event that a parent is unable to care for them, particularly if the parent is detained or deported.

- **“Family Preparedness Plan” (also available in Spanish),** Boston Medical Center, 2017.

This document is intended to be completed by parents with the support of a facilitator. The plan should not be disseminated to parents to complete on their own.

- **“Make a Plan: Essential Steps for Migrant Parents for Preventing Family Separation,”** Women’s Refugee Commission, December 18, 2024.
- **Immigration, Know Your Rights,** Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors, 2025.

This Spanish-language video supports immigrant parents in having difficult conversations with children about immigration.

**Know your rights when interacting with federal immigration agents.** These are resources for immigrants as well as service providers working with immigrant families:

- **A Guide for Employers: What to Do if Immigration Comes to Your Workplace,** National Immigration Law Center, January 24, 2025.

- **Know Your Rights: A Guide to Your Rights When Interacting with Law Enforcement** (available in multiple languages), CLINIC, last updated January 27, 2017.
- **"What to Do if Immigration Comes to Your Workplace,"** National Employment Law Project and National Immigration Law Center, 2017.
- **"When Immigration Officials Arrive at Your Workplace: A Know Your Rights Toolkit for Public Sector Workers,"** Immigrant Legal Resource Center and SEIU California, 2017.

Resources to find an immigration attorney or immigrant rights organization near you:

- Search for an immigration lawyer by location and type of lawyer using the American Immigration Lawyers Association's online directory at **[AILA's Immigration Lawyer Search](#)**.
- Organizations that provide free or low-cost immigration assistance by location and detention center can be found at **[National Immigration Legal Services Directory - Immigration Advocates Network](#)**.