Immigration, Family Separation, and Mental Health

TIJUANA - SAN DIEGO BORDER (1938)

Bernando Ng, MD, DFAPA
Immigration, Family Separation, and Mental Health

- Migration
- US citizens in Mexico
- Mexican Citizens in the US
- Removal and deportation
- Forced Separation
- Adverse experiences in childhood
- What can we do?
Immigration, Family Separation, and Mental Health

BERNARDO NG, MD, DFAPA

Migration
Migration started to change when mankind evolved from nomad to sedentary. Migration continues to exist for various reasons.

Cantú, GH 2001, Gutiérrez Sáenz R 2001
Reasons to Migrate

- Political
  - Spain – México

- Religious
  - UK – EU

- Personal Security
  - Germany - UK
  - Korea - US
  - Salvador - US

- Financial
  - Africa – US*
  - México - US
  - US - Mexico

Cantú, GH 2001, Gutiérrez Sáenz R 2001
Immigration, Family Separation, and Mental Health

US citizens in Mexico
BOSQUETE, MEXICO — At the sprawling beachfront Las Rocos Resort and Spa in the Mexican state of Baja California, the restaurant El Mesón serves up American-style pizza and Mexican cactus soup, accompanied by a breathtaking view of the Pacific. To drum up more business, the resort is running a new campaign in local publications, with a limited-time offer.

Their advertisement shows a beaming, middle-aged couple, a silver-haired gentleman and his wife, whose arms are draped comfortably around his shoulders. "Super special!" reads the large text, in English. "Seniors 50% off your check!" In the tiny print below, a disclaimer notes that the deal is available to those aged 55 and up.

That marketing focus is intentional. In 2017, for the first time in twenty years, Mexico topped International Living’s list of International Living’s annual ranking of the best places for U.S. citizens to retire. This trend is being driven by a growing population of American baby boomers, who are living longer, in size as well as in age.

Yet most of them may be there illegally. South of the border, it's relatively easy for U.S. residents to live without legal documentation. In fact, some official reports indicate that illegal American immigrants seem to be the rule, not the exception.

One 2015 study from Mexico’s National Institute of Statistics and Geography reveals that the majority of Americans in the country don't have their papers in order. That includes typos and other minor irregularities, and doesn't appear to account for dual nationalities.

The welcome many American immigrants feel in Mexico stands in stark contrast to the way their Mexican counterparts are treated by Uncle Sam.
## Annual Global Retirement Index 2018 Standings

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https://internationalliving.com/the-best-places-to-retire/
CIUDAD DE MÉXICO

De 2015 a la fecha el número de estadunidenses que viven de manera ilegal en México ha aumentado 37.8 por ciento.

De acuerdo con la Encuesta Intercensal 2015 elaborada por el Instituto Nacional de geografía y Estadística (Inegi) indica que en ese momento 739 mil 168 ciudadanos de Estados Unidos (EU) vivían en México; sin embargo, 65 mil 302 tenían su residencia regular, la cual es entregada por el Instituto Nacional de Migración.

INEGI 2015

- 739,168 US citizens
- 65,302 are legal residents

Mientras las autoridades mexicanas son más flexibles con los indocumentados del país vecino y no los deporta, el gobierno de Donald Trump ha amenazado con llevar a cabo redadas masivas para extraditar a cerca de dos o tres millones de “delincuentes” que están ese país de manera ilegal.

Actualmente la administración del magnate ha repatriado a 11 mil 328 personas, de las cuales 723 tienen antecedentes penales por tráfico de drogas, secuestros, violencia y portación de armas.

Las autoridades migratorias de México han asegurado que el resto de los deportados han sido repatriados por incurrir en delito menores.
With nearly two million Americans living among us, Mexico is the country with the largest community of US citizens living outside the United States. In the state of Jalisco, of which I am governor, one of the largest communities of expatriate Americans in the world resides peacefully on the banks of Lake Chapala, with thousands of others living in Guadalajara and Puerto Vallarta. These people are an essential part of the heartbeat of our community. However, I fear the inflammatory rhetoric of Trump could put that social harmony at risk, sowing the seeds of division. The lazy stereotypes he uses are wrong and unbecoming of a man who is now leading one of the greatest countries in the world.

Jalisco was once only known as the birthplace of hot sauce and tequila. Today, it has become Latin America’s Silicon Valley, with the technology industry worth $21bn and one of the fastest-growing tech revolutions. There is no doubt the close relationship between Mexico brings huge economic, cultural and strategic benefits. The US is Mexico’s main trading partner. The Agreement allows Mexicans to get US work permits and an opportunity. Also, six million Americans enjoy jobs directly on trade with Mexico. But beyond the common border, Mexicans and Americans aspire to peace and prosperity for their people. Let’s not forget.

Tens of thousands of Americans visit our state each year, they are my constituents – even if it is just for a weekend. The situation or background is irrelevant. Since taking office, I have continuously acknowledged the value of diversity in our society, which are not only financial, but cultural as well.

Building a wall along one of the largest and most dynamic borders in the world is a toxic symbol of mistrust. In one single reckless act, the US risks destroying the very special relationship it has built with Mexico over many years and portraying Mexicans as second-class citizens. A wall is both a physical and a symbolic barrier to the notion of working together to solve common problems. The money invested in building something like this would be better spent in solving structural problems and strengthening ties.

I invite all those who harbour and peddle hatred against Mexico and Mexicans to come to visit. I can guarantee that if Trump or his supporters spent time in Mexico, they would embrace the richness of the country, the humility of the people and see the talent we have. We are at the start of a new era.

The futures of both Mexico and the US are interlocked, so while we live in uncertain times I believe that if we focus more on what unites us rather than divides us, both countries will have a great future together.
Immigration, Family Separation, and Mental Health

Mexican Citizens in the US (Latin Americans)
Latinos in the US

17%
Latinos in the US

Estimated unauthorized immigrant population in the U.S. lower in 2015 than in 2009

In millions

- There is no statistically significant difference between the 2015 estimate and 2016 preliminary estimate.


PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Immigration, Family Separation, and Mental Health

Removal and deportation
The U.S. Immigration System

2016 Immigration Enforcement Actions

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of Immigration Statistics (OIS) reports on several immigration enforcement actions, including apprehensions, arrests, determinations of inadmissibility, removals, and returns of unauthorized immigrants. This graphic provides information for these categories for Fiscal Year 2016.

**ALIEN APPREHENSIONS**

- **530,250** aliens were apprehended by DHS in Fiscal Year 2016.
- **415,816 (78.4%)** aliens were apprehended by CBP USBP
  Customs and Border Protection (CBP) U.S. Border Patrol (USBP) is responsible for securing approximately 7,000 miles of international land border with Canada and Mexico and 2,600 miles of coastal border of the United States.
- **110,104 (20.8%)** aliens were apprehended by ICE ERO
  Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) serves as the primary enforcement arm within ICE for the identification, apprehension, and removal of certain aliens from the United States.
- **4,330 (0.8%)** aliens were apprehended by ICE HSI
  Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) Directorate is responsible for disrupting and dismantling transnational criminal threats facing the United States.
The U.S. Immigration System

2016 Immigration Enforcement Actions

**INADMISSIBILITY DETERMINATIONS**

274,617 aliens arriving at a port of entry were determined to be inadmissible by CBP Office of Field Operations (OFO).

The top three ports of entry recorded 50.9% of all inadmissibility determinations:

- Laredo, TX: 24.8%
- San Diego, CA: 17.5%
- El Paso, TX: 8.6%

**ALIEN REMOVALS**

340,056 aliens were removed from the United States.

- Criminals: 39.9% or 135,570 of total
- Non-Criminals: 60.1%

**ALIEN RETURNS**

106,167 aliens were returned to their home countries without an order of removal.

Aliens were returned by the following three DHS components:

- CBP OFO: 77.9%
- CBP USBP: 15.2%
- ICE ERO: 6.9%

Aliens determined inadmissible came from the following top five countries of citizenship:

- Mexico: 26.7%
- Cuba: 19.7%
- Canada: 8.1%
- Philippines: 5.8%
- Guatemala: 4.9%

Removed aliens (criminal and non-criminal) came from the following top five countries of citizenship:

- Mexico: 72.1%
- Guatemala: 9.9%
- Honduras: 6.4%
- El Salvador: 5.9%
- Colombia: 0.6%

Returned aliens came from the following top five countries of citizenship:

- Mexico: 35.0%
- Canada: 17.3%
- Philippines: 12.8%
- China: 8.1%
- India: 2.3%
Figure 1 depicts available data on estimated detected unlawful entries for FY 2006 – FY 2016, the years for which data are available. As the figure indicates, estimated detected unlawful entries (the sum of apprehensions, turn backs, and got aways) fell from 2.0 million to 624 thousand during this period, a 69 percent decrease.

Figure 1.
Estimated Detected Unlawful Entries Nationwide Between POEs, FY 2006 – FY 2016
The White House
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

January 25, 2017

Executive Order: Border Security and Immigration Enforcement Improvements

EXECUTIVE ORDER

BORDER SECURITY AND IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT IMPROVEMENTS
Sec. 2. Policy. It is the policy of the executive branch to:

(a) secure the southern border of the United States through the immediate construction of a physical wall on the southern border, monitored and supported by adequate personnel so as to prevent illegal immigration and human trafficking, and acts of terrorism;

(b) detain individuals apprehended on such violations, including Federal immigration law, including Federal immigration law, as well as Federal immigration law, including Federal immigration law, including Federal immigration law, including Federal immigration law, including Federal immigration law, including Federal immigration law, including Federal immigration law, including Federal immigration law, including Federal immigration law, including Federal immigration law, including Federal immigration law, including Federal immigration law, including Federal immigration law, including Federal immigration law, including Federal immigration law, including Federal immigration law, including Federal immigration law, including Federal immigration law, including Federal immigration law, including Federal immigration law, including Federal immigration law, including Federal immigration law, including Federal immigration law, including Federal immigration law, including Federal immigration law, 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(c) expedite determinations of asylum seekers' claims of eligibility to remain in the United States whose legal claims to remain in the United States are fully rejected, after any appropriate civil or criminal proceedings have been held.


DONALD J. TRUMP

State fully with States and local law enforcement in enacting Federal- State partnerships to enforce Federal immigration priorities, as well as State monitoring and detention programs that are consistent with Federal law and do not undermine Federal immigration priorities.
## Table 2. Changes in Apprehensions at the U.S.-Mexico Border, January–March, 2016–17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>January</th>
<th>February</th>
<th>March</th>
<th>Total (January-March)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Unaccompanied minors</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>3,089</td>
<td>3,092</td>
<td>4,209</td>
<td>10,390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>4,412</td>
<td>1,914</td>
<td>1,043</td>
<td>7,369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% change (2016-17)</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>-38</td>
<td>-75</td>
<td>-29</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Family units</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>2016</td>
<td>3,143</td>
<td>3,050</td>
<td>4,451</td>
<td>10,644</td>
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<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>9,300</td>
<td>3,124</td>
<td>1,125</td>
<td>13,549</td>
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<tr>
<td>% change (2016-17)</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-75</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All Apprehensions</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>23,758</td>
<td>26,072</td>
<td>33,316</td>
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<td>2017</td>
<td>31,577</td>
<td>18,754</td>
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<td>% change (2016-17)</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>-28</td>
<td>-63</td>
<td>-25</td>
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President Trump’s Big Wall Is Now Just 74 Miles Long In His Budget Plan

May 24, 2017 · 5:16 PM ET

JOHN BURNETT
The cheerful paintings of flowers on the tall metal posts on the Tijuana side of the border fence between the U.S. and Mexico belie the sadness of the Mexican families who have gathered there to exchange whispers, tears, and jokes with relatives on the San Diego side.

Many have been separated from their family members for years. Some were deported to Mexico after having lived in the United States for decades without authorization, leaving behind children, spouses, siblings, and parents. Others never left Mexico, but have made their way to the fence to see relatives in the United States. With its prison-like ambience and Orwellian name—Friendship Park—this site is one of the very few places where fleeting contact with their loved Elsewhere, the tall metal barrier.

So is to be the wall that Presi But no matter how tall and thick

Undocumented workers and administration ends up building become undocumented immigra outnumbered those who become border.

Construction cost estimates*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>President Trump</th>
<th>House Speaker Paul Ryan</th>
<th>Dept. of Homeland Security</th>
<th>Washington Post</th>
<th>Senate Democrats’ Report</th>
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<tr>
<td>$12 billion</td>
<td>$15 billion</td>
<td>$22 billion</td>
<td>$25 billion</td>
<td>$70 billion</td>
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*The above figures show the upper estimate when a range was suggested. Costs do not include annual maintenance.
President Trump
4 Pillars on Immigration - Vital for Security and Economy

• https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FSmiNaCDX-U

• Path to citizenship 1.8M people (12 yrs)
• Secure the border - Southern Wall
• End Visa lottery
• End chain migration

State of the Union address 2018
It is an outdated notion that people from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras are primarily looking for economic opportunity in the United States and, therefore, should wait in line for a visa. For people fleeing these countries, waiting for a visa can result in death, rape, or forcible recruitment into crime.

A recent report from Doctors Without Borders (MSF) states that these Northern Triangle countries are experiencing "unprecedented levels of violence outside a war zone" and that "citizens are murdered with impunity, kidnappings and extortion are daily occurrences. Non-state actors perpetuate insecurity and forcibly recruit individuals into their ranks, and use sexual violence as a tool of intimidation and control."

These countries rank in the top 10 in the world for homicide. White House Chief of Staff John Kelly, as leader of U.S. Southern Command in 2014, said that cartels and gangs, fueled by the U.S. demand for drugs, "have left near-broken societies in their wake."

The U.S. government argues that people fleeing these places do not fit the technical definition of a refugee, so the U.S. is not obligated to offer them asylum. Yet they fit the spirit of agreements on refugees adopted after World War II. The U.N. refugee agency has concluded "that a significant percentage of those fleeing... may be in need of international protection, in line with the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees."

Under current U.S. policy, most individuals from Northern Triangle countries are subject to deportation. The Obama administration stepped up enforcement following the 2014 surge in unaccompanied minors, in an attempt to deter future arrivals. The Trump administration has recently implemented an even tougher stance. MSF calls these policies a death sentence for Central Americans fleeing violence. There are documented cases of individuals being murdered in their home country after being deported by the U.S.
EVIDENCE CONFIRMS IT'S NOT JUST ECONOMICS

Activists and media have been reporting on the situation for years. There have always been migrants—documented and undocumented—crossing the U.S. southern border. Many of them come for economic reasons. But the current flow is different. In 2016, 42 percent of people apprehended at the U.S. southern border came from Northern Triangle countries, compared to 13 percent in 2010. While economic incentives are still a push factor, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops concludes that generalized violence "has played a decisive and forceful role" for recent arrivals.

MSF surveyed people in Mexico from Northern Triangle countries in 2015. Thirty-nine percent of respondents cite attacks or threats to themselves or family as the reason for leaving. More than 40 percent had a relative who was killed in the past two years. Thirty-one percent knew someone who was kidnapped; 17 percent knew someone who disappeared. Michael Clemens examines the relative strength of violence and economics driving unaccompanied minors from the Northern Triangle into the U.S.: Controlling for economic factors, a sustained increase of one homicide per year in an area caused approximately 0.9 additional apprehensions of unaccompanied minors per year in the U.S. from that area.

Former Secretary of State Rex Tillerson argued that U.S. demand for drugs drives violence and lawlessness in Northern Triangle countries. In a 2017 speech, then Secretary of Homeland Security John Kelly argued, "The reason for the drug flow is due to our drug demand and we do almost nothing about it.” Arms trafficked from the U.S. also contribute to the violence. Almost half of unregistered weapons seized in Honduras came from the U.S. The region also has stockpiles of weapons from civil conflict during the Cold War, many provided by the U.S. and Soviet Union.

MEXICO IS NOT A SAFE HAVEN

Safety concerns cause many fleeing violence from the Northern Triangle to pass through Mexico en route to the U.S., rather than seeking protection there. Of individuals from these countries surveyed by MSF while transiting Mexico, 68 percent reported being victims of violence during their trip and nearly one-third of women had been sexually assaulted. Perpetrators include gang members and Mexican security forces. Twelve of the world’s 50 most violent cities are in Mexico.
Immigration, Family Separation, and Mental Health

BERNARDO NG, MD, DFAPA

Forced Separation
Unaccompanied Minors

2014 - 68,541 unaccompanied minors

Zayas LH et al, 2017
The effects of parental undocumented status and children


By Cecilia Menjívar and Andrea Gómez Cervantes

An estimated 25 percent of all children in the U.S. live with at least one immigrant parent (Zong & Batalova, 2015), and approximately 79 percent or 4.1 million children of undocumented parents were U.S. citizens in the time period of 2009-2013 (Capps, Fix & Zong, 2016). U.S. immigration policies and enforcement practices today directly and indirectly affect children, families and communities by forcing individuals into new unions, dividing couples, separating parents and children across borders for indefinite time periods, leaving family members in highly vulnerable positions, and complicating individual family relationships when different members hold various legal statuses in the same family (Menjívar, Abrego & Schmalzbauer, 2016). This article focuses on the spillover effects of U.S. immigration policies and...
In Their Own Words

President Trump: "The United States will not be a migrant camp and it will not be a refugee holding facility. ... Not on my watch."

Attorney General Jeff Sessions: "If you cross this border unlawfully, then we will prosecute you. It's that simple. ... If you are smuggling a child, then we will prosecute you and that child will be separated from you as required by law. If you don't like that, then don't smuggle children over our border."

Sessions on whether the policy is a deterrent: "Yes, hopefully people will get the message and come through the border at the port of entry and not break across the border unlawfully."

Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen: Under the "zero tolerance" policy, when families cross the border illegally, "Operationally, what that means is we will have to separate your family. That's no different than what we do every day in every part of the United States when an adult of a family commits a crime."

White House chief of staff John Kelly: Separating families is "a tough deterrent. ... The children will be taken care of — put into foster care or whatever. But the big point is they elected to come illegally into the United States and this is a technique that no one hopes will be used extensively or for very long."

https://www.npr.org/2018/06/19/621065383/what-we-know-family-separation-and-zero-tolerance-at-the-border
What happens when families are separated?

The process begins at a Customs and Border Protection detention facility. But many details about what happens next — how children are taken from their parents and by whom — were unclear.

According to the Texas Civil Rights Project, which has been able to speak with detained adults, multiple parents reported that they were separated from their children and not given any information about where their children would go. The organization also says that in some cases, the children were taken away under the pretense that they would be getting a bath.

The Los Angeles Times spoke to unnamed Homeland Security officials who said parents were given information about the family separation process and that "accusations of surreptitious efforts to separate are completely false."

From the point of separation forward, the policy for treating the separated children appears to be the same as existing systems for detaining and housing unaccompanied immigrant children — designed for minors who cross the border alone. Those unaccompanied minors were generally older than the children affected by family separation.
ORR says children remain at these shelters for "fewer than 57 days on average."
However some children have been kept detained for months longer than that, and
some advocates say certain facilities improperly administer psychotropic medications.

Observers have raised concerns about the psychological toll on young children who
enter this shelter system. NPR's Joel Rose talked to one former shelter employee who
said he quit after he was instructed to prevent siblings from hugging each other. The
organization that runs the shelter said it allows touching and hugging in certain
circumstances.

More than 10,000 migrant children, including children who crossed the border alone, are kept in ORR facilities.
And existing facilities are filling up — the shelter Burnett visited was 95 percent full.
May 30, 2018

APA Statement Opposing Separation of Children from Parents at the Border

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The American Psychiatric Association issued the following statement from President Altha Stewart, M.D.:

"As physician experts in mental health, the American Psychiatric Association opposes any policy that separates children from their parents at the United States border. Children depend on their parents for safety and support. Any forced separation is highly stressful for children and can cause lifelong trauma, as well as an increased risk of other mental illnesses, such as depression, anxiety, and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The evidence is clear that this level of trauma also results in serious medical and health consequences for these children and their caregivers. Many families crossing the United States border are fleeing war and violence in their home countries and are already coping with the effects of stress and trauma. These children deserve our protection and should remain with their families as they seek asylum. The APA recommends an immediate halt to the policy of separating children from their parents."
President Trump has signed an executive order to halt the family separation process he created, but at least 2,500 children have already been taken from their parents and sent to shelters in at least 15 states. Some are as young as a few months old. Hundreds have been apart from distraught parents for several weeks. The system for reuniting these children with parents arrested for crossing the border illegally is chaotic, so the humanitarian crisis could persist for months.
Immigration, Family Separation, and Mental Health

Adverse childhood experiences
Biological Memory

Child Maltreatment (CM) → alteration in core physiological systems.

- Stress systems
  - HPA system
- Cellular Aging
  - Telomere/Telomerase
- Immune System
  - Antibody response

Schury K, Kolassa IT, 2012
Childhood Adversity - PTSD

World Mental Health Surveys (n=27,017)
OR=1.8 greater risk of developing PTSD

• Physical Abuse
• Sexual Abuse
• Neglect
• Parental Psychopathology

McLaughlin KA et al, 2017
Martin Teicher, MD, PhD

McLean Hospital Title:
- Director, Developmental Biopsychiatry Research Program

Harvard Medical School Title:
- Associate Professor of Psychiatry

Research Focus:
Dr. Teicher’s Developmental Biopsychiatry Research Program was founded in 1988 with the aim of improving the lives of children, adolescents, and adults by exploring the cause of psychiatric disorders that arise during development, and by creating medical devices for their assessment. Dr. Teicher is particularly focused on the enduring effects of childhood maltreatment.

Research reveals a strong link between physical, sexual, and emotional maltreatment and bullying, and depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress, and substance abuse. Research pioneered by Dr. Teicher’s lab shows that childhood maltreatment alters brain structure and function, depending on the type of abuse and the stage of development.
Male vs. Female Hippocampus

MRI of the BRAIN
N=336 unmedicated/right handed subjects
132M/204F
18-25 years of age
PTSD, MDD, GAD, PD

Neglect
Male - 7 yrs
Abuse
Female - 10-11 yrs, 15-16 yrs

Teicher MH et al, 2018
Brian Structure, Function, Connectivity

Sensory Systems

Network Architecture

Circuits:

• Threat detection

• Emotional regulation

• Reward Anticipation

Teicher MH et al, 2016
Genetics vs. Epigenetics

DNA Methylation (n=74)

↑ symptoms / ↓ response to treatment

- Alcohol dependence
- Drug dependence
- Depressive Disorders
- Anxiety disorders
- Conduct disorders

Checknita D et al, 2018
Genetics vs. Epigenetics

**THE CELL**
- Nucleus
- Centromere (joins the two chromatids together and is the region which fibers attach to during cell division)

**CHROMOSOME**
- Chromatid (one of the two identical strands of DNA that make up a chromosome)

**Telomeres**
- Molecular protective caps of repetitive DNA at the ends of chromosomes

**When a cell divides**
- **Without Telomerase**
  - Telomeres get shorter each time a cell divides, leading to eventual cell death. This may play a role in aging.

- **With Telomerase**
  - Telomerase is an enzyme that builds and maintains telomeres. It prevents shortening by adding extra pieces of DNA each time a cell divides.

**Cancer Cells**
- In tumors, telomerase is overactive, repairing telomeres and allowing cancer cells to replicate indefinitely.

[Source: massgeneral.org]
Genetics vs. Epigenetics
The integration of epigenetics into developmental psychobiology illustrates the processes by which environmental conditions in early life (0-7 yrs) structurally alter DNA.

This provides a physical basis for the influence of childhood environmental signals on phenotype over the life of the individual.

Also provides evidence for genetic transmission of such changes.

Maltreatment-related childhood adversity is the leading preventable risk factor for mental illness and substance use disorders.

Teicher MH et al, 2018; Meaney MJ, 2010; Checknita D et al, 2018
BERNARDO NG, MD, DFAPA

Immigration, Family Separation, and Mental Health

Research
Clinics
Advocacy
Education

What can we do?
# Charting directions for Research

## Conference Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Institution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Olga Acosta-Price</td>
<td>George Washington University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jodi Berger-Cardoso</td>
<td>University of Houston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dina Birman</td>
<td>University of Miami</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalina M. Brabeck</td>
<td>Rhode Island College</td>
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<tr>
<td>Esther J. Calzada</td>
<td>The University of Texas at Austin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Randy Capps</td>
<td>Migration Policy Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wendy Cervantes</td>
<td>First Focus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laurie Cook</td>
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<td>Gregory Cuellar</td>
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<td>Heather Larkin</td>
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<td>Ernesto Loperena</td>
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<td>Cecilia Menjivar</td>
<td>University of Kansas</td>
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<td>Eva Moya</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yolanda Padilla</td>
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<tr>
<td>J. Rubén Parra-Cardona</td>
<td>Michigan State University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Krista Perreira</td>
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<td>Nina Rabin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joanna Dreby</td>
<td>SUNY Albany</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deliana Garcia</td>
<td>Migrant Clinicians Network</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oscar Gil-Garcia</td>
<td>DePauw University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lauren Gulbas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lauren Heidbrink</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lucila Vargas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hirokazu Yoshikawa</td>
<td>New York University</td>
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Zayas LH et al, 2017
Research

Vulnerable groups of children from Mexico and Central America
- Foreign-born who entered the US with undocumented parents
- Unaccompanied children that entered the US alone
- U.S. born citizen children of undocumented immigrant parents

Methodological and Ethical challenges
- Participant recruitment
- Sampling barriers
- Limited appropriate instruments
- Human-subjects protection

Sustained efforts
- Longitudinal examination
- Long term ethnography
- Funding both private and public

NOT enough research done/published

Zayas LH et al, 2017
Multiple participants
• Researchers
• Policymakers
• Providers
• Advocates

- Immigrants children’s needs to be addressed
  - General Health
  - Mental Health
  - Developmental needs
  - Wellbeing

Zayas LH et al, 2017
Immigrants pay more in private insurance premiums than they receive in benefits (Institute for Community Health/Harvard Medical School)

National representative data:
Immigrants account for
- 12.6% of premiums paid to private insurers
- 9.1% of insurer expenditures on immigrants’ insured

Immigrants’ annual premiums exceeded care expenditures by $1,123/month
US born annual premiums debited care expenditures by $163/month

‘These findings suggest that curtailing immigration could reduce the numbers of “actuarially desirable” people with private insurance, thereby weakening the risk pool’.
Processes of belonging for Citizen-Children of undocumented Mexican immigrants (qualitative study)

- Accompanied parent on deportation (n=31)
- Remained in the US on deportation (n=18)
- Living in the US with an undocumented parent (n=34)
Advocacy

• Get educated
• Work with others
• Stay informed
• Be sensitive
• Be aware of regulations at your agencies
• Take care of yourself
Since June 29th, 2018 the RAICES Bond Squad has paid over $2 million in bond payments for 256 families torn apart by cruel immigration policies in 20 different states. Including bond payments for clients from over 30 partner organizations. Because we believe #FamiliesBelongTogetherANDFree.
Transnational cooperation was evident at a joint conference convened by Mexican and U.S. psychiatric associations and held on both sides of the border.

Psychiatrists Cross Borders for Collaborative Learning

Sharing knowledge and developing collegial friendships know no boundaries. BY AARON LEVIN

Some people want to build walls along the border between the United States and Mexico, while other people want to build bridges and roads to link them closer together.

A few weeks after APA’s 2017 Annual Meeting in San Diego, members of the San Diego Psychiatry met with their counterparts in Mexico. Sessions were held in both Tijuana and San Diego, just a short drive.

San Diego, and former president of the San Diego Psychiatric Society. One benefit of the program: all attendees could receive CME credits from their respective societies.

“For the first time, we had a meeting that was held concurrently in English and Spanish, where psychiatrists and researchers from both countries attended and presented lectures and symposia,” said Ng.

For instance, a symposium on neuropsychiatrists from the Guadalajara, Mexico, the president of the APM, closed the meeting in Tijuana, while Enrique Chavez, M.D., offered the opening remarks in Tijuana, while Enrique Chavez, M.D., the president of the APM, closed the meeting in Tijuana, while Enrique Chavez, M.D.
Psychiatry without borders…. From neuroscience to psychotherapy

CME
APM – APA
For the first time of the 2 associations

Binacionalidad - La nueva Mexicanidad
Binational Mental Health and Migration Symposium

Date: Friday, October 12, 2017
Location: Tijuana Mental Health Hospital, Tijuana BC
Time: 8:00 a.m. a 3:00 p.m.

A dialogue on the mental health impact of migration on individuals and families
American Society of Hispanic Psychiatry
Annual Symposium
May 5, 2018
Mental Health and Migration
Sheraton Times Square, Madison Square, Lower Lobby
811 7th Avenue
New York, NY 10019
Migration is an ongoing phenomena between US and Mexico; and the rest of Latin America.

Legal, moral, and ethical issues are a struggle in our current environment.

Forced separation has the same effect as abuse/neglect in children’s health (?)

Vulnerable groups of children from Mexico and Central America
- Foreign-born who entered the US with undocumented parents
- Unaccompanied children that entered the US alone
- U.S. born citizen children of undocumented immigrant parents

Science, clinical care, research and advocacy are the ways to address the needs of immigrants’ children
Gracias - Thank you
Bernardo Ng, MD