In this section you will find:

- Opportunities for Action which can be applied to any of the three areas of concern for the 2018 Children’s Sabbath
- Children’s Sabbath “World Cafe” Discussion Guide that may be used with your place of worship, several places of worship, or for a community multi-faith conversation.
- Resources for each of the 2018 Children’s Sabbath concerns: Ending Child Poverty; Ending Gun Violence; and Ending Child-Family Separations, which provide helpful facts we hope will be useful as you develop your Children’s Sabbath actions.
Opportunities for Action

1. **“Adopt” a Child-Serving Program or Organization in Your Community**

   A primary goal of the National Observance of Children’s Sabbaths is to encourage new, year-round action that helps improve the lives of children. One way to do that is to identify a program, agency, or organization in your community that is doing effective and important work on the concern your congregation’s Children’s Sabbath is focusing on—ending child poverty, ending gun violence, or ending child-family separations.

   Seek out an organization that is engaging individuals to provide direct services, advocacy opportunities, or pathways to justice for children and families. Once you have identified an organization, find out how your place of worship could become an ongoing partner with them to support them in their important work. Forms of your support might include one or more of the following: financial donations, in-kind donations of needed items, volunteers to support ongoing work with or on behalf of children and families, volunteers with specialized skills or experience (for instance, in marketing, website development, or event planning), publicizing the program’s services and activities, a “work day” to paint or otherwise spruce up the buildings, providing space in your place of worship’s buildings for the organization’s meetings or events, or sponsoring a fund-raising or ‘friend-raising’ event to benefit the program and increase donations and supporters. Your “adopted” organization will, of course, have a more specific understanding of what they most need.

2. **Partner with Another Place of Worship to Strengthen and Expand How You Serve Children**

   Every place of worship is unique. Each is situated in a different location, some closer than others to neighborhoods, children and families affected by the challenges we hope to change, some closer to public transportation that makes them accessible to a wide variety of people. Each has a different array of members. Some have many children who might be served, others have more retirees with expertise and time to share. Each congregation has a different mix of resources, both those that can be touched—like financial resources, playgrounds, classrooms, books, and toys—and those that can’t be touched and are also rich resources—like firsthand understanding of the challenges we hope to change; trust and connections with children and families affected by poverty, immigrant family separations, gun violence, or other challenges; fluency in different languages; and passion and commitment.

   One long-term outcome of the National Observance of Children’s Sabbath weekend may be identifying another place of worship with which to partner to strengthen and expand how, together, you might better serve children and advocate for systemic change.

   Doing so will call for reflection about the needs and resources each place of worship has to offer, respect and recognition of the various gifts of each place of worship, a spirit of mutuality and partnership, and honest and open communication. Congregations that come from experiences of being in the majority (religiously, racially, ethnically, or otherwise) or from other positions of traditional power (for instance, greater financial resources, politically influential members, visibility) will need to enter partnerships with particular attention and intention to a spirit of mutuality and respect and recognize that there is much to listen to and learn that privilege may have previously obscured.
Once you and another place of worship have decided to partner, together you can look at the variety of resources you have and begin the process of determining how they might best contribute to reducing or ending child poverty, child-family separations, gun violence, or any of the other crises facing children and families that hinder the ability of children to live lives of hope, joy, and justice.

3. Host a Children’s Sabbath “World Cafe” Conversation (see following pages)
Children’s Sabbath World Cafe Discussion Guide for the 2018 National Observance of Children’s Sabbaths

For the 2018 Children’s Sabbath discussions, we invite you to try the World Cafe method described below (p. 5). More information about this method of hosting a conversation is available at this website: www.theworldcafe.com. Please take time to familiarize yourself with the process and the resources there.

In brief, the World Cafe method conversations are organized around three questions. Participants are grouped at tables with 4-5 persons per table. The first question is announced and participants at each table discuss it for 20 minutes. Then, participants change tables and once seated are given the second question. Participants change tables once again, and the third question is announced and discussed. Large sheets of paper covering the tables and pens offer a chance for ideas to be recorded (in words, drawing, doodles!) as the conversations unfold. Additionally, at the end of each conversation period, people can offer aloud to the room some of the key insights that emerged.

You are encouraged to select just one of the 2018 Children’s Sabbath concerns for your World Cafe conversation on the Children’s Sabbath weekend. Depending on how it goes and interest level, you might then host conversations the following weeks on the other concerns, host a follow-up conversation the next week to go even deeper on the same topic, or host a follow-up conversation another week on the same topic but broadening the invitation to include additional participants.

Sets of three questions for each of the three concerns follow:

**For a World Cafe Conversation on Ending Child Poverty:**

Question 1: Why do you care about ending child poverty?
Question 2: What is a hopeful or promising approach to ending child poverty?
Question 3: What can we do to work for an end to child poverty?

**For a World Cafe Conversation on Ending Gun Violence:**

Question 1: Why do you care about ending gun violence?
Question 2: What is a hopeful or promising approach to ending gun violence?
Question 3: What can we do to reduce gun violence?

**For a World Cafe Conversation on Ending Border Separations:**

Question 1: Why do you care about ending separations of children from families?
Question 2: What is a hopeful or promising approach to ending child-family separations?
Question 3: What can we do to help end child-family separations?
World Cafe Method

Drawing on seven integrated design principles, the World Cafe methodology is a simple, effective, and flexible format for hosting large group dialogue. World Cafe can be modified to meet a wide variety of needs. Specifics of context, numbers, purpose, location, and other circumstances are factored into each event’s unique invitation, design, and question choice, but the following five components comprise the basic model:

1) **Setting:** Create a “special” environment, most often modeled after a cafe, i.e. small round tables covered with a checkered or white linen tablecloth, butcher block paper, colored pens, a vase of flowers, and optional “talking stick” item. There should be four chairs at each table (optimally) – and no more than five.

2) **Welcome and Introduction:** The host begins with a warm welcome and an introduction to the World Cafe process, setting the context, sharing the Cafe Etiquette, and putting participants at ease.

3) **Small Group Rounds:** The process begins with the first of three or more twenty minute rounds of conversation for the small group seated around a table. At the end of the twenty minutes, each member of the group moves to a different new table. They may or may not choose to leave one person as the “table host” for the next round, who welcomes the next group and briefly fills them in on what happened in the previous round.

4) **Questions:** Each round is prefaced with a question specially crafted for the specific context and desired purpose of the World Cafe. The same questions can be used for more than one round, or they can be built upon each other to focus the conversation or guide its direction.

5) **Harvest:** After the small groups (and/or in between rounds, as needed), individuals are invited to share insights or other results from their conversations with the rest of the large group. These results are reflected visually in a variety of ways, most often using graphic recording in the front of the room.

The basic process is simple to learn, but complexities and nuances of context, numbers, question-crafting and purpose can make it optimal to bring in an experienced host to help. Should that be the case, professional consulting services and senior hosts are available through World Cafe Services.

In addition, there are many resources available for new World Cafe hosts, including a free hosting tool kit, an online community of practice, and World Cafe Signature Learning Programs.

(Text this page from the World Cafe website, [http://www.worldcafe.com](http://www.worldcafe.com)).
Sample “Welcome” for the Children’s Sabbath World Cafe

Introduce the purpose of the time together. You could say something like:

“This weekend marks the 27th annual National Observance of Children’s Sabbaths® Celebration, ‘Realizing Dr. King’s Vision for Every Child: Lives of Hope, Not Despair.’ The Children’s Sabbath is an annual occasion when people of all faiths across our nation focus on their shared concern for children facing serious problems. It is a time when people of different religious traditions focus on the shared values of love, justice, and protecting children. And, it is a time when people of faith and places of worship commit to new responses to love and protect children.

Our gathering today is an opportunity for conversation about [name which concern you are focusing on: ending child poverty, ending child-family separations, or ending gun violence.] This is a time when all are welcome. It is a time to share from your perspective and to listen with respect and curiosity to others’ perspectives.

There’s no single right or wrong answer to these questions. If you have a different perspective during the course of the conversations, I encourage you to say ‘I see it differently,’ rather than ‘I disagree,’ as an invitation to greater understanding of each other rather than a confrontation that shuts down understanding.

We will begin this time in conversation with those at your tables now. There will be 20 minutes of conversation on a question that I’ll tell you in a moment. At the end of the 20 minutes, there will be a few minutes to share with the room a few key insights or ideas that emerged in your conversations. Then, we’ll change tables so there’s a chance to engage in conversation with new partners. There will be a second question and 20 minutes for conversation, a time to “harvest” or share with the room a few insights, and then we’ll change tables one last time for the third and final question and conversation for the final 20 minutes.

Feel free to make use of the paper on the table during the course of the conversations. We may find a way to post these papers afterward so we and others can see more of what emerged during the conversations.

Are there any questions before we get started?

The first question for conversation at your table is:

‘Why do you care about [name the single focus: ending child poverty, ending gun violence or ending child-family separations]?’”
THE PROBLEM: CHILD POVERTY IN AMERICA

Too many U.S. children have to face challenges like hunger, homelessness, instability and toxic stress. Nearly 1 in 5 children—more than 12.8 million—live in poverty in America. About 70 percent of poor children are children of color. The youngest children are the poorest, with nearly half of all poor children under 5 in extreme poverty. Even after government benefits, the U.S. continues to have one of the highest child poverty rates among 35 industrialized nations.

POVERTY HARMS CHILDREN

Being exposed to poverty during childhood has lifelong negative consequences. It impairs cognitive, emotional, social and physical development from the earliest years. It increases the risk for developmental delays, poor school performance and behavioral issues. Poor children are less likely to graduate from high school and more likely to be unemployed, earn less as adults and become involved in the criminal justice system. Poverty also increases children's risk of hunger, illness and homelessness.

POVERTY HURTS OUR NATION’S ECONOMIC STABILITY

The nation’s high rate of child poverty costs at least $500 BILLION a year in lost productivity and extra health and crime costs.

WE CAN END CHILD POVERTY

It doesn’t have to be this way. We know what works. We know what to do. We can end child poverty by investing in policies and programs to increase employment for families with children, make work pay and ensure children’s basic needs are met. We must honor the 50th anniversary of Dr. King’s Poor People’s Campaign by realizing his vision and leveling the playing field for all children in America.
HOW TO END CHILD POVERTY

PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM POVERTY HAS LONG-TERM POSITIVE IMPACTS

Investments in these nine policies and programs will:

- Improve educational and life outcomes for children
- Reduce health, education and criminal justice costs
- Improve the productivity of the economy
- Ensure the American Dream exists for poor children

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- **Learn:** Listen to and learn from those directly affected by poverty and engage them in ending it.
- **Raise Awareness:** Share with others key facts about child poverty in the nation, your state and your community.
- **Advocate:** Identify steps being taken in your community and state to end child poverty. Encourage your state legislators and members of congress to protect and expand investments in policies that work.
- **Take Action:** After the National Observance of Children’s Sabbaths®, commit to long-term action to end child poverty. Start new service or advocacy efforts at your place of worship, such as an afterschool tutoring or Head Start program or an outreach and enrollment campaign to help uninsured children get health care. Encourage individual members to find new ways to volunteer time or resources to help children and change the systems that keep children in need.
Child Poverty in America 2017: National Analysis

September 12, 2018

Poverty data released by the U.S. Census Bureau on September 12, 2018 show roughly 12.8 million America children lived in poverty in 2017, about 450,000 fewer than in 2016. The national child poverty rate declined from 18.0 percent in 2016 to 17.5 percent in 2017, though the decrease was not statistically significant. Child poverty rates declined for Black and Hispanic children, remained flat for White and American Indian/Alaska Native children and increased for Asian/Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander children. Overall, children remain the poorest age group in the nation.

Child Poverty

In total, 39.7 million poor people in America were poor in 2017 and a third of them were children. Nearly 1 in 5 children—17.5 percent—were poor in 2017, compared with 11.2 percent of people ages 18-64 and 9.2 percent of people ages 65 and older.

- **12,808,000** children lived in poverty in 2017.
- The proportion of children living in poverty was **17.5 percent** in 2017, a decrease from **18.0 percent** in 2016.
- Poverty is defined as an annual income below **$25,283** for a family of four, which divides out to about **$2,107** a month, **$486** a week or **$69** a day.

### Child Poverty, by Age and Race/Ethnicity*, 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>White, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Asian/Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander</th>
<th>American Indian/Alaska Native</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Number</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 18</td>
<td>4,026,000</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>2,889,000</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>4,639,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 5</td>
<td>1,130,000</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>928,000</td>
<td>33.7</td>
<td>1,346,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Percent of Children in Poverty, by Age and Race, 2017

- **10.9**, **28.7**, **25**, **12.2**, **31.1**
- **11.7**, **33.7**, **26.2**, **15.6**, **36.2**

*All racial groups exclude Hispanic ethnicity.*
Extreme Child Poverty
In 2017, nearly 5.9 million children—about 1 in 12—lived in extreme poverty, defined as an annual income of less than half the poverty level, or $12,642 for a family of four, which amounts to about $1,053 a month, $243 a week, or $35 a day.
- The number of children living in extreme poverty: 5,864,000
- The percentage of children living in extreme poverty: 8.0 percent, a slight decrease from 8.2 percent in 2016.

### Children Living in Extreme Poverty, by Age and Race/Ethnicity*, 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>White, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Asian/Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander</th>
<th>American Indian/Alaska Native</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 18</td>
<td>1,869,000</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>1,537,000</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>1,945,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Under 5</td>
<td>526,000</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>518,000</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>557,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*All racial groups exclude Hispanic ethnicity.

### Children Living in Extreme Poverty, by Age and Race, 2017

*Under 18: 5.0 White, non-Hispanic, 15.3 Black, 4.9 Asian/Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 16.4 American Indian/Alaska Native
*Under 5: 5.4 White, non-Hispanic, 18.8 Black, 6.2 American Indian/Alaska Native

Young Children
Our youngest children have the highest poverty rates. In 2017, nearly 1 in 5 infants, toddlers and preschoolers between the ages of 0 and 5 were poor at the time of greatest brain development.
- The number of children under 5 living in poverty: 3,865,000
  - Nearly 1 in 5 children under 5 were poor (19.6 percent), an increase from 19.3 percent in 2016.
- The number of children under 5 living in extreme poverty: 1,790,000
  - Nearly half (46.3 percent) of all poor children under 5 lived in extreme poverty
  - Overall, nearly 1 in 10 children under 5 were living in extreme poverty (9.1 percent)
Family Characteristics
Nearly 8.3 million poor children lived in single-parent families in 2017, with the majority in single-mother families. While children in single-parent families were more likely to be poor, married-couple families with children were not immune to poverty.
- 58.2 percent of all poor children lived in single-mother families
  - 8.3 percent lived in single-father families
  - 33.5 percent lived in married-couple families
- The poverty rate among the approximately 23.2 million children in single-parent families was 35.8 percent, down from 37.2 percent in 2016.
- The poverty rate among the more than 49.4 million children in married-couple families was 8.4 percent, the same as in 2016.

Work Status of Family Members
- More than two-thirds of poor children (70.1 percent) had at least one family member who worked in 2017, and more than one-third (34.0 percent) had at least one family member who worked full-time year-round.
- The number of children in families with no working adults decreased from more than 4.6 million to 4.5 million.
- Poverty among children in families with at least one worker decreased slightly, from 13.1 to 12.8 percent.
- Poverty among children in families with at least one full-time year-round worker increased from 6.8 to 7.3 percent.

Children of Color
Black and Hispanic children continue to suffer disproportionately from poverty, with the youngest children most at risk of being poor.
- Nearly 1 in 3 American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) children and more than 1 in 4 Black and Hispanic children were poor in 2017, compared with 1 in 9 White children.
- Nearly 1 in 6 AI/AN children, more than 1 in 7 Black children and 1 in 10 Hispanic children were living in extreme poverty, compared with 1 in 20 White children. The extreme child poverty rates for American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) and Black children were more than 3 times that for White children.
- More than 1 in 3 Black children under 5 were poor and nearly 1 in 5 were extremely poor.
- While Black children had the highest poverty rate, the largest number of poor children were Hispanic children (4,639,000) followed by White children (4,026,000) and Black children (2,889,000).

Income Inequality Continues
- The median incomes of Black ($43,425) and American Indian/Alaska Native families with children ($41,536) were less than half the median income of White families with children ($89,462) in 2017.

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1 Percentages of all poor children living in single-mother families, married couple families, and single-father families are calculated using the number of related children under 18 (12.5 million) rather than the number of all poor children (12.8 million).
Supplemental Poverty Measure
The Census Bureau also reported data from the Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM), which expands on the Official Poverty Measure by analyzing the impact of various government and other programs on family resources. The SPM data show poverty would be far more widespread if not for key federal programs that helped lift millions of children and families out of poverty in 2017.

Listed below are the government programs included in the SPM and the number of children lifted out of poverty because of each program:

- Refundable Tax Credits: 4,496,000
- SNAP: 1,473,000
- Social Security: 1,442,000
- Housing Subsidies: 897,000
- School Lunch: 722,000
- Child Support Received: 522,000
- SSI: 472,000
- TANF/General Assistance: 296,000
- WIC: 156,000
- Unemployment Insurance: 151,000
- LIHEAP: 47,000
- Workers’ Compensation: 29,000
Notes and Citations:

All data are from the Annual Social and Economic Supplement of the U.S. Census Current Population Survey and reflect poverty for the calendar year 2017.

CHILD POVERTY:


Poverty Thresholds (dollar amounts used to determine poverty status): U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, “Poverty Thresholds for 2017 by Size of Family and Number of Related Children Under 18 Years.” We use the weighted average for a family of four.

FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS:


WORK STATUS:


CHILD POVERTY BY RACE AND ETHNICITY:

Poor Children (under 18 and under 5), number and percent: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey Table Creator, 2018 Annual Social and Economic Supplement (Below 100 percent of poverty; White alone, not Hispanic; Black alone, not Hispanic; Asian/Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander alone, not Hispanic; American Indian/Alaska Native alone, not Hispanic; Hispanic of any race). Calculations by Children’s Defense Fund.

Children in Extreme Poverty (under 18 and under 5), number and percent: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey Table Creator, 2018 Annual Social and Economic Supplement (Below 50 percent of poverty; White alone, not Hispanic; Black alone, not Hispanic; Asian/Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander alone, not Hispanic; American Indian/Alaska Native alone, not Hispanic; Hispanic of any race).

INCOME INEQUALITY:


Children’s Defense Fund

Protect Children, Not Guns

The Truth About Guns

March 2018

1. A gun in the home increases the risk of homicide, suicide, and accidental death.
Contrary to what many people believe, having a gun in your home doesn’t make you safer but instead endangers you and your loved ones. A gun in the home makes the likelihood of homicide three times higher, suicide three to five times higher, and accidental death four times higher. For every time a gun in the home injures or kills in self-defense, there are 11 completed and attempted gun suicides, seven criminal assaults and homicides with a gun, and four unintentional shooting deaths or injuries.

2. Many children live in homes with loaded and unlocked guns. Every parent and grandparent must be careful where their children play and ask if there is a gun in the home. One third of all households with children under 18 have a gun and 45 percent of gun-owning households with children do not store all of their firearms safely. Three in 4 children ages 5-14 with gun-owning parents know where firearms are kept in the home and 22 percent have handled a gun in the home without their parents’ knowledge. More than half of youths who committed suicide with a gun obtained the gun from their home, usually a parent’s gun.

3. Guns make violence more deadly. Contrary to what the gun industry says, guns do kill people. Guns make killing easy, efficient, and somewhat impersonal, thereby making anger and violence more deadly. An estimated 41 percent of gun-related homicides and 94 percent of gun-related suicides would not occur if no guns were present. The use of a gun in family or intimate assaults increased the risk of death 12 times.

4. Virtually anyone can buy a gun without a background check. Federal law requires that anyone purchasing a firearm from a federally licensed dealer submit to a background check. But private sales—including sales at gun shows, on the internet, and between private individuals—do not require a background check.

5. The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) can regulate the sale and manufacture of teddy bears and toy guns, but not real guns. A 1976 amendment to the Consumer Product Safety Act specifically states that the Commission “shall make no ruling or order that restricts the manufacture or sale of guns, guns ammunition, or components of guns ammunition, including black powder or gunpowder for guns,” and the restriction continues to be in effect. As a result, the CPSC can regulate teddy bears and toy guns but remains forbidden from regulating real guns, although they are one of the most lethal consumer products. H.R. 5162, the Firearm Safety Act of 2018, if enacted would amend the Consumer Product Safety Act to remove the exclusion of pistols, revolvers, and other firearms from the definition of consume products to permit the issuance of safety standards by the CPSC for such firearms.
6. **Loopholes in prior gun safety laws prevented them from being as effective as necessary.** The 1993 Brady Law, which required federal background checks for guns purchased from licensed retailers such as stores and pawnshops, did not require such checks for guns bought through private sales. The 1994 Assault Weapons Ban, which expired in 2004, did not apply to weapons and magazines manufactured prior to the ban, allowed importation of rifles that could accept large capacity magazines, and allowed the manufacture and sale of “copycat” assault weapons with only small differences from banned models.\(^{13}\)

7. **The NRA has actively prevented the enforcement of current gun safety laws.** Since the 1970s, the NRA and its allies in Congress have worked to make it more difficult for the federal agencies responsible for overseeing firearms dealers to regulate criminal or negligent dealers.\(^{14}\) By banning public disclosure of data on gun sales (known as trace data), banning electronic storage of firearms sales records, and prohibiting the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) from requiring dealers to inventory their stock of weapons, the NRA has made it incredibly difficult for the government to trace the source of guns used in crimes and identify dealers that sell guns to criminals. By preventing law enforcement from using trace data in legal proceedings and limiting the resources and operating flexibility of the ATF, the NRA has successfully blocked the agency from holding criminal dealers and traffickers accountable.

8. **Common sense gun safety laws help reduce gun violence while protecting the legal use of guns.** The following gun safety laws have all been found effective for reducing gun violence and factors associated with gun violence. None of these regulations prevent law-abiding citizens from owning guns.
   - **Tighter regulation and oversight of gun sellers.** A study using crime gun trace data from 54 U.S. cities found that diversion of guns to criminals is much less common in states:
     - that license retail gun sellers;
     - that require careful record keeping that can be reviewed by law enforcement;
     - that require potential gun buyers to apply for a license directly with a law enforcement agency; and
     - where law enforcement agencies conduct regular compliance inspections.\(^{15}\)
   - **Requiring background checks for purchases through private sellers as well as licensed dealers.** Evidence shows background checks for purchases through both licensed and private dealers prevent guns from getting into the wrong hands. According to the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, more than 3 million firearm purchase applications have been denied since the implementation of the Brady Law in 1994.\(^{16}\) California, which also regulates private gun sales, has substantially fewer illegal straw sales (where a purchaser buys a gun for a person who isn’t eligible to buy it) than states that do not regulate such sales.\(^{17}\)
   - **Firearm prohibitions for high-risk groups.** A study in California suggests denying handgun purchases to people who have committed violent misdemeanors is associated with a decrease in risk of arrest for new gun and/or violent crimes.\(^{18}\)
   - **Child access prevention laws.** Studies of child access prevention laws, which require gun owners to store their guns so that children and teens cannot access them unsupervised, have found these laws reduce accidental shootings of children by as much as 23 percent\(^{19}\) and suicides of adolescents by 8 percent.\(^{20}\)
• **Well-designed assault weapons ban.** An Australian law banning and buying back assault weapons – including semi-automatic rifles, pump-action rifles and shotguns – was associated with decreased suicide and homicide rates. There were no mass shootings in the decade following the law compared with 11 mass shootings in the prior decade.\(^{21}\)

9. **Common sense gun safety regulations protect lawful ownership and use of guns.**

The 1994 Assault Weapons Ban protected the rights of gun owners by exempting every shotgun and hunting rifle in use at the time.\(^{22}\) Background checks do not prevent legal gun purchases, but they could prevent child and teen gun deaths.

10. **The majority of American voters, including gun owners, support common sense gun safety regulation.** As of February 2018, 2 in 3 American voters (66 percent) indicated support for stricter gun laws, including half (50 percent) of gun owners. Ninety-seven percent of all voters and gun owners support universal background checks. Sixty-seven percent of voters and more than half of gun owners favor a nationwide ban on the sale of assault weapons.\(^{23}\)

11. **Armed school guards and teachers will not necessarily make children safer but will jeopardize the futures of some children.** Armed guards or officers are already in about 1 in 5 (19 percent) of our nation’s public schools.\(^{24}\) Columbine and Marjory Stoneman Douglas High Schools both had an armed guard; Virginia Tech had a full campus police force.\(^{25}\) The presidents of the two largest unions representing teachers and other school staff at all levels resoundingly rejected the proposal set forth by President Trump and the NRA to place armed police officers in every school in this nation and arm educators, calling the idea “ill-conceived, preposterous, and dangerous”\(^{26}\) and reinforcing that “teachers and school staff need to ensure schools are safe sanctuaries and not armed fortresses.”\(^{27}\)

While there isn’t clear evidence about armed security guards or police officers keeping children in schools safer, there is very troubling evidence that their presence on school grounds leads to the criminalization of our children at increasingly younger ages and the pushing of children, especially Black and Latino males, into the prison pipeline.

Sources

9. Id at 3.


Children’s Defense Fund
Protect Children Not Guns Factsheet
2016 Child Gun Deaths

February 2018

A child or teen dies from a gun every 2 hours and 48 minutes.
- 3,128 children and teens died from guns in the United States in 2016, one every 2 hours and 48 minutes.
- The children and teens who died from guns in 2016 would fill 156 classrooms of 20 children.
- As shocked as the nation was by the recent school shooting in Parkland, Florida, about as many children and teens died from guns every two days in 2016 as died in that massacre.

2016 marked the greatest number of child and teen gun deaths since 2006.
- 2014 reversed a seven-year trend of declining child and teen gun deaths, with 79 more children and teens being killed by guns than in 2013. 2015 continued that disturbing trend with 275 additional children and teens being killed than in 2014. 2016 represented an even greater increase with 329 more children and teens being killed than in 2015.
- The number and rate of children and teens killed by guns in 2016 are higher than for any other year since 2006.

Guns killed more children under 5 in 2016 than law enforcement officers in the line of duty.
- 113 children under 5 died from guns in 2016, compared to 65 law enforcement officers killed by guns in the line of duty. Guns were used in criminal acts to kill 62 law enforcement officers while 3 were killed in gun accidents.

Black children and teens are disproportionately affected by gun violence.
- In 2016, 43 percent of gun deaths were among Black children and teens, although they made up only 14 percent of all children and teens.
- 1,335 Black children and teens were killed by guns in 2016, one every 6 hours and 34 minutes.
- The gun death rate for Black children and teens was nearly four times that for White children and teens and more than 8 times that for Asian and Pacific Islander children and teens.
- The majority of gun deaths among Black children and teens were by homicide. The majority of deaths by White children and teens were by suicide.

Child and teen gun death rates remain higher than in the early 1960s.
- In 2016, the rate of gun deaths among children and teens was 41 percent higher than in 1963, when data were first collected from all states.
- Between 1963 and 2016, 66,024 Black children and teens have been killed by guns—more than 16 times the recorded lynchings of Black people of all ages in the 74 years from 1877 to 1950.
While Black children and teens have been disproportionately likely to die from guns since the early 1960s, over half the deaths since 1963 were among White children and teens.

On average 3,449 children and teens—172 classrooms of 20 children—were killed by guns every year from 1963 to 2016.

Since 1963, over three times more children and teens died from guns on American soil than U.S. soldiers were killed by hostilities in wars abroad.

- 182,829 children and teens died from guns on American soil between 1963 and 2016. By contrast, 52,988 U.S. soldiers were killed by hostilities in the Vietnam, Persian Gulf, Afghanistan, and Iraq wars during that same period.

The U.S. has as many guns as people.

- The U.S. accounts for less than 5 percent of the global population but owns about 46 percent of all civilian-owned guns in the world.
- The most recent estimate of U.S. civilian gun ownership is as high as 393 million, more than one gun per person. In contrast, U.S. military and law enforcement agencies possess approximately 5.5 million guns.
- American companies manufacture enough bullets each year to fire 31 rounds into every one of our citizens.

A gun in the home increases the risk of homicide, suicide and accidental death.

- Guns are more often used to cause harm than in self-protection. A gun in the home makes the likelihood of homicide three times higher, suicide three to five times higher, and accidental death four times higher. For each time a gun in the home injures or kills in self-defense, there are 11 completed and attempted gun suicides, seven criminal assaults and homicides with a gun, and four unintentional shooting deaths or injuries.
- More than half of youth who committed suicide with a gun obtained the gun from their home, usually a parent’s gun.

Welcome Immigrants and Preserve Families

“The anti-immigrant sentiment whipped up by the intemperate rhetoric and actions of our President is similar to another historic period of toxic hatred, bigotry and intolerance during slavery that dehumanized millions and severed family bonds. We must meet today’s snatching of children from parents with roaring nonviolent resistance.”
— Marian Wright Edelman, President, Children’s Defense Fund

“We can’t let people drive wedges between us... because there is only one human race.”
— Dolores Huerta, Co-Founder, United Farm Workers

We must honor and intensify the call by all major faiths to protect children and welcome the stranger. It will take all of us protesting together the Trump Administration’s many harsh immigration policies, including the evil and ongoing separation of immigrant children from their parents.

The zero tolerance policy formally announced in May 2018 left more than 2,500 children to be reunited with their families, and more than 500 children separated from their families are still waiting to connect with them. We must also add all the families daily broken up by deportation actions, the more than 270,000 U.S. born children threatened with separation if President Trump revokes Temporary Protected Status for Haitians, Salvadoreans and Hondurans in 2019, and the threatening uncertainty still hanging over those who have received temporary immigration benefits through the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program and other Dreamers. And the Department of Health and Human Services reported this month that there are 12,800 migrant children, most all of them minors who came across the border alone but have not been placed in a timely fashion as they would have been previously with family members or other sponsors in the U.S.. The increase is dramatically straining the capacity of existing shelters and depriving the young people of supportive connections. Some believe sponsors are more reluctant to come forward to care for these unaccompanied minors given the anti-immigrant actions of the Administration. And as if these horrors of the Trump Administration’s anti-immigrant agenda were not enough, it has recently proposed regulations to remove the 20-day limit on detention of children with their families imposed by the Flores case and allow indefinite detention.

The Administration also is expected to soon propose for comment harmful revisions to the “public charge” regulation that would allow the Department of Homeland Security to deny green cards and visas to immigrants who, among other considerations, are using public benefits from an expanded list, including Medicaid, SNAP, housing vouchers and other programs. Previously only Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and long-term care were on the “public charge” list. Already the threat of the new broader definition of “public charge” is having a chilling effect on immigrant families, causing many not to apply for benefits for themselves and their children. The harm to children is clear.
Join national, state and community collaborations focused on welcoming, integrating and protecting immigrant children, youth and families.

Help address the immediate needs of immigrant children, youth and families in your communities by supporting ongoing service programs, offering them refuge and sanctuary, protesting harmful practices, and joining with others at community, state and national levels to push back harmful policies that separate children from families, keep children and families together in detention for long periods, turn away asylum seekers and refugees, threaten those who are undocumented, those with Temporary Protected Status, and those with DACA and other Dreamers. Support those at the border, assist with resources, and protest in your own communities.

Oppose Trump Administration efforts to cut back protections for immigrant families and their children that have a chilling effect on getting families help they need.

To keep abreast of the anti-immigrant actions above, including threats from changes to the "public charge" rule and to submit comments opposing the new rule once proposed, check the Protecting Immigrant Families, Advancing Our Future Campaign, co-chaired by CLASP and the National Immigration Law Center, at https://protectingimmigrantfamilies.org/ and to join, register at http://bit.ly/PIFCampaign.

Urge your Members of Congress to oppose efforts to overturn protections for children in the Flores case, vigorously support the Fair Day in Court for Kids Act, S2468/HR2403, and the Keep Families Together Act, S3036/HR61356.

Harmful proposals in the House of Representatives threaten to extend stays for youth in detention beyond 20 days and permit placement in unlicensed facilities (contrary to Flores). On a positive note, The Keep Families Together Act prohibits border agencies from removing a child from a parent or legal guardian solely to deter individuals from migrating to the U.S. or to promote compliance with civil immigration laws. The Fair Day in Court for Kids Act requires government appointed counsel for all children in immigration proceedings and access to counsel for anyone in immigration custody.

• Call your Members of Congress. Tell your Senators and Representatives to help stop the inhumane separation of children from their parents and other harmful actions facing families and unaccompanied minors at the border. Urge their vigorous support for both the Keep Families Together Act and Fair Day in Court for Kids Act. Also urge them to oppose any bills that extend stays of children in detention beyond 20 days and permit children to be placed in unlicensed facilities.