



RESEARCH REPORT

Health and Social Service Needs of US-Citizen Children with Detained or Deported Immigrant Parents

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MPI provides analysis, development, and evaluation of migration and refugee policies at local, national, and international levels. It aims to meet the demand for pragmatic and thoughtful responses to the challenges and opportunities that large-scale migration, whether voluntary or forced, presents to communities and institutions in an increasingly integrated world.

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Executive Summary

Between 2003 and 2013, the US government deported 3.7 million immigrants to their home countries, over 90 percent of whom were unauthorized immigrants from Mexico or Central America. According to the most reliable estimates, parents of US-born children made up between one-fifth and one-quarter of this total. Prior research suggests that families and children experience significant emotional and financial hardship when a parent is deported.

This qualitative study addresses several key research questions:

- What are the experiences of children whose parents are deported or detained?
- What are the primary health and human services needs of these children?
- What barriers do affected children and families face in accessing services?
- What are promising approaches for delivering services to children with deported and detained parents?

Beginning in 2012, the Urban Institute and its study partners undertook qualitative research to answer these questions. The study team selected five fieldwork locations based on several characteristics, including number of deportations, size and composition of the local immigrant population, region of the United States, state and local policies affecting immigrants, and the availability of key contacts in the community. The team chose key contacts who regularly interacted with families experiencing parental deportation and with immigrant communities more generally. The team also held group discussions with spouses and other family members of detained or deported parents, and individual discussions with parents in Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention centers. Visits to these locations occurred in 2013.

Key Finding 1. Children Experienced a Number of Harms following a Parent's Detention or Deportation

Spouses of detained and deported parents and other caregivers participating in the study reported that children experienced negative emotional and behavioral outcomes after a parent was detained or deported. Family members had problems communicating with detained parents because of difficulties locating them, great distances between their homes and detention centers, strict visiting rules at

detention centers, and the expense of telephone calls from the centers. According to study participants, communication problems with parents in detention exacerbated the emotional harm to children. In some cases, children were unable to communicate with their parents before deportation, and thus felt that their parents had simply “disappeared.”

Further, many of the spouses and partners of detained parents reported suffering from depression and social isolation following the detention. Previous research suggests that depressed parents have more difficulty supporting the healthy development of their children, leading to risks of poor cognitive and behavioral outcomes. Prior research also indicates that unauthorized immigrant parents experience high levels of depression and social isolation, which are in turn associated with poorer cognitive and socioemotional development in their children.

According to study participants, most families chose to stay in the United States after a parent, typically the father, was deported. The loss of the father, often the breadwinner, caused substantial financial hardship. Costs associated with hiring lawyers and paying immigration bonds compounded financial stress. Such hardship often led to housing instability, with families doubling up in crowded housing or moving frequently in search of affordable housing. If the remaining parent was detained at a later date, children faced additional instability in caregiving arrangements, as they were usually taken into the care of siblings, aunts, uncles, and more distant relatives. Emotional harm, financial stress, and housing instability led to declines in school performance among some of these children.

A small share of deported parents chose to bring their children back to their home country. The study team was unable to collect information from families who returned to their home country, since the research was conducted in the United States. However, study participants who had either considered returning with children or had known families who returned reported that moving increased financial hardship, disrupted schooling, and reduced access to health care and other resources for children. Further, US-citizen children might return to the United States as adults, and an incomplete education or poor health could complicate their reintegration into US society.

Key Finding 2. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Took Actions Intended to Reduce Harm to Children with Parents in Custody

Immigration and Customs Enforcement aimed to reduce harm to the children of detained parents through a range of actions, including issuing the “Facilitating Parental Interests in the Course of Civil Immigration Enforcement Activities” directive, facilitating detainee communication with families and lawyers, and taking precautions to protect children during field operations. The agency implemented the directive in August 2013, midway through the study. The directive recommends that local ICE offices designate points of contact for families and communities, allow parent-child visitation in detention centers, facilitate interaction with child welfare systems and family courts, and support arrangements with consulates for family members to meet with detainees before deportation.

Additionally, ICE helped families and advocates communicate with detainees by setting up an electronic locator system, establishing detention center hotlines to consulates and legal-services providers, allowing health and social service providers to visit detainees, and facilitating workshops by legal-service providers. The agency also took steps during field operations to protect children from potential harm. For example, ICE conducted operations when children were not at home or were not awake.

This project was not intended to evaluate these efforts, and the study team did not conduct such an evaluation.

Key Finding 3. Children with Detained or Deported Parents Had Difficulty Accessing Conventional Health, Mental Health, Early Education, and Social Services

Prior research shows that families with immigrant parents confront language, cultural, information, and other barriers to receiving public benefits. Additionally, unauthorized immigrant parents are ineligible for key federal benefit programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, and Medicaid. Families with unauthorized immigrant parents and US-citizen children receive lower benefits than families in which the parents are eligible, because of prorating of benefits by the share of family members who are eligible.

Key contacts reported that unauthorized immigrant parents might not apply for benefits because they feared interacting with government officials. They reported relatively more fear in communities where large numbers of people had been deported or where local law enforcement collaborated more closely with ICE.

Social service agencies reported a lack of staff with the resources, expertise, and experience to meet the needs of children whose parents are deported or detained, particularly in areas with smaller, less established immigrant communities. Some agency staff also reported that they lacked training on ICE detention and deportation procedures, which hindered their ability to assist affected families. Advocates and families across the sites reported that varying citizenship and immigration status among family members complicated service provision.

Study participants reported that some services were in short supply in their communities. Where available, services were often unaffordable or not provided in a linguistically and culturally appropriate manner. Families and service agencies in all five sites reported a lack of mental health care for children to address the emotional harm resulting from their parents' detention and deportation. Because they could not find linguistically and culturally appropriate mental health services, families generally preferred informal counseling through churches and other trusted organizations.

Families also had difficulty finding emergency financial, food, and housing assistance after a parental detention or deportation. When such support was available, it was generally available only once or for a short period of time, and not on an ongoing basis.

Study participants reported that unauthorized immigrant families were unable to locate affordable legal services to challenge deportations and keep their families intact. Fraudulent legal providers often took advantage of the lack of affordable legal services and provided bad advice that exacerbated families' immigration problems and financial difficulties. Key contacts in the community noted the reluctance of these families to report such fraud or other crimes because they feared interacting with the police.

Many parents in the study said that they were unable to drive their children to services because they lacked driver's licenses. Without licenses, parents feared being pulled over by the police and then detained by ICE. These fears were more acute in South Carolina, South Texas, and rural and suburban jurisdictions lacking reliable public transportation. Lack of transportation hindered parents' ability to enroll their children in early learning programs that did not provide buses. On the other hand, Illinois and California recently allowed unauthorized immigrants to apply for driver's licenses, increasing their mobility.

Child welfare agencies experienced difficulty providing services to families with detained and deported parents. Staff at these agencies reported difficulties in locating parents in custody and reestablishing contact, conducting home studies with remaining family members who may be unauthorized, finding family members and conducting home studies outside the United States, and involving parents who are detained or outside the United States in child court proceedings. Staff reported that poor coordination with ICE undermined child welfare agencies' ability to provide services; for example, when child welfare agency staff did not know how to arrange for detained parents to attend family court hearings or children could not make required visits with parents in detention.

Key Finding 4. Diverse State and Local Organizations Developed Promising Approaches to Better Meet Children's Needs

State, local, and private organizations helped families apply for benefits. State and county social service agencies developed ways to improve access to benefits for which children were eligible, including using bilingual staff to take applications over the phone in South Carolina and assisting parents in navigating public benefit applications in South Florida and the Rio Grande valley, in Texas.

Organizations reported filling specific gaps in key services. Head Start programs, public schools, and community-based organizations in multiple sites provided mental health services to children who experienced emotional harm from a parent's deportation. Services for parents, however, were harder to find. Across the sites, a range of organizations, including consulates, community-based organizations, and religious organizations, provided short-term financial support for families, though their resources were limited. Federally qualified health centers and coalitions of providers offered health services to children and families, though their capacity and service areas were also limited. Some community-based organizations provided assistance to detained parents upon their release. Religious organizations reported providing a range of services for families facing detention and deportation, including legal assistance and planning for deportations. One promising service was a detention-visiting program set up by a Catholic organization in Chicago and staffed mostly by volunteers.

Organizations also reported working to build trust with families. Several social service providers reported reaching out to unauthorized immigrant families by hiring bilingual staff from the immigrant community. Law enforcement agencies developed special programs to build trust with unauthorized

immigrants to encourage them to report crimes. Consulates tracked parents in detention, facilitated communication with family members, and helped identify community resources. Community-based organizations in all five sites reported creating support groups and informal networks (mostly of mothers) to help families cope with economic hardship, manage depression, and overcome social isolation. These organizations also helped some women find employment, informal work, or other forms of financial support for their families.

Child welfare systems collaborated with ICE and foreign country consulates to address the needs of children in their custody or otherwise in their care. Communities with large, long-established immigrant communities were further along in developing these collaborations. Three study communities had developed practices in this regard: Los Angeles County, which has a very experienced immigrant-focused social work unit; the Rio Grande valley, which created immigration specialist positions to assist case workers across the state; and the Chicago metropolitan area, which developed a handbook for serving immigrant families and a memorandum of understanding with a Mexican consulate.

Conclusion

President Obama's November 2014 Immigration Accountability Executive Action included a proposal to extend work permits and temporary deportation stays to approximately 3.7 million parents with US-citizen or legal permanent resident children. In February 2015, a federal court issued an injunction against these elements of the executive action, and as of June 2015, when this report was written, the new policy had not yet gone into effect. Until appeals of this injunction are resolved, unauthorized immigrant parents of US citizens and legal permanent residents remain subject to deportation, and the concerns articulated in this report remain relevant. Even without more deportations, nearly one million children have already had a parent deported, and these children remain at risk for adverse outcomes.

The findings from this study suggest a number of ways to provide services and reduce harm to children with detained and deported parents. First, health and human service agencies could improve their staff's language capacity, cultural competence, and knowledge of issues associated with immigration status. Another approach involves building bridges between health and human services agencies and informal local organizations that immigrants trust. Coordination among the key agencies (ICE, social service agencies, and foreign country consulates) is critical, especially for the provision of child welfare services. Leadership is important, as high-level contacts yield stronger coordination and service delivery. Finally, small organizations implement many promising strategies to serve children

with detained and deported parents. These organizations, however, often face limited resources and high staff turnover. Institutionalizing such strategies would provide a stronger safety net for these children and families in need.

Introduction

Between 2003 and 2013, the US government deported 3.7 million immigrants to their home countries. Ninety-one percent of deportees were from Mexico and the Central American countries of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras (Rosenblum and McCabe 2014). Mexico has been the major source of US unauthorized immigrants for decades, as measured by apprehensions along the US-Mexico border. In 2014, however, apprehensions of migrants from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras outpaced apprehensions of Mexican nationals.¹ The vast majority of deportees were unauthorized immigrants, though legal permanent residents (LPRs) could be deported for felonies and other serious crimes.²

Parents of US-citizen children made up an estimated one-fifth to one-quarter of deportees between 2003 and 2013, and 91 percent of deportees were men, or fathers in the case of parents (Rosenblum and McCabe 2014).³ Of an estimated 5.5 million US children with one or more unauthorized immigrant parents, 4.5 million of these children (82 percent) are US citizens (Passel and Cohn 2011).

Law enforcement authorities apprehended or arrested one-third of all 2003–13 deportees (1.3 million) in the US interior. In most cases, local law enforcement initiated the arrests, identified deportable immigrants via the Secure Communities database, and referred them to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) for deportation.⁴ The Border Patrol apprehended the other two-thirds (2.4 million deportees), predominantly on the nation's southwestern border with Mexico (Rosenblum and McCabe 2014). An estimated 15 percent of these deportees were parents of US-citizen children (Human Rights Watch 2015).

The scope and nature of US immigration enforcement activities have changed substantially in recent years. The US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has narrowed the scope of deportation, and some migrant groups, especially parents of US citizens, are now potentially eligible for protection. Removals from the US interior peaked at 188,000 in federal fiscal year (FY) 2011, but fell to 102,000 in FY 2014 (ICE 2014a; Rosenblum and McCabe 2014). The drop in interior removals resulted from a series of ICE policy memoranda prioritizing the removal of three groups: individuals apprehended at the border, those with prior formal deportations, and those with criminal convictions (Rosenblum and McCabe 2014).⁵ The Immigration Accountability Executive Action (IAEA) announced by President Obama in November 2014 further narrowed these enforcement priorities, likely resulting in continuing drops in interior removals (DHS 2014).⁶

The Obama administration has also announced initiatives to provide deportation relief for certain groups of unauthorized immigrants. In August 2012, the administration initiated the Deferred Action

for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, which provides work permits and temporary (two-year) relief from deportation to certain unauthorized immigrants who entered the United States as children.⁷ In November 2014, the administration announced that the Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA) program would include parents of US-citizen and LPR children.⁸ An estimated 3.7 million unauthorized immigrant parents of US-citizen or LPR children could be eligible for DAPA (Migration Policy Institute 2014). The administration planned to implement DAPA in May 2015, but in February 2015, a federal district court judge in Texas placed an injunction on the expansion of DACA and DAPA. Neither the expansion nor the new program can be implemented until the case is resolved by the federal courts. The case had not been resolved at the time this report was written in June 2015 (National Law Review 2015).

Until this federal court case can be resolved, millions of children have unauthorized immigrant parents who remain at risk for detention and deportation. In addition to the findings from this study, prior studies have documented the emotional and financial hardship these children face when their parents are detained or deported (Brabeck and Xu 2010; Chaudry et al. 2010; Dreby 2012). Detention and deportation also complicate the delivery of health and social services to needy children in these families, for reasons described in this report and elsewhere.

This study addresses four key questions:

- What are the experiences of children whose parents are deported or detained?
- What are the primary health and human services needs of these children?
- What barriers do affected children and families face in accessing services?
- What are promising approaches for delivering services to children with deported and detained parents?

Following a brief methods overview, the remainder of this report focuses on the findings of the study. At the end of the report are two appendixes: the first describes the study methodology in detail, and the second provides a detailed overview of enforcement policies in the team's study sites.

Methods

The study team consisted of researchers from the Urban Institute (the prime contractor), the Migration Policy Institute, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and the University of Texas at Austin.

Team members visited five sites in 2013:

- in South Carolina, Columbia, a neighboring suburb, and a rural area;⁹
- in Texas, the Rio Grande valley (Brownsville, Harlingen, and McAllen in Cameron and Hidalgo counties);
- in California, Los Angeles County;
- in Illinois, Chicago and neighboring suburbs; and
- in South Florida, the Miami metropolitan area (Miami-Dade and Palm Beach counties).

The study team selected these locations based on the number of deportations, size and composition of the local immigrant population, regional location within the United States, availability of key contacts, willingness of key contacts to participate, and the range of state and local policies affecting immigrant populations. Key contacts in the sites were chosen based on their involvement in organizing, representing, providing services to, or interacting with families with detained and deported parents.

Two locations (the Chicago metropolitan area and Los Angeles County) had implemented permissive policies for immigrants, such as limiting local law enforcement cooperation with ICE, allowing unauthorized immigrants to obtain driver's licenses, extending health insurance coverage to unauthorized immigrant children, and broadening immigrant eligibility rules for other public benefit programs.¹⁰ The mayor of Chicago has stated that he hopes to make his city the most immigrant friendly in the world. In pursuit of this goal, the City's Office of New Americans has organized provision of services to immigrant communities through city agencies and broadened the reach of city services to immigrant communities by collaborating with community organizations, academic institutions, and the private sector (City of Chicago 2015).

In contrast, South Carolina had passed legislation restricting unauthorized immigrants' access to state benefits and promoting enforcement of federal immigration laws by making unauthorized status a state crime. The Rio Grande valley and South Florida did not have many specific state or local policies related to benefits or enforcement.¹¹ In the study sites in both states, however, the Border Patrol had a significant presence. The Rio Grande valley has been the busiest sector along the border with Mexico

since 2012, and South Florida has continued to be a busy area for maritime apprehensions. Border Patrol activity heightened the risk of apprehension and deportation in these two study sites.

In each study site, the team met with key contacts, including ICE officers, local law enforcement officers, local government officials, staff at health and human service agencies, educators in public schools and Head Start programs, community-based organization (CBO) staff, immigration lawyers and advocates, and Mexican and Guatemalan consular officials. Team members did not meet individuals from all these groups in all locations, but they did meet with the full range of these contacts across the study sites. Immigration and Customs Enforcement allowed team members to visit detention centers in each location. In four of these detention centers, team members held discussions with detained parents of US-citizen children. Team members also held larger group discussions with parents (mostly spouses or partners of detained parents) in four of the study sites.

Strict confidentiality procedures were maintained throughout the study. No key contacts or other discussants are mentioned by name in this report or any transcribed notes, and additional efforts have been made to protect confidentiality, including shielding geographic location of discussants where necessary. Appendix A provides more detail on the project's methodology.

Experiences of Children with Detained and Deported Parents

This section describes the study team’s findings about children’s mental health, financial hardship, housing instability, and caregiving instability following a parent’s detention or deportation. This information is based on the observations of the parents who were not detained or deported, as well as those of social service providers and other key contacts who worked closely with these children. The findings also draw from this study’s companion piece, which reviews the literature on this topic (Capps et al. 2015).

Mental Health

Children have strong psychological reactions to the apprehension, detention, and deportation of their parents.¹² In prior research, subjects described a wide range of mental, physical, and behavioral conditions afflicting children with detained or deported parents (Capps, Chaudry, Castañeda, and Santos 2007; Chaudry et al. 2010; Dreby 2010, 2012; Brabeck and Xu 2010). Participants in the current study reported that children often developed similar problems and lashed out at the parent who was not detained or at others in school. Most often, children with a detained or deported parent became depressed, which led to deteriorating physical health and performance in school. Study participants reported that children refused to eat, pulled out their hair, or had persistent stomachaches or headaches. Others turned to more self-destructive outlets such as cutting themselves or abusing substances. Many children lost interest in their daily activities and struggled to maintain positive relationships with their nondetained parent or new guardian.

Nondetained parents often suffered from depression after their spouse’s detention, which further strained the parent-child relationship. Previous research suggests that depressed parents have more difficulty supporting the healthy development of their children, leading to risks of poor cognitive and behavioral outcomes (Beardslee et al. 1996; Goodman et al. 2011). Research focusing on children with unauthorized immigrant parents has linked parents’ unauthorized status to depression and social isolation, which are in turn associated with lower scores on measures of young children’s cognitive and socioemotional development (Yoshikawa 2011).

Prior studies have also found that mothers left behind with children after fathers are deported often experience social isolation and depression (Capps et al. 2007; Chaudry et al. 2010). These studies have also shown that after large-scale immigration raids, whole communities of remaining immigrant families may go into hiding.

In the current study, some mothers had already been isolated before their spouses were detained because they had no US work experience and had not yet learned to drive. Mothers who were not well integrated in these ways often became more socially isolated and depressed after a spouse or partner was arrested. In some cases, study participants reported difficulties getting mothers to leave the house at all.

Conditions of Arrest

Family members reported that witnessing the apprehension of a parent at home was particularly traumatic for children. For example, a mother from South Florida reported that ICE arrested her brother in front of her children in their home, which scared the children. In South Carolina, it was reported that an ICE team went door-to-door looking for specific individuals and arrested some unauthorized immigrants who were not the original targets of the investigation. Children sometimes confused ICE officers for the local police because they wore similar uniforms or conducted joint operations. Such confusion led to mistrust of local law enforcement authorities and hesitation to report crimes.

Arrests outside the home generated a different set of potential harms to children. Study participants reported that children often did not understand what had happened to parents arrested away from home. From the child's perspective, the parent had simply disappeared one day after going to work or dropping him or her off at school.¹³

Several study participants noted that mothers were often reluctant to tell children that their fathers had been detained or deported. In one case, a family moved to Mexico to join the father after his deportation. For many years, the parents did not tell their children the father had been deported, and the children remained resentful about this into adulthood. Some CBOs participating in the study counseled mothers to talk to their children about deportation because hiding the truth could lead to distrust between parents and children and conflict within families.

Parental Contact during Detention

The initial emotional harm resulting from a parent's arrest was compounded by families' difficulty finding detained parents, especially after these parents were transferred from state or local custody to ICE or transferred from one ICE facility to another.

Additionally, remote detention centers were often inaccessible. Immigrant communities are widely dispersed across the United States, and ICE does not have facilities near every community. Though Los Angeles County, South Florida, and the Rio Grande valley housed major detention centers, individuals in other study sites were generally detained far from where they were apprehended. Immigration and Customs Enforcement sometimes transferred migrants in custody from one facility to another because of capacity, criminal history of the detainee, and other logistical constraints.¹⁴ For example, ICE detained individuals apprehended in the Chicago metropolitan area in facilities two to three hours away, but detained those apprehended in less populous midwestern states and cities in facilities that were hundreds of miles from where they were apprehended. Individuals apprehended in South Carolina and North Carolina were generally detained in Georgia.

Detention centers were typically secure and prison-like. The secure conditions greatly restricted visitation hours and length, frequency, and number of allowable visitors.¹⁵ For example, in two facilities the study team toured, glass separated visitors from detainees, and communication was only allowed by telephone.

Many parents feared that young children, in particular, would find it difficult to see their parents in custody. Moreover, spouses and other adult family members often could not enter detention centers because of their own unauthorized status. Some facilities warned unauthorized family members not to enter the building because of the risk of arrest if they met ICE enforcement priorities, while others prohibited them from visiting altogether.

Economic Hardship

Parental detention and deportation had a significant financial impact on families who were already living paycheck to paycheck. Families reported that they did not have the resources to replace the loss of income from the detained or deported primary breadwinner. Prior research has documented steep drops in family income, and sometimes loss of income altogether, among families with detained and deported fathers (Chaudry et al. 2010; Dreby 2010, 2012), and this study found a similar effect on

family income. Often, mothers reported struggling to take care of their children and find paid work to make up for the father's lost income. Study participants reported that mothers often did not have prior work experience and did not have their names on any bills or other important family documents.

One mother in South Florida who was working when her spouse was deported explained that she had to choose between working double shifts and caring for her children at night. If she stayed home at night, she could not afford necessities like shoes or soap. Similarly, mothers participating in a group discussion in South Carolina expressed difficulty affording food after their husbands' detention or deportation. As one mother stated, "People see that I'm worried and ask how I am. I say nothing is the matter. But, we don't have anything to eat." Thus, in some cases, mothers did not openly discuss the degree of their families' needs, making it difficult for them to access services and potentially compounding their hardship.

In addition to lost income, expensive legal fees compounded families' financial difficulties. Fees for hiring a lawyer and the costs of immigration bonds often amounted to thousands of dollars. One mother from South Carolina said that hiring a lawyer for her husband and paying his immigrant bond cost a total of \$20,000, which she raised with the help of informal networks in her local community. Several people from other regions described lower immigration bonds of a few thousand dollars, an amount still unaffordable for most unauthorized immigrant families.

In a few cases, families secured pro bono lawyers through local nonprofit agencies or home country consulates. Some study participants noted that lawyers they had hired charged high fees without accomplishing much, "[The lawyer] could not do anything and kept asking for more and more money, when I could barely afford shoes, soap, and basic necessities for my daughters." Advocates and some public officials who participated in the study were concerned that *notarios* (unlicensed legal-service providers referred to as "notaries" in the immigrant community) preyed on vulnerable families with members in immigration detention. Chicago, as part of its policies protecting immigrants, tightened regulations for immigration service providers and audited them to reduce fraudulent practices (City of Chicago 2013).

Even if they spent large sums on lawyers, notarios, or immigration bonds, most parents were ultimately unsuccessful in fighting their deportation. US immigration law allows very limited avenues for relief from deportation once cases get to immigration court. Recent policy changes narrowing enforcement priorities, however, have resulted in some deportation cases being closed (see appendix B).

Housing Instability

Parental detention and the accompanying loss of income led some families to move out of their homes. Prior studies have documented high levels of crowding and other forms of housing hardship after parental deportation (Brabeck and Xu 2010; Chaudry et al. 2010). Families often move in with other households when they cannot afford housing. The resulting crowding has been shown to negatively affect children's health, development, and behavior (Edwards, Fuller, Vorakitphokatorn, and Sermisri 1994; Evans, Saegert, and Harris 2001).

Study participants noted cases in which families moved to smaller, more affordable homes, where they often all lived in one or two rooms. Those who could not find affordable housing found themselves homeless, relying on shelters or moving in with family and friends. In South Florida, for example, one mother with two adolescent girls was evicted from her home after failing to pay rent. The landlord kept the family's belongings in lieu of the rent payment, and the mother believed she had no legal recourse to challenge this action.

A representative from a California legal nonprofit described the housing challenges faced by many affected families in the Los Angeles area: "One of [the] consequences is you lose your housing. People go live with relatives and double up. This is already a densely populated community so that's being exacerbated. There's an increase in people who are homeless, and not just a person but a family. And shelter space is already scarce. Often they don't accept a family, or it's a temporary situation. They may end up in [neighboring counties] where there's family that can take them in so they're uprooted [from Los Angeles]." In other cases, scarce space in homeless shelters contributed to family separation.

Instability in Caregiving

Sometimes the financial and emotional stresses associated with parental detention and deportation became overwhelming for the remaining parent, and they placed children in the care of another guardian, usually a relative or family friend in the community. In other cases, the remaining parent was not competent to take care of the children alone because of mental health, substance abuse, or other conditions that existed before the other parent's apprehension. Children left behind in the care of a parent with such conditions were at risk for family instability and child welfare system involvement.

When parents felt compelled to split up their families, they typically made arrangements with family members such as grandmothers, brothers, or sisters, or with friends in the local area. Parents

often made these arrangements quickly, under duress, and the arrangements sometimes became unstable. For example, one organization in Los Angeles County worked with a girl whose parents were both deported. Her grandmother took custody of her but was not able to fully care for her, and her housing situation was unstable. The girl continued to move back and forth between two different houses in the Los Angeles area, attending two different high schools.

Arrest of a single parent also led families to dissolve and placed children in unstable situations. For example, one of the female detainees who met with the study team was a single mother with four children, two of whom were disabled. Her ex-husband had been deported several years earlier after being convicted of physically and sexually assaulting her. She did not have any relatives in the immediate area. After her arrest, the children were divided among four of their father's relatives, whom the children had not seen in many years. While in detention, the mother could only communicate with one of her children because she was estranged from the caregivers of the other three.

Children separated from their parents and taken into custody by relatives or family friends experienced other difficulties. Families included in the study reported that it could be difficult for relatives to establish legal guardianship, which is necessary for applying for health care and other benefits for the children. For example, one grandmother in the Chicago metropolitan area was left in charge of her grandchildren when her son and daughter-in-law were deported, but was unable to secure assistance for the children without proper guardianship documentation from the parents (then in Mexico). Likewise, in South Florida and the Rio Grande valley, social service providers told the study team that some people who cared for children with detained or deported parents had trouble enrolling the children in school or collecting their benefits.

Guardianship by educators or other nonrelatives offered a solution to these documentation problems. In Los Angeles County, for example, two study participants described cases in which teachers or school administrators legally adopted students after their parents were deported, so that the children could stay in the United States and finish their education.

Caregivers were sometimes overwhelmed by the responsibility of the child left behind. For example, a social worker described the case of an eight-year-old left with older siblings after their mother's deportation. The siblings did not enroll him in school or take him to the doctor, and they were unable to provide adequate supervision. After an older sister punched him in the face, the child was taken into the child welfare system. At the time of the team's visit, social workers were attempting to reunify him with his mother in Mexico.

Performance in School

Prior research suggests that school performance may falter for some children following parental deportation, but may improve for others as school becomes an important source of support (Chaudry et al. 2010). In this prior study, some districts were very supportive of immigrant communities following immigration raids, and their support made schools into safe havens. Once the schools became safe havens, some children's academic performance actually improved following parental deportation.

In the current study, however, reports of children's performance and behavior following parental deportation were generally negative. School staff who participated in the study reported that some students with detained or deported parents lost track of long-term goals such as college enrollment and became disengaged from academics and from social relationships with their peers. Some children uncharacteristically fought with other students or with teachers in class. As one grandmother from the Rio Grande valley stated about her grandson, "He was hardworking, he was doing well in school, but after all that, he would not go to school, he wouldn't work, he just sleeps during the day and is out at night, he's on a bad path now, he's always going to court."

Sometimes schools or local nonprofits had resources to provide counseling for these children, as will be described later in the report, but these schools and other institutions often did not have enough resources to provide counseling to all children who needed it. Several study participants described how older students felt the need to drop out of college because they lacked money for tuition. Others dropped out to take care of their younger siblings or to enter the workforce and support their families financially.

Returning to the Parent's Home Country

A recent study of Border Patrol data suggests that many parents attempt to reenter the United States after deportation. In FY 2011-12, 15 percent of migrants apprehended at the US-Mexico border were parents of US-citizen children (Human Rights Watch 2015). This amounted to 102,000 parents attempting to reenter the country illegally during this two-year period.

Participants in the current study reported that most families affected by deportation desired to remain in the United States, hoping that the deported parent would be able to return illegally. Families acknowledged the challenges associated with illegal reentry, but these challenges were outweighed by

the considerable difficulties that families with children could face upon return to Mexico or Central America.

Participants reported that, less commonly, families moved to the US-Mexico border region, where US-citizen children living on the US side could travel to Mexico to visit the deported parent on a regular basis. Families with parents deported to countries other than Mexico (e.g., El Salvador, Guatemala, or Honduras) did not have this option.

Key contacts at consulates, service providers, and other organizations included in the study reported that parents seldom took children with them when they were deported.¹⁶ Families had many concerns about leaving the United States, including basic health and living conditions, school enrollment and affordability, and crime. Children who could not speak Spanish might encounter difficulties enrolling in school in Mexico and Central America. Parents might have difficulty affording schools in Central American countries, where even public school tuition can be expensive. Parents might not want to interrupt their children's academic trajectories in the United States. In the words of one study participant, parents wanted to keep their children "on the right track" in school. Parents reported that they preferred not to have their children return to the parental country of origin, except in cases where the children were very young and their mothers were deported.

There is limited research or documentation on families that have left the United States following parental deportation. Prior studies have described a small number of cases in which mothers took very young children (mostly infants and toddlers) with them to home countries after deportation (Capps et al. 2007; Chaudry et al. 2010). In these cases, maintaining the mother-child bond was a primary consideration. These studies documented some cases in which younger siblings followed parents to their home countries while the older ones remained in the United States.

A recent survey of migrants returning to Jalisco in central Mexico found that most had left the United States voluntarily and that very few had been deported. Among those who had been deported, most intended to leave children in the United States rather than have the children join them after deportation. This survey was conducted far from the US-Mexico border, and it is possible that families were more likely to move to border communities than to the interior of Mexico after parental deportation (Mexican and Americans Thinking Together 2014).

In sum, the difficult and uncertain experiences following separation from a parent in the context of immigration enforcement often led to a cascade of other changes in children's lives. As documented in prior research and the current study, separation from a parent often caused mental health issues, problems in school, economic hardship, housing instability, family dissolution, and, in extreme cases,

abuse and neglect that could result in child welfare involvement. Children with detained and deported parents, therefore, exhibited an array of social service needs. The next section of the report describes ICE policies that aim to reduce the harm experienced by children with deported or detained parents. The report then provides detailed assessments of challenges to providing health and social services to these vulnerable children, as well as promising approaches to overcoming these challenges.

ICE Policies That Protect Children during Parental Detention and Deportation

Immigration and Customs Enforcement recently implemented policies aimed at reducing the harm children experience from the detention and deportation of their parents. United States immigration law gives discretion to ICE officers to suspend deportation for some immigrants. Even before the announcement of DAPA and new enforcement priorities in November 2014, a significant share of parents were eligible for deportation relief if they had not been previously convicted of serious crimes and had not committed multiple immigration violations. The Department of Homeland Security has some flexibility in handling cases involving parents, particularly when it comes to the location of detention, as well as procedures for allowing communication with children and other family members.

Moreover, ICE's 2013 "Facilitating Parental Interests in the Course of Civil Immigration Enforcement Activities" directive (parental interests directive, or PID) provides guidelines for protecting children whose parents are apprehended, detained, and deported. This section outlines provisions of the PID that were implemented during the team's visits, as well as other actions taken by ICE to reduce harm to children with parents in custody. However, this project was not intended to evaluate these efforts, and the study team did not conduct such an evaluation.

Locating Parents in Detention

Immigration and Customs Enforcement has reformed the detention system to facilitate communication between detained parents and their children and other family members. These reforms include creating an online detainee-locator system, developing toll-free hotlines to consulates and legal-service providers, reducing transfers to facilities far away from family members, developing less restrictive detention facilities, and releasing detainees under community or ICE supervision (ICE 2012a; Landy 2012). ICE created the detainee-locator system to help families communicate with parents who are detained. Before the locator system, family courts, social workers, and lawyers had difficulty communicating with parents in ICE detention who had children in the child welfare system (IPC and First Focus 2012).

Immigration lawyers and others working closely with individuals in detention reported that the locator system made it easier to find people in ICE custody, but problems remained. The system's requirement for A-numbers or, alternatively, full names and birthdates, created some obstacles to using the system.¹⁷ A-numbers could be difficult to obtain because ICE required consent from detainees to use them, so family members usually could not obtain an A-number before locating their detained relatives. Full names could be problematic because migrants often used multiple names and did not give full information to ICE. Birthdates were also sometimes inconsistent for the same person. To overcome these obstacles, discussants recommended that the system allow partial matches to names and birthdates. In two sites, study participants reported that it was easier to locate individuals through local ICE officers, who typically have been responsive to inquiries about parents' locations.

Recently, ICE developed hotlines in detention centers to allow detainees contact with consulates and legal-service providers. Unlike the regular pay phones in ICE facilities, the hotlines are free. They facilitate communication for detainees, though not directly with families.

In addition, ICE established the Detention Reporting and Information Line (DRIL), a toll-free service in English and Spanish.¹⁸ The DRIL allows detainees and their representatives or family members to communicate directly with ICE to answer questions and resolve concerns, including issues involving separation of minor children from their parents and other family-related issues. ICE set up another mechanism for inquiries and complaints for those outside of detention via e-mail.

Other than these toll-free services, phone calls from detention centers remain expensive. In one study location, local jail staff organized a fundraising drive to purchase phone cards for detainees, and in another site, a CBO that visits detainees provided phone cards for them.

Visiting Parents in Detention

Since 2009, ICE has reformed civil immigration detention with the understanding that it should be nonpunitive. As part of these reforms, county jails and private corrections facilities must follow ICE detention standards and allow detainees access to visitation. Two of the five detention facilities visited by the study team housed women and families; consequently, they were less restrictive than the other three. In the two less restrictive facilities, detainees had access to more mental health and social service supports, more freedom of movement, and more access to visiting family members than detainees in the more traditional settings.

The three more traditional facilities observed for the study were county jails or private correctional facilities run under contract. As such, they operated like facilities for criminal inmates with the usual restrictive housing, rigid daily schedules, and limited opportunities for family visitation. One of these facilities also housed a general criminal population and applied the same rules to that population and the ICE detainee population. In the three traditional facilities, direct contact visits were not possible. Visits were conducted in booths with telephones, and individuals were separated by plexiglass.

As described earlier in the report, the remote location of detention centers often made family visits difficult. Immigration and Customs Enforcement has attempted to place detainees in facilities as close as possible to their families and communities, but this has been difficult for several reasons: dispersed locations of arrests across the country, consolidation of detention centers, the security levels required for different detainees, and segregation of men from women in most facilities.

The 2013 Parental Interests Directive

On August 23, 2013, ICE issued the PID. The PID aims to ensure that enforcement activities do not “unnecessarily disrupt parental rights.” It is a comprehensive policy that protects parents in detention and removal proceedings (ICE 2013a). The PID applies to parents and legal guardians in ICE custody, with a special focus on three groups: primary caretakers of minor children, those involved with family court or child welfare proceedings, and those with US-citizen or LPR children living in the United States.

The PID provisions consolidate ICE’s enforcement priorities, detention standards, and other policies regarding parents into a single document. The PID reinforces earlier guidelines for exercising prosecutorial discretion by directing ICE officers to obtain and confirm information about whether immigrants in custody are primary caretakers or parents, and to use this information to evaluate detention and removal decisions. The PID specifies that information obtained at any point during arrest, processing, or detention should be used for such purposes, and requires officers to record the information in the ICE database.

Coordination with Child Welfare Systems

The PID has several specific guidelines for cases in which a parent or guardian in custody may be involved in child welfare or family court proceedings. The PID directs ICE officers to transport parents and guardians to custody hearings when their appearance is required to maintain or regain custody of

their children. The PID also allows officers to take security and transportation constraints into account. The PID allows videoconferencing whenever security and transportation constraints prohibit in-person attendance. The PID directs ICE detention staff to comply with court-ordered family visitation plans for parents in ICE custody, in addition to normal visitation rights detainees have under the ICE detention standards. When deported parents face termination of parental rights hearings, ICE must consider allowing them to return, using humanitarian parole procedures. ICE officers are also directed to coordinate with consulates, immigration counsel, family members, and others to ensure that parents who are about to be deported can either arrange legal guardianship in the United States or obtain travel documents so their children can leave the United States with them.

Parental Rights Coordinators

The PID creates a new parental rights coordinator position in ICE's headquarters and designates parental rights points of contact in ICE's field offices. The PID requires the parental rights coordinator and field points of contact to conduct outreach to consular officials, child welfare agencies, family courts, and others to provide information and resolve complaints concerning parents in ICE custody. The field points of contact are supervisory-level ICE officers who have received training on the child welfare court process. After the study team visited the sites, ICE conducted outreach to child welfare agencies about the PID through national conference presentations and events in communities with large immigrant populations. ICE also published an information sheet about the PID and other ICE policies relevant to child welfare systems. This sheet includes names and contact information for field parental rights points of contact.

The PID does not, on its own, suggest that parents should be detained or deported less frequently than other individuals, although it does advise that ICE officers should continue to use parental status as a factor in weighing whether or not individuals should be detained or deported, under the agency's enforcement priorities (see appendix B for details).

Parental Interests Directive Implementation during the Team's Fieldwork

The study team undertook the fieldwork during calendar year 2013. Two visits occurred before the PID's August implementation, and three visits occurred after implementation. The study team observed that many PID policies were already in place before August 2013. For example, ICE's Atlanta regional office created a children's point of contact at the assistant field office director level in late 2012, and

this point of contact worked closely with lawyers, home country consulates, advocates, and family members to help locate parents in detention, facilitate contact, and resolve any potential child welfare issues or other issues. In the Chicago metropolitan area, key contacts in the community communicated frequently with the ICE field office director about cases concerning parents of US-citizen children.

ICE implemented facilitation of family court hearings for parents in detention by the beginning of 2013. These cases arose infrequently, but key contacts mentioned at least one case in most of the sites. Immigration and Customs Enforcement participants in the study reported a preference for videoconferences in lieu of in-person attendance at family court hearings because of transportation costs and security concerns. They also reported that family court judges were willing to allow videoconferencing in most cases.

Barriers to Meeting the Needs of Children with Deported or Detained Parents

This section describes ways in which children with detained and deported parents had difficulty accessing conventional health and mental health services, early education, and social services. Information in this section, like that in the previous one, comes primarily from site visit discussions with social service providers and families affected by deportation, and is supplemented by prior research.

Study participants identified several gaps in services and supports for children with parents who were deported or detained. These included lack of access to many of the benefits that low-income families might rely on during an economic crisis; lack of access to health care; short supply of key support services that children needed during parental detention or deportation; lack of transportation to access services; social service agencies' lack of resources and experience serving children with deported or detained parents; and difficulties encountered by the child welfare system in coordinating services.

Lack of Access to Major Benefit Programs

Following parental detention or deportation, most families faced an immediate need for financial support. Children with unauthorized immigrant parents, however, were not always able to receive the public benefits for which they were eligible. Federal legislation bars unauthorized immigrants from participating in major means-tested programs, including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Medicaid, and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). Therefore, even if they have eligible US-citizen children, families with unauthorized immigrant parents generally receive lower total benefit amounts. For example, SNAP benefits are prorated by the number of eligible individuals in the household. Similarly, TANF benefits are not provided to unauthorized immigrant parents. Consequently, citizen children with unauthorized immigrant parents generally receive lower, "child only" benefits. In a prior study, unauthorized immigrants had difficulty documenting their income, which is necessary for benefit applications, as a result of off-the-books employment (Speiglmán, Castañeda, Brown, and Capps 2013).

Parental detention and deportation created additional barriers to accessing benefits. As described earlier in the report, parents' detention and deportation often resulted in housing instability and lack of certainty over children's guardianship. Moving led to interruptions in health and social service delivery for children, especially if moving to a new jurisdiction required the reestablishment of children's benefits eligibility. Uncertain guardianship also interfered with benefit eligibility determination. If a child lived informally with a relative or friend after a parent's arrest, this informal guardian might not have the legal right to apply for benefits on the child's behalf.

Study participants, particularly in areas of high deportation levels or areas with restrictive policies toward unauthorized immigrants, like Los Angeles County, the Rio Grande valley, and South Carolina, also expressed fear of applying for benefits. Families sometimes possessed unfounded fears that accessing public assistance, even if only for their children, could be used against them in deportation proceedings. A prior study in California also found that unauthorized immigrant families fear that participation in public benefit programs could have immigration consequences (Perreira et al. 2012).

Fear among unauthorized immigrant parents in Los Angeles County was so acute that the study team had difficulty finding parents who would meet with them, as has been the case for other scholars conducting research in this area. The county's social service agency also declined to participate, potentially for similar reasons. Los Angeles County has been the source of almost 10 percent of deportations via Secure Communities, despite the fact that both California and Los Angeles have established policies limiting police-ICE cooperation and the scope of referrals to ICE via Secure Communities.¹⁹ In 2013, California passed the Trust Act, which prohibits state and local law enforcement officers from transferring individuals charged with minor crimes into ICE custody (California General Assembly 2013). The Los Angeles Police Department has a formal policy of noncooperation with ICE that dates to 1979 (Los Angeles Police Department 1979).

Social service providers in the Rio Grande valley described similar fears among unauthorized immigrant parents. The Rio Grande valley has a strong Border Patrol presence. At the time of the team's visit, it was the busiest sector along the US-Mexico border. Local law enforcement frequently patrolled the downtown areas of local cities alongside Border Patrol officers. Several social service providers described high levels of fear among families with unauthorized immigrant parents when interacting with any government officials.

South Carolina has a much smaller unauthorized population and much less enforcement activity than Los Angeles County and the Rio Grande valley. Yet the state passed legislation that, among other things, required public agencies to verify the immigration status of adults applying for state and local

benefits, denied nonemergency medical care to unauthorized adults at state-funded clinics and hospitals, and created a felony charge for transporting unauthorized immigrants, including driving them in private automobiles (South Carolina General Assembly 2008). Follow-up legislation criminalized unauthorized presence in the state (South Carolina General Assembly 2011). While most provisions of these two laws were struck down by the courts, site visit discussions suggested that they nonetheless produced a general atmosphere of fear and uncertainty among unauthorized immigrants, especially in their interactions with public institutions such as social service agencies. A participant provided an example, noting that when South Carolina's Department of Social Services operated a booth at a Hispanic community fair, no one came to the booth to apply for benefits because they were afraid of having their names listed in a public database and shared with ICE.

Additionally, South Carolina's benefit application forms included boxes for the Social Security numbers of all household members, not only those applying for benefits. Though not required on the application, these boxes reportedly deterred unauthorized immigrant parents from applying for their children. Participants generally reported less use of public benefits in South Carolina than in the other states included in the study. However, the study team could not verify this because they were unable to obtain administrative data on benefits use in any of the sites.

Based on findings in this and previous studies, it appears that fears of participating in TANF and other public benefit programs may be relatively widespread regardless of state policies. In California, there is no legislation suggesting that unauthorized applicants could be reported to authorities, and most state policies promote integration and protection of unauthorized immigrants. Yet even in California, unauthorized immigrant parents are often unwilling to apply for TANF for their US-citizen children because of fears that their status could be discovered and that they could be barred from legalization programs (Speiglmán et al. 2013).

Lack of Access to Health Care

Study participants noted that families with unauthorized immigrant parents often had difficulty accessing appropriate health care services because they lacked insurance. Unauthorized immigrant parents are ineligible for Medicaid, except emergency services, and about two-thirds of all unauthorized immigrants are uninsured (Migration Policy Institute 2015). In a handful of states, including California and Illinois, unauthorized immigrant children may be eligible for Medicaid, CHIP, or similar public health programs (Ku 2009).

US-citizen children with unauthorized immigrant parents are much more likely to be insured than their parents, because US-citizen children face no eligibility barriers to Medicaid, CHIP, or subsidies for purchase of private insurance through the Affordable Care Act's exchanges. Some jurisdictions, including the state of Illinois and Los Angeles County, also provide publicly funded insurance for children regardless of immigration status. However, parental ineligibility and fears related to immigration enforcement can inhibit US-citizen children's access to health insurance coverage.

In the study sites, unauthorized immigrant parents and their children often accessed health care through federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) and other low-cost clinics that serve the uninsured. The availability of these clinics and services varied by geographic location within a site, as FQHCs target their services to specific medically underserved areas, often at the subcounty level. Additionally, most local governments provided free public health services tied to specific preventive health screening and treatment of specific communicable diseases, but not comprehensive health care. Social service providers in some sites noted that unauthorized immigrant families could not afford even the minimal copayments required at low-cost health clinics.

Short Supply of Key Support Services

Study participants reported that families experiencing parental detention and deportation had difficulty accessing other critical benefits and services, including mental health services, emergency assistance (such as food, shelter, and clothing), legal services, and services for victims of domestic violence.

Mental Health Care

Study participants in all sites identified culturally and linguistically competent mental health services as a priority need for children whose parents have been detained or deported. Social service providers emphasized the need for trauma-informed mental health services, in particular. Study participants also described parental mental health services as critical, given that parental mental health can influence the development and well-being of children.

Participants in all sites, however, reported that child and parental mental health services were unavailable, unaffordable, or not offered in a culturally and linguistically competent manner. For example, in Los Angeles County, community mental health clinics generally required clients to be

Medicaid recipients. Consequently, these clinics could serve US-citizen children but not unauthorized immigrant parents.²⁰ Mental health agencies in Los Angeles County had limited funds designated to serve indigent or very low-income children and families, but such funding typically expired six months into the fiscal year. In South Carolina, South Florida, the Rio Grande valley, and the Chicago metropolitan area, there were few mental health resources for low-income people generally, and fewer still resources for Spanish speakers.

In addition to low availability, social service providers in the Chicago metropolitan area, the Rio Grande Valley, and South Florida identified cultural and linguistic barriers to accessing mental health services. Families served by these providers were not receptive to mental health counseling and did not identify the need for it in themselves or their children. Because they could not find linguistically and culturally appropriate mental health services, families generally preferred informal counseling through churches and other trusted organizations.

Emergency Financial Support

Immediately following a parental detention or deportation, families often needed money to buy necessities, such as food and rent, because primary breadwinners, typically fathers, were the family members most often detained and deported. Prior studies have described similar needs for emergency assistance in this population (Capps et al. 2007; Chaudry et al. 2010; Dreby 2012). Lack of access to benefit programs compounded this financial need. Charitable organizations providing financial support to families themselves had very limited resources. Most organizations could provide funds to cover basic expenses in the short term, typically for only one month.

Low-Cost Legal Services

Beyond the immediate financial difficulties they encountered, families often had trouble finding reliable low-cost or no-cost legal services. Families with a parent in detention (or a parent released but still in deportation proceedings) generally needed legal representation if they wanted to contest the parent's deportation. In all the study sites visited by the study team, low-cost legal services were in very short supply.

Immigrants often turned to low-cost legal-service providers such as notarios when they could not afford better lawyers. According to participants across the study sites, notarios provided bad advice,

often recommending that individuals apply for immigration benefits for which they were not eligible. Some notarios began a deportation defense or started an immigration-benefit application process and then disappeared. In South Carolina, one participant mentioned a notario who charged families to process their public benefit applications, and then incorrectly completed the applications.

Domestic Violence Services

The availability of services for domestic violence victims varied across the study sites. In Los Angeles County, study participants reported that many domestic violence agencies did not accept unauthorized immigrants because their services were funded through Medi-Cal (Medicaid) or CalWORKs (TANF), both of which require clients to be LPRs, other legal immigrants, or visa applicants. Those domestic violence agencies that served unauthorized immigrants had waiting lists ranging from six to nine months because of limited funding.

In South Carolina, domestic violence programs lacked bilingual staff. In the Chicago metropolitan area, three of the organizations that participated in the study had domestic violence programs, and they reported that there were many domestic violence providers in the city serving unauthorized women. In the other two sites, participants did not provide detailed information on the availability of domestic violence services for immigrant women and families.

The Violence against Women Act (VAWA) provides visas for women who are domestic violence victims, and U visas are available for victims of other criminal activity in the United States (USCIS 2014a, b). Both of these nonimmigrant visa categories allow beneficiaries to apply later for permanent residency and citizenship. But when seeking such protection, victims confront a complex process of navigating the systems of law enforcement, immigration law, and possibly child welfare agencies.

Law enforcement agencies must confirm that applicants for U visas have cooperated with their investigations by providing information about criminal activity and supporting prosecution. Some jurisdictions in the study, including those participating in 287(g) partnerships for local enforcement of immigration laws, were supportive of confirming cooperation, while others were not.²¹

Lawyers and law enforcement officers across the sites reported that unauthorized immigrant women who experienced domestic violence were reluctant to contact the authorities because the women feared that they or their partner would be deported. Even when eligible for visas, victims of domestic violence had difficulty supporting themselves and their children financially after their abuser was detained or deported. According to lawyers participating in the study, many applicants could not

obtain work permits until their VAWA or U visa applications were approved, a process that could take several months.

Lack of Transportation

Transportation barriers impeded families' access to health and social services. Study participants reported that parents were often unable to drive their children to service providers because they could not find public transportation, lacked driver's licenses, and feared being pulled over and apprehended by police. Across the study locations, parents frequently came to the attention of law enforcement when they drove without a license.

Availability of transportation and fear of driving, however, varied across the study sites. In December 2013, Illinois began accepting applications for driver's licenses from unauthorized immigrants, and in January 2015, California implemented the same policy. The study team's visits occurred before these states began accepting applications, and unauthorized immigrants at that time still feared driving in some locations. But participants in the Chicago metropolitan area reported that unauthorized immigrants were comfortable driving in Chicago, where city and county police did not cooperate with ICE through the Secure Communities program. Immigrants were more afraid to drive in some suburbs in the "collar counties" surrounding the city, where police cooperated with ICE and deportations had increased in recent years. Similarly, participants in Los Angeles County reported that arrests for driving without a license were more common in suburban Orange County than in Los Angeles. Chicago and Los Angeles also have strong public transportation systems, making driving less necessary there. The Chicago and Los Angeles suburbs, however, generally have weaker systems.

Florida, South Carolina, and Texas do not allow unauthorized immigrants to apply for driver's licenses. Before our visit, Texas had increased the documentation requirements for driver's licenses in an effort to ensure that unauthorized immigrants could not obtain driver's licenses illegally. Our discussions indicated that driving was perceived as especially risky in South Texas, where the Border Patrol operated permanent checkpoints between the Rio Grande valley and the rest of Texas as well as temporary checkpoints around the local area.²² In South Carolina, participants reported that unauthorized immigrants feared driving more in rural areas and suburbs, such as the suburbs of Columbia and Charleston (the state's two largest cities), than in the cities themselves.

Lack of transportation interfered with access to services. The study team visited Head Start centers in rural areas of the Rio Grande valley and South Florida that were not served by reliable public

transportation. Head Start staff reported that when police patrolled the area, especially when they arrested local community members for driving without licenses, unauthorized immigrant parents became afraid to drive their children to their centers. In South Florida, a Head Start provider noted that the police had patrolled nearby, checking for valid driver's licenses, when parents were dropping off or picking up children. When the police were nearby, the Head Start staff called parents to forewarn them, and the parents would wait to drop off or pick up their children. After this, the center used Head Start funds to provide bus service for the children.

Social Service Agencies' Lack of Resources and Experience with Immigrant Populations

Social service agencies sometimes lacked sufficient resources, expertise, and experience to meet the needs of children whose parents were deported or detained, especially in places with smaller, less established immigrant communities. Among the study sites, South Carolina had the least developed infrastructure to serve immigrants because its immigrant population was small and relatively recent, having doubled from 116,000 in 2000 to 231,000 in 2013 (Zong and Batalova 2015). In South Carolina, the state child welfare agency, social service agency, and Head Start network reported having few bilingual staff. These organizations found it difficult to recruit bilingual workers because of the state's small immigrant population, though offices in major cities were able to recruit more of these workers because of the relatively larger immigrant populations residing there. Organizations located in small towns and rural areas had little language or cultural capacity.

Discussants from community organizations in South Carolina reported that some social services eligibility workers were not helpful in supporting immigrants' application processes. According to the discussants, some eligibility workers cited the state's legislation, particularly provisions regarding general ineligibility for public benefits and requirements to report unauthorized applicants to the authorities, as a reason for their lack of support for immigrant applications. South Carolina's legislation was modeled in part after Oklahoma's, and a study of the effects of that legislation suggested that it increased caseworkers' negative attitudes toward immigrant applicants, erecting barriers to the application process and leading to a decline in immigrants' public benefit participation (Koralek, Pedroza, and Capps 2010).

In the other study sites, immigrant communities were much larger and bilingual workers were more readily available. But even in these states, participants reported variations across agencies and across

geography. In the Chicago metropolitan area, for example, discussants from CBOs providing application assistance reported that eligibility workers in some offices were more supportive than others. They generally tried to choose the most responsive offices, usually those located in immigrant-dense neighborhoods within Chicago. Offices in the suburbs were reportedly more difficult to work with, and those outside the Chicago metropolitan area generally had few bilingual staff members and little experience working with immigrants. Thus, the responsiveness of social service offices to immigrants' needs varied greatly across Illinois, as it did across South Carolina.

Difficulty Coordinating Child Welfare Services

Despite the PID described on page 16, child welfare agencies reported difficulty facilitating parents' participation in child welfare proceedings. Agencies across the study sites reported difficulties locating parents in detention, communicating with them, and ensuring that they could attend custody hearings. In the Chicago metropolitan area, for example, discussants from the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) reported that parents in detention were unable to appear in court or to conduct court-mandated visits with their children. The study team could not determine whether this was due to lack of effort or understanding about how to contact ICE on the part of some child welfare stakeholders in the study site, or due to lack of responsiveness by ICE.²³ Detention centers were located a few hours from Chicago, making it difficult for ICE to arrange transportation of detainees to courts in Chicago and for families to arrange transportation for required visits with parents in detention.

In some cases, lack of coordination with ICE undermined child welfare agencies' ability to provide services. For example, in South Florida, some detained parents took the steps the child welfare agency required for reunification, only to be deported before reunification because the steps were not coordinated with ICE. Child welfare staff in several sites reported that they would like immigration enforcement to have a "pause button" before parents are deported (i.e., to slow the deportation process) so that all the elements of child welfare cases could be resolved first.

On the other hand, children could be reunified with parents after deportation, in their home countries. Therefore, child welfare agencies should not consider deportation as automatic grounds for termination of parental rights. Immigration and Customs Enforcement respondents noted that parents could seek to return to the United States for child welfare hearings in limited circumstances, specifically to determine whether parental rights should be terminated.

In South Carolina, administration of child welfare services by counties and their lack of experience working with immigrant populations complicated cases involving detained and deported parents. At the time of the team’s visit, a small office in the South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) was attempting to track all cases involving immigrant children, but discussants from that office were not confident that they had succeeded in doing so. Some large urban counties had more experience with cases involving immigrant children. These counties reliably collected information about cases involving immigrant children and were more responsive to inquiries from the state about these cases than smaller, more rural counties. Moreover, there was no tracking of cases involving immigrant parents and US-citizen children.

Diverse opinions and perspectives across the wide range of child welfare system actors (judges, social workers, and child advocates) also complicated child custody proceedings. Despite positive home studies, some judges in South Carolina refused to reunify children with parents living in Mexico, arguing that being brought up in a lower-income country would be harmful to the child. A similar perspective prevailed among some child welfare agency staff in South Florida. They noted that they believed US-citizen children should stay in the United States because “a child should not be deported because their [sic] parent has been.” Judges and child advocates in South Carolina and the Chicago metropolitan area were also sometimes reluctant to place children with unauthorized relatives in the United States based on concerns about poverty and the possibility of future deportation of these relatives.

Promising Approaches to Better Meet Children's Needs

Diverse state and local organizations have developed promising approaches to better meet the needs of children following parental detention or deportation. This section describes how some organizations in the study sites have addressed the barriers described in the previous section. For example, state and county health and human services agencies worked with CBOs to improve access to income-support benefits for eligible children. Some organizations stepped in to fill gaps in key services, and others worked to build trust with families. Child welfare agencies collaborated with ICE and foreign country consulates to address the needs of children in their systems. Common themes across these efforts included proactively reaching out to the immigrant community, developing trust between institutions and immigrant communities, improving coordination among and within institutions, building leadership within institutions, and institutionalizing service delivery where possible, given resource constraints.

Improving Access to Benefits

State, local, and private organizations across the five study sites developed a range of approaches to help families complete and submit benefit applications. These approaches included hiring bilingual staff to help families complete benefit applications, providing support throughout the application process, and educating families about their children's eligibility for public assistance.

Application assistance took many forms across the study sites. Illinois's approach in the Chicago metropolitan area was the most systematic and received the greatest financial support. In 2014, the Illinois state budget included support for immigrant-serving CBOs to provide assistance with benefit applications.²⁴ These organization provided start-to-finish application assistance, including submission of the application, review of documents requested by the Illinois Department of Human Services, accompaniment on all appointments, follow-up until families received benefits, and education about how unauthorized immigrant parents can apply for benefits for eligible citizen children without immigration consequences. The CBOs also developed working relationships with individual Illinois Department of Human Services offices. According to discussants, these relationships were particularly strong in immigrant-dense neighborhoods in Chicago. In one such neighborhood, the CBO was located

next door to an Illinois Department of Human Services office, and CBO application assistants typically walked applications over to the office.

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission developed the Office of Border Affairs (OBA) to provide services and health education to families living near the Texas-Mexico border. Many of these families live in *colonias*, economically distressed areas within 50 miles of the border that often lack basic necessities such as sewage systems, paved roads, and electricity.²⁵

Discussants identified the OBA's work with contracted *promotora* organizations as an effective strategy to reach unauthorized immigrant families. *Promotoras* are Spanish-speaking local residents who are trained to provide basic health education and to connect families with services. The Office of Border Affairs provided a liaison for the contracted organizations, helped develop best practices for outreach, and provided education about benefit application to the promotoras. To aid the promotoras, OBA developed a resource guide that identified eligibility criteria, including immigration status, for benefits and services. Discussants described some opposition to including immigration-status eligibility information in the resource guide. The promotoras, however, found this eligibility information to be vital in connecting immigrant families to available services and benefits.

In South Carolina, the DSS responded to bilingual staff shortages by hiring bilingual operators to take applications over the phone. By routing those with limited English proficiency to a handful of bilingual eligibility workers, DSS was able to process their applications more efficiently. The other study sites generally had sufficient Spanish-speaking populations for social service agencies to hire bilingual staff.²⁶

Health and education providers also linked families to benefits in all the study sites. In the Chicago metropolitan area and the Rio Grande valley, for example, community health clinics in immigrant-dense neighborhoods processed Medicaid, SNAP, TANF, and other public benefit applications. In South Carolina, a Seasonal and Migrant Head Start (SMHS) office processed applications for the children it served, who were generally all income-eligible for benefits. In Los Angeles County, South Florida, and the Rio Grande valley, health clinics and Head Start agencies commonly processed these applications.

A school district in South Florida hired counselors from the Guatemalan immigrant population to communicate with recent immigrant parents speaking indigenous Mayan languages. The area's established immigrant community and the district's service infrastructure typically operated in English or Spanish. When students from Guatemalan families missed school or exhibited behavior problems, the counselors located the families and referred them to supportive services. The counselors also educated Guatemalan immigrant parents about the US educational system. Some of these parents who

had adolescent children were unaware of Florida’s truancy laws requiring children to remain in school until age 16. Guatemalan adolescents sometimes missed school to work because their families relied on their earnings for financial support. The district’s counselors explained these truancy laws to families in their preferred languages, helping to overcome any misunderstandings and keep the children in school.

Filling Gaps in Key Services

Schools, CBOs, faith-based organizations, advocacy organizations, consulates, and universities stepped in to provide key services to children with deported or detained parents. Typically these institutions had broader goals of serving the immigrant or Hispanic community, but when they encountered families facing a parental deportation or detention, they adapted existing services or developed new services to specifically assist these families. Many of these organizations provided a range of services to children and families.

Mental Health Services

Schools and Head Start centers across the study sites were the primary source of mental health counseling for children with detained or deported parents, as staff there observed children’s behavioral and emotional changes following a parental deportation. Beyond relying on referrals, school and Head Start staff could also use guidance counselors or on-site mental health professionals to provide services to children while they were in school.

In Los Angeles, the school district’s Immigrant Guidance, Assessment, and Placement Center served as the first point of contact for immigrant students and parents. Immigrant families were referred to the center by schools or directly from the community. The center had social workers and nurses on site to address children’s mental and physical health needs. Additionally, community mental health programs offered services in some of the Los Angeles schools, eliminating the need for referrals. Competitive grants funded these school-based services, but funding was limited. Not all schools were able to provide such services, and, at some schools, social workers and nurses were only available one day a week.

In the Chicago metropolitan area, some high schools serving large Hispanic immigrant populations hired counselors to help students address immigration status and related issues. The counselors in these schools created safe spaces for unauthorized youth to discuss their legal status or apply for DACA. Counselors also made referrals to mental health providers in the community when needed.

However, according to discussants outside the school district, these types of services were only available in a handful of the area's high schools.

In South Carolina, bilingual counseling was generally unavailable, though there were exceptions. For example, one school district had a bilingual social worker who provided a substantial amount of counseling and many service referrals to unauthorized immigrants. That social worker changed jobs and left the district, leaving it without any bilingual staff members who could provide counseling. This example shows the weakness of relying on a single person to provide linguistic and cultural competence.

The SMHS program in South Carolina and the Head Start program in South Florida that the team visited had bilingual staff with a variety of skills, ranging from education to social work and formal mental health counseling. The South Carolina SMHS program moved with the crop cycle. At the time of the team's visit, the SMHS followed a group of workers to South Carolina for the tomato harvest. Because the SMHS program operated in several southeastern states (including Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina), it could draw staff from across these states, thereby increasing the pool of potential bilingual workers.

Support Groups and Informal Networks to Help Families Cope with Hardship

Organizations created support groups and informal networks to help families cope with economic hardship and psychological stress. For example, in South Carolina a university-based public health program trained a corps of community ambassadors to link low-income immigrant mothers with health services across the state. The community ambassadors organized support groups for mothers in locations with high numbers of deportations and linked these groups to each other across the state to share their experiences.

In Los Angeles County, an immigrant advocacy group organized support groups for mothers left in the United States after their spouses or partners were deported. The advocacy group had previously organized a large relief effort when over 100 workers were apprehended at a manufacturing plant in 2008 (Chaudry et al. 2010).²⁷ Building on their experience following the 2008 manufacturing plant raid, this organization's staff developed an array of activities to support spouses of detained and deported parents. These activities included group counseling, microenterprise development, and advocacy efforts to change state and local policies regarding local law enforcement's cooperation with ICE.

Health Care

Across the sites, the team visited FQHCs and other low-cost health clinics serving the children of unauthorized immigrant parents. As described above, many health clinics hired staff to help families apply for benefits and refer them to other services. In South Florida, a law school partnered with the medical school in the same university to provide low-cost legal services and health care to families facing deportation. The medical school took a public health approach, focusing on social determinants of health. Staff at the medical school assessed families' housing, food, and other needs and connected families with the public benefits they were eligible for as well as other services in the community.

Short-Term Financial Support

Consulates, immigrant-serving CBOs, and faith-based organizations provided short-term emergency financial support for families immediately following parental deportation and detention. These organizations also typically provided families with legal assistance and help with documentation or other issues related to detention and deportation. But, across the study sites, none of these organizations provided long-term financial support for families.

In the Chicago metropolitan area, the Mexican consulate and some CBOs offered short-term financial and other support to families with detained or deported parents. The consulate, which serves all of Illinois, provided financial assistance for rent and basic necessities. One Chicago CBO and a smaller CBO in the suburbs provided emergency assistance to help cover rent, food, clothing, and other necessities such as medical bills. In the Chicago area, these forms of emergency support were generally limited to one month, making it difficult for families to find ongoing support.

In Los Angeles County, emergency services were offered through parent centers located in every school. Parent centers, which were staffed by parent volunteers and, in some schools, school employees, collected donations of food and clothing. The schools and parent centers also helped families gather documents necessary for deportation defense cases and trips to reunify with deported parents. The emergency services offered through the Los Angeles schools were not well institutionalized. The services offered varied by school because they depended heavily on parent volunteers and their ability to refer to existing services or collect resources from local communities. One school offered support for up to four months, but others only offered support for more limited periods.

Building Trust between Families and Service Providers

The organizations that most successfully served children following a parental detention or deportation built trust with these families. Immigrant-serving CBOs and faith-based organizations gained families' trust by providing vital support services, building close relationships with immigrant communities, engaging in immigrant-rights advocacy, and providing immigration legal assistance. These organizations frequently faced unstable funding, as they were not always well institutionalized. Service providers typically relied on competitive grants, community fundraising, and volunteer staff. In some cases, promising services were developed only to be cut within a few years when funding was no longer available.

Organizations with Close Ties to the Community

Some immigrant-serving organizations built trust through their connections with immigrants' countries of origin. These organizations were typically community centers located in immigrant-dense neighborhoods. Staff were often from the same countries as the immigrants they served, spoke the immigrants' preferred language, and organized activities relevant to the cultural heritage of the community.

In the Chicago metropolitan area, hometown associations linked individuals who had migrated to the United States from the same cities, towns, or regions. The hometown association participating in the study established two centers with two full-time staff supporting a range of services for unauthorized immigrant families. The staff organized sporting, social, and cultural events that helped immigrants retain cultural ties to their home communities.

The association provided services for deported immigrants through a close relationship with the Mexican consulate, which facilitated contact with detained and deported parents, gathered necessary documents, and arranged travel for family members to join deportees. The association brought together groups of family members (usually mothers) with detained partners, helped them find work or volunteer activities to get them out of their homes, and provided informal counseling. It provided a range of other services including adult education; immigration legal services; health care; assistance with public benefit applications; and referrals for immigrants affected by domestic violence, substance abuse, and mental health problems.

A CBO in South Florida served the Guatemalan community where the primary language was an indigenous dialect and Spanish was a secondary language. The CBO provided early childhood education classes, home-visiting programs focused on parenting and early literacy, and referrals to legal services. At the time of the study team’s visit, the center was an active community hub where many families came for support following the detention or deportation of a family member.

Another CBO in South Florida was originally created to provide a space to match employers with day laborers, most of whom were unauthorized immigrants. Before the creation of the center, day laborers seeking work stood along the town’s main roads, which created traffic jams and resulted in community resentment. The CBO built trust with the immigrants by providing them a way to safely obtain employment, and then created partnerships with other local organizations to expand service provision to include meals, food assistance, English-language instruction, job training, and legal assistance following detention or deportation. At the time of the team’s visit, staff at the CBO planned to provide health services through a partnership with a local health clinic. Like many other CBOs, this organization faced funding constraints as it relied on grants and volunteers to support service delivery.

Faith-Based Organizations

Churches and other faith-based organizations were also a primary source of support services for families facing parental detention and deportation. Immigrant communities often trusted faith-based organizations because of their own religious affiliation and because many of these organizations advocated for immigrant rights. Additionally, faith-based organizations did not face the same restrictions as federally funded and state-funded organizations in providing services to unauthorized immigrants.

In the Chicago metropolitan area, a faith-based organization operated a visiting program for parents in ICE detention. Immigration and Customs Enforcement granted faith leaders access to a detention center and to the staging point where migrants were taken just before deportation. Clergy and volunteers visited detainees on a regular basis, where they exchanged information and provided care packages from family members. This organization also operated a postdetention network that included access to short- and long-term support for people released from ICE detention. At the time of our visit, it was attempting to start an “alternatives to detention” pilot modeled after ICE pilot programs in New Jersey and Texas. Under these pilots, ICE approved faith-based and other organizations to supervise people released from detention.

Catholic Charities affiliates in the Rio Grande valley and South Florida provided a range of services to families facing deportation, including emergency housing assistance, food banks and pantries, emergency payments for utilities, and clothing. The Catholic Charities affiliate in the Rio Grande valley also provided bilingual mental health counseling by licensed professionals on a sliding fee scale. Many families initially came to Catholic Charities to obtain low-cost legal services following a parent's detention. Legal counseling often revealed other service needs, and the affiliate linked these families with additional support services. The affiliate in the Rio Grande valley also educated families about setting up guardianship plans for their children should they face a parent's deportation.

In South Carolina, churches of several different denominations (e.g., Lutheran, Catholic, and Baptist) were key sources of support for unauthorized immigrant families. These tended to be churches with small congregations and limited resource bases, and as a result their services were less institutionalized than those provided in the other study locations. The churches generally combined spiritual support and counseling with material support. They also typically referred people to community service providers or helped them apply for public benefits, rather than offering direct health or social services.

One church in South Carolina started a small immigrant outreach center primarily focused on education and health care. A clergy member and volunteers from this center helped locate families in detention, raised money for immigration bonds and other legal needs, supported families with food assistance, and linked families, when eligible, to public benefits. The church's outreach center operated on congregational support and was managed by a single clergy member who has since left the congregation, highlighting the limitations of this less institutionalized approach.

Advocacy Organizations

Trusted organizations often engaged in advocacy related to immigrant rights. Though many organizations primarily focused on advocacy, they also offered a range of services to immigrants.

In the Chicago metropolitan area, immigrant advocacy networks offered support groups for parents with detained and deported spouses. These efforts were tied to broader advocacy against immigration enforcement. The advocates encouraged spouses of detained and deported parents to participate in these activities, and used the activities to help build their confidence. The advocacy groups and hometown associations also assembled support groups made up mostly of mothers with detained

spouses. The groups provided emotional support, helped each other find employment or volunteer work, and shared information on paying bills and other practical concerns.

As described earlier, a large immigrant advocacy organization in Los Angeles County supported families in the aftermath of a large-scale manufacturing plant raid in 2008. While ICE no longer conducts large-scale worksite enforcement activities, this CBO also successfully advocated for changes in Los Angeles County immigration enforcement policies, including limiting cooperation with ICE via Secure Communities and ending the county's 287(g) program. The CBO's success in organizing unauthorized immigrants and visible influence on local policies earned it the trust of immigrant communities and laid the foundation for supporting families with detained and deported parents.

Legal-Service Providers

In the study sites, legal-service providers and pro bono networks were well-positioned to help social service agencies, CBOs, and families locate and communicate with parents in ICE detention. When representing individuals in detention, lawyers had access to their A-numbers, could track their locations, and could meet with them in person or by telephone on a regular basis. Many legal-services organizations conducted "know your rights" sessions in detention centers, where they contacted detained parents. In all the study sites, however, at least some families had unmet immigration legal-service needs.

In the Chicago metropolitan area, the team visited a large immigrant legal-service provider. This organization represented both clients in detention (usually contacted via "know your rights" sessions) and those referred from the community. The organization also offered subsidized housing, adult education, employment assistance, health care, and other services in partnership with public schools, domestic violence providers, the Mexican consulate, and other institutions.

In South Florida, a legal aid and advocacy organization provided free immigration legal services to families through a network of pro bono lawyers. This organization also successfully advocated for Miami-Dade County to end its cooperation with the Secure Communities program, and the county stopped holding individuals in the county jail past their sentences (Mazzei 2013).

In the Rio Grande valley, a legal-services organization offered "know your rights" presentations to all detainees soon after they were taken into ICE custody. The organization located detainees through these workshops and connected them to low-cost legal services as well as to their family members and community resources.

In South Carolina, the team visited a legal-service provider that, while part of a national network, was much smaller than the legal providers visited in the Chicago metropolitan area, South Florida, and the Rio Grande valley. This provider offered deportation defense for ICE detainees and for people ICE had released pending deportation. The agency also provided housing, education, domestic violence, and child welfare services, as well as public benefit application assistance. Agency staff also trained community leaders to help immigrants advocate for better access to public benefits and services.

Law Enforcement Agencies

Police departments used a range of approaches to build trust, thereby allaying immigrants' fear of authority, facilitating their access to benefits and services (for example, by reducing the fear of driving), and linking them directly to services for survivors of domestic violence.

The City of Chicago's Office of New Americans has worked with the Chicago Police Department to hold regular meetings with immigrant advocates and CBOs to publicize the protections afforded to unauthorized immigrants in Chicago (City of Chicago 2015). Study participants inside and outside the city government reported that the police department built trust with immigrant communities by not engaging in immigration enforcement activities and not interfering with protests against ICE enforcement actions.

On a smaller scale, some police departments in South Carolina reached out to allay fears of law enforcement in immigrant communities. One police department that participated in the study hired a bilingual victim-services officer from the community, a position funded through a VAWA grant. According to the department's policy, officers were not supposed to record immigration status during traffic stops. The department's victim-services officer explained this policy through community outreach meetings and media campaigns.

In the other study sites, local law enforcement agencies undertook community outreach by sponsoring community fairs, sporting events, and holiday parties for needy families. In Los Angeles County, the police departments hired designated liaisons to reach out to immigrant communities. The police departments in the Rio Grande valley also hired designated community liaisons and provided education about U visas for victims of crime. In one of the Rio Grande valley police departments, all the officers spoke Spanish.

In South Florida, a sheriff's office received a grant from the US Department of Justice to develop innovative policing methods for serving the immigrant community. The sheriff's office used these

federal funds to partner with a bank to establish accounts for unauthorized immigrants. Before this initiative, unauthorized immigrants were generally paid in cash and were frequently robbed when they could not secure their earnings. The sheriff's department also conducted extensive outreach in the immigrant community to build trust.

Developing Expertise and Relationships to Better Handle Child Welfare Cases

Child welfare agencies in some states coordinated with foreign country consulates and counterpart agencies in other countries to locate relatives, conduct home visits, and plan for potential family reunification. Communities with historically high levels of immigration were most likely to have developed these forms of coordination. Among the study site states, California and Illinois spearheaded these practices and have been conducting international family reunifications in Mexico for years.

Los Angeles County has a long history of addressing immigration issues in its child welfare system. The county's Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) developed a unit dedicated to pursuing immigration relief for unauthorized immigrant children in the early 1990s; this unit was the first of its kind in the country. More broadly, the Los Angeles County DCFS developed expertise in serving and reunifying families across international borders, including US-citizen children with deported parents. The agency worked closely with consulates to locate parents abroad and ensure that parents received supportive services necessary to reunify with their children. Representatives of the Los Angeles County DCFS regularly met with consulates to explain US child welfare laws and procedures. In general, the reasons for a parent's arrest or deportation did not factor into the manner in which the agency handled cases, unless the parents were convicted of serious crimes.

In the Chicago metropolitan area, ICE, the Mexican consulate, and Illinois state DCFS developed high-level contacts among their leadership. The local ICE office director was in regular contact with the Mexican consulate and the Illinois State Guardian for the child welfare system. These high-level contacts enabled the three institutions to facilitate detained parents' attendance at child custody hearings, find the location of parents after their deportation to Mexico, and conduct home visits in Mexico to evaluate the safety of children placed there. Discussants reported that high-level contacts were essential to ensure that any problems in these areas could be resolved quickly and efficiently. The Mexican consulate in Chicago had a longstanding relationship with the Illinois DCFS, but the relationship with ICE was more recent as it was facilitated by a new ICE field office director.

The Illinois DCFS also created a handbook for immigration cases in the child welfare system. The handbook, developed with assistance from child welfare experts at Loyola University, explained various immigration statuses of parents and children, along with implications for child welfare policy and practice. Social workers statewide were required to follow the handbook. The Illinois Office of State Guardian was directly involved in every immigrant case, and a representative from the office met independently with all immigrant children (and many other Hispanic children) to ensure that decisions were made with the children's best interests in mind.

The Illinois DCFS also provided training sessions through an annual conference on immigration issues for its social workers and other child welfare providers. US Citizenship and Immigration Services presented information about DACA at the 2013 conference. Despite efforts to standardize treatment of immigrant children in the system, discussants reported that treatment still varied among local child guardians, family court judges, and contract service providers across the state.

In Texas, the state child welfare agency hired specialists with knowledge of immigration laws and procedures in offices across the state. In the experience of agency staff, specialists provided immigration-policy knowledge that was vital to working successfully with unauthorized immigrant children and children with unclear immigration status. Immigration specialists tracked all such cases and provided them with assistance in applying for permanent resident status or citizenship, when applicable.

South Carolina attempted to standardize policies regarding immigrant children in custody but faced three significant challenges: (1) variations in practice across the counties that administer child welfare programs; (2) lack of experience with immigrant cases in most of these counties; and (3) different jurisdictions for ICE, the Mexican consulate, and child welfare agencies. At the time of the study team's visit, South Carolina had only recently developed new statewide policies for handling immigrant cases and was conducting training alongside staff from immigration legal-service providers across the state. South Carolina developed a template for county-level agreements with the Mexican consulate on international family reunification. Staff in the South Carolina DSS office also monitored all cases involving immigrant children and attempted to ensure that they were treated in a standardized way.

Different jurisdictions for ICE, the Mexican consulate, and child welfare agencies also made it difficult for these institutions to collaborate, especially with the great distances involved across the Southeast. The Mexican consulate serving South Carolina was located in Raleigh, North Carolina, and provided services across much of the Southeast. The ICE office responsible for South Carolina was located in Atlanta, where a different Mexican consulate was located. The Mexican consulate had not

been able to establish agreements with all the counties by the time of the team's visits. Nonetheless, the consulate worked closely with the South Carolina DSS to facilitate international family reunification, assemble travel documents, and help establish guardianship in the United States for children left behind when their parents were deported.

Conclusions

The future of US immigration enforcement policy remains unclear. Immigration and Customs Enforcement has narrowed its enforcement priorities and substantially reduced deportations from the US interior. The agency has issued the PID to provide certain protections for parents in ICE custody, especially those with child welfare system involvement. The Obama administration created the DACA program, announced DAPA, and introduced a major overhaul to Secure Communities. At the time this report was written, however, the proposed expansion in DACA eligibility and the new DAPA program had not been implemented because of judicial challenges, and were unlikely to be implemented for at least several months. Additionally, the administration's latest enforcement priorities and Secure Communities overhaul, both of which could protect many unauthorized immigrant parents from deportation, had not been fully implemented.²⁸

Congress has yet to reconsider comprehensive immigration reform or any other legislation that would provide more permanent protection from deportation for unauthorized immigrants. Recent downward trends in deportations suggest that unauthorized immigrant parents are less likely to be deported in the future, but immigration enforcement policies and the scope of protection for parents within them remain unresolved.

Even with DAPA's implementation, some parents (particularly those with serious criminal convictions and those caught attempting to reenter illegally) will remain priorities for immigration enforcement. Thus, regardless of the scope of policy changes, thousands of children with unauthorized immigrant parents will remain at risk of family separation and the other experiences described in this report. The emotional harm of parental detention and deportation can shape a child's future, as depression, anxiety, and anger can put a child at risk for difficulties later in life. Families experience economic hardship and move frequently, exacerbating emotional harm as children leave behind friends and schools and, sometimes, their remaining parent. Families may place children with different friends or relatives until they can find a new home. In the worst cases, when single parents or both parents are detained, children can be left without adequate supervision or in unstable housing situations.

As significant numbers of parents will continue to be deported, communities will continue struggling to support immigrant families and children. Many families rely on trusted community resources, including Head Start programs, schools, faith-based organizations, or immigrant-serving CBOs. These organizations have assembled services to meet the basic needs of children and families, but faith-based organizations and CBOs often work under constrained budgets and rely heavily on

volunteers. These services are frequently not institutionalized, making it difficult to piece together a coherent, sustained response. Larger agencies providing health care and social assistance are generally more distant from these families, particularly in states where the policies toward immigrants are less supportive.

It can be challenging to coordinate responses among the different institutions that come into contact with affected families, including ICE, local law enforcement agencies, health and social service agencies, and community organizations. These organizations have different missions and goals, service delivery capacity, staff expertise, and funding streams. Recent policy initiatives, such as ICE's parental interests directive and state-funded CBO outreach and application assistance, have enhanced coordination among these stakeholders. However, many challenges remain in delivering services to children with detained or deported parents.

This report identified several promising approaches for improving service delivery to affected families in locations with diverse demographic, political, and economic characteristics. Some of the most promising practices blended resources and expertise from different service sectors. In community health clinics, for example, on-site lawyers helped patients identify and apply for an array of benefits. Universities with teaching hospitals combined legal services, social services, and medical services. A center servicing day laborers compiled a range of social supports and educated families about services available to them. Despite the value of these services, their reliability and sustainability were jeopardized by constrained budgets, unstable professional staffing, and reliance on volunteers.

The current study included locations with high levels of deportations, but did not represent all US communities with parents who have been deported. The researchers did not systematically sample immigrant communities or the organizations serving them. The study team based its findings on discussants' perspectives and could not verify the findings with administrative data, as no such data were available in the sites. Nonetheless, the team sought to identify a range of service-delivery approaches by drawing on the perspectives of stakeholders from varying institutional, regional, and demographic backgrounds. Thus, the report lays a foundation for policy development and program initiatives to support these families in an uncertain and challenging policy environment.

Appendix A. Study Methods

This report is based on fieldwork by the study team in five purposefully selected locations throughout the United States. In each location, the team attempted to obtain detailed enforcement and social services data on unauthorized immigrant families with deported parents, but was unable to do so in any of the communities.

Site Selection

Five locations were selected for this project's fieldwork:

- in South Carolina, Columbia, a neighboring suburb, and a rural area;
- in Texas, the Rio Grande valley (Brownsville, Harlingen, and McAllen in Cameron and Hidalgo counties);
- in California, Los Angeles County;
- in Illinois, Chicago and neighboring suburbs; and
- in South Florida, the Miami metropolitan area (including Miami-Dade and Palm Beach counties).

The following criteria were used to select these sites. They are listed here in order of priority used to select the sites (see table A.1):

Immigration Enforcement Activity

Three communities (Los Angeles County, the Rio Grande valley, and South Florida) had relatively high enforcement activity, as measured by deportations through the Secure Communities program.²⁹ Los Angeles County had the largest unauthorized immigrant population in the country and was responsible for more Secure Communities deportations than any other county. Although it had among the largest unauthorized populations, the Chicago metropolitan area experienced very few deportations because the city and surrounding Cook County did not refer immigrants identified by Secure Communities to ICE for deportation. The Rio Grande valley also experienced a large number of deportations, not only

through Secure Communities but also by the Border Patrol, as the valley became the busiest Border Patrol sector in 2013. As a mostly rural state with a much smaller immigrant population, South Carolina experienced relatively few deportations.

Regional Diversity

Immigration enforcement has been concentrated in the southwestern states along the border with Mexico, where the largest unauthorized populations reside: California, Texas, and Arizona. The team visited two of these states (California and Texas). The study team also visited other areas of the country (South Carolina in the Southeast and the Chicago metropolitan area in the Midwest) to provide a more representative picture of immigrant families and communities across the country.

“New Growth” Immigrant States

In the past 20–25 years, a handful of states in the Southeast and Midwest have seen rapid growth in previously small immigrant populations. With less time to adjust to changing demographics, new-growth states may lack infrastructure and resources to help immigrant families affected by enforcement policies. Four of the study states (California, Florida, Illinois, and Texas) had large but slow-growing immigrant populations. The fifth state, South Carolina, is the fastest growing state, with its foreign-born population increasing 99 percent between 2000 and 2013 (Zong and Batalova 2015).

Rural Agricultural Areas

Historically, the largest immigrant populations have resided in major metropolitan areas such as Los Angeles, Chicago, and Miami (three of the study sites). However, in recent years, more immigrants have moved to smaller towns and rural areas, which often lack experience working with immigrant populations. Three of the study sites (South Carolina, South Florida, and the Rio Grande valley) included rural areas. In South Florida, however, the agricultural area chosen for the study is located just a few miles from downtown Miami.

Immigrant Population Diversity

Mexico has traditionally accounted for the vast majority of unauthorized entries as well as deportations by ICE and the Border Patrol. Unauthorized migration from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras has surged, with these three countries accounting for the majority of migrants apprehended on the southwestern border starting in 2014. Four sites (the Chicago metropolitan area, Los Angeles County, the Rio Grande valley, and South Carolina) had large majority Mexican populations, though Los Angeles County also had a large Central American population. The Rio Grande valley was the main entry point for unauthorized migrants from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. In South Florida, unauthorized immigrants were primarily Central and South American, not Mexican.

Communities along the US-Mexico Border

Communities along the southwestern border have a much longer history of immigration enforcement than those in the interior. The study included two areas where the Border Patrol was active: the Rio Grande valley and South Florida, where the Border Patrol monitored the coastline. A third site, Los Angeles County, was relatively close to the border (less than 100 miles away), but the Border Patrol was apprehending fewer migrants crossing the border in California than in Texas at the time of the study.

Variation in Immigration Enforcement and Integration Policies

Since the 1990s, states and local areas with substantial immigrant populations have adopted divergent immigrant integration policies and differing relationships with ICE for immigration enforcement. Some states, such as Illinois and California, enacted policies supporting integration; for example, allowing unauthorized immigrants to obtain driver's licenses, allowing them to qualify for in-state tuition at universities, and funding English language instruction and interpretation and translation services. Illinois and some California counties (including Los Angeles County) also offered health insurance to unauthorized immigrant children, who are barred from federally funded programs (except for emergency services).

On the other hand, Florida, South Carolina, and Texas historically have not been as supportive of immigrants. South Carolina, like other southeastern states such as Alabama and Georgia, passed legislation restricting unauthorized immigrants' access to higher education and to some public benefits, and delegating immigration enforcement powers to some local law enforcement agencies, though

elements of these laws were struck down by the courts in all three states.³⁰ Florida and Texas had neutral policies, with little state legislation either promoting immigrant integration or supporting more rigorous enforcement at the time of the team's visits.

Child Welfare Systems with Proactive Policies to Serve Immigrant Families

State and county child welfare systems in the study also varied in the degree to which they addressed issues regarding children of unauthorized immigrant parents. Three study locations had child welfare systems with practices and policies that accommodated unauthorized immigrant parents. California was perhaps the most active state in addressing issues involving immigrant families in the child welfare system, and Los Angeles County had a unit devoted to handling these types of cases, with a strong focus on unauthorized youth. Illinois had one of the first agreements with a Mexican consulate to reunify children with immigrant parents living in Mexico, and Texas hired immigration specialists in its child welfare system. Florida had not developed extensive supports for children of immigrants in its child welfare system, and South Carolina was far less experienced than the other four states with issues arising from the interaction of the immigration and child welfare systems.

Local Law Enforcement Cooperation with ICE

Once individuals were booked in jail, their fingerprints were automatically screened for immigration violations under the Secure Communities program, and in theory this program operated the same way in every jurisdiction nationwide. In reality, there was substantial variation in who was arrested and booked into jail, and therefore screened, as well as in who was referred to ICE after being identified by Secure Communities.

On the more restrictive end, some jurisdictions chose to book individuals in local jails for offenses that might not warrant arrest in other states, such as driving without a license (an offense affecting many unauthorized immigrants). For example, arrests for driving without a license were common in South Carolina.

By contrast, Chicago and Cook County did not transfer anyone into ICE custody unless they were sent to state prison, so deportable immigrants were generally apprehended by ICE after release from city or county custody. In 2013, Los Angeles County only honored detainers on individuals who had been convicted of serious crimes. In 2014, the county further limited compliance with ICE detainers to

those with arrest warrants issued by a judge. By the time this report was written in June 2015, more than 300 counties and cities, plus California, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and the District of Columbia, had such policies limiting the transfer of inmates to ICE (Associated Press 2015). Appendix B provides more detail about variation in enforcement policies among the study locations as well as the replacement of Secure Communities with a new, more focused program at the federal level.

Presence of Key Contacts and Willingness to Participate

Fieldwork was conducted in communities where the four project institutions (the Urban Institute, the Migration Policy Institute, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and the University of Texas at Austin) had contacts in relevant organizations and communities. Some states and local areas were not chosen because contacts there could not guarantee a sufficient number of participants across the study domains.

TABLE A.1

Criteria Used to Selected Communities for Participation

	Chicago	Los Angeles	Rio Grande valley	South Carolina	South Florida
Heavy immigration enforcement activity		X	X		X
Regional diversity (outside the Southwest)	X			X	X
“New growth” state (not a traditional immigrant settlement state)				X	
Rural agricultural areas			X	X	X
Immigrant diversity (large populations other than Mexican origin)		X			X
US Border Patrol presence			X		X
State policies supporting integration	X	X			
Proactive child welfare systems	X	X	X		
Protective local law enforcement	X	X			

Key Contacts and Study Participants

Before each visit, the study team identified key contacts who provided connections to discussants across the different groups relevant to the study. One important group included staff of social service providers such as child welfare departments, health providers, social service agencies, and public educational institutions (both public schools and Head Start and SMHS programs). These educational institutions are required by law to serve all children, whether they or their parents are unauthorized. As a result, schools and Head Start and SMHS programs are generally among the institutions most trusted by unauthorized immigrant families.

Another group of discussants included staff at government health and social services agencies, agencies often facing immigrant eligibility restrictions on benefit and service provision. Because eligibility for means-tested benefits such as Medicaid, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families is limited to legal immigrants, unauthorized immigrant families may be more hesitant to interact with these agencies, even when they have US-citizen children who are eligible for these programs.

Another set of discussants included those working for local community organizations, religious organizations, and universities that provide services to immigrant families, from legal services to health care. Lawyers and law clinics, mostly working pro bono for immigrant clients, were also able to provide information about the enforcement climate and how immigration enforcement was affecting families in their communities.

In all sites, the study team heard directly from immigrant parents about their experiences facing deportation. This perspective came from parents in ICE detention centers and individuals with detained or deported spouses and other family members. Detained immigrants agreed to participate in four sites but not in South Florida, where they did not come forward when ICE detention center staff posted information about the project. The study team worked with local CBOs to assemble small groups of nondetained parents (usually spouses or partners of detained parents) in four of the sites (all but Los Angeles County).

Finally, to fully understand the enforcement context in each area, as well as obtain a range of perspectives about the effects of immigration enforcement, the study team spoke with officers in local ICE offices and detention centers, Border Patrol agents, and local law enforcement officials. These discussants provided information about the efforts of ICE and the Border Patrol to communicate with child welfare agencies and with immigrant communities more generally about parents in their custody. Managers of ICE detention centers gave project staff tours of and presentations about their facilities in

all five study locations. Some of these centers were operated directly by ICE, and others were contracted to local law enforcement agencies or private for-profit companies.

The study team could not obtain the participation of every type of discussant in every site because of fear of participation, discomfort among public agencies in discussing topics regarding unauthorized immigrants, and other unknown reasons.

Approach to Discussions

Discussions were guided by the study's overarching research questions. The team tailored questions for each type of discussant and the locations where the discussions took place. The discussion guides and the resulting conversations flexibly explored key areas of interest with each type of discussant, including the following:

- **Public schools and Head Start programs.** What are the characteristics of the children served? What are discussants' perspectives on immigration enforcement in the area? How does enforcement affect the children they serve? Do they have support structures in place to aid children of unauthorized immigrants, specifically children with detained or deported parents?
- **Health and social service providers.** What state and local resources are available to children of immigrants? Are there specific policies or practices for meeting the health and social service needs of children and families affected by immigration enforcement? Do service providers have any formal arrangements with ICE?
- **Community-based organizations, advocacy groups, and universities.** What types of services do they provide to children in immigrant families, particularly those facing the detention or deportation of a parent? How are immigrant families able to find the services they need? What services are lacking? From the staff's perspective, what are the effects of local immigration enforcement on the immigrant community?
- **Foreign country consulates.** How do they identify their nationals in ICE custody and communicate with them? How do they facilitate communication between detained parents and children? What services do they provide? How often do deported parents take children and other family members with them to their home countries?

- **Immigration lawyers and legal-service providers.** What are the usual circumstances under which their clients are detained? What are their observations about changes in the volume of detentions and deportations in their community? How are they able to facilitate communication between detained parents and their family members? Are they able to use parental status as a factor to get clients released or granted relief from deportation? What is their perspective on the effects of parental detention and deportation on children?
- **Local law enforcement officials.** What is the local immigration enforcement context, and how do local officers interact with ICE? What are law enforcement policies and procedures for interacting with potentially unauthorized immigrants, especially if their children are present? What effect might these policies and procedures have on law enforcement’s relationship with the immigrant community? What special programs do they have in place to serve the immigrant communities?
- **Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers and Border Patrol agents.** How has immigration enforcement changed over time? What processes do they follow when detaining unauthorized immigrants? Have agency standards and procedures regarding parents in custody changed in the wake of recent policy memoranda on prosecutorial discretion and parental interests?
- **Immigrant families facing deportation.** What challenges have families faced as a result of the detention or deportation of a family member? How have parents in detention been able to communicate with their children? What services have their children needed and received? What barriers do they face in attempting to access services, and whom do they trust to provide them? What plans do the families have for the future (i.e., staying in the United States versus returning to their origin countries)?

Discussion notes and audio recordings provided the primary source material for this report. With participants’ permission, study team members made audio recordings of discussions for the purposes of clarification and completion of notes. Audio recordings were not allowed in the detention centers.

Confidentiality Protection

The Urban Institute’s institutional review board set the conditions for protection of participants during the course of the project. Given the sensitive nature of the study population and substance, strict efforts for protection of participants were undertaken. All participants in the key contact discussions,

detention center meetings, and parent group discussions were asked to provide verbal consent for their participation. Detention center and parent group participants were identified on a first-name basis only, and no further personally identifying information was collected from them. Recordings and notes were kept in secure locations and were not linked to participants in any way. All efforts were made to ensure confidentiality in writing this report, and details that could identify participants were in some cases excluded from the report, including details such as specific geographic location.

Project Limitations

This project has a number of limitations as a result of the sensitive nature of the topic, which precluded some individuals and institutions from participating, and the qualitative nature of the research. First, the findings described in the report reflect the perspectives and opinions of a limited number of community members. They do not reflect systematic, large-scale data collection or analysis of a representative sample of each study location. Thus, our description of children’s experiences following the detention and deportation of a parent is based on the observations of those who work closely with such children and their families. Findings are further limited by failure to obtain the participation of some groups, most notably schools and health and social services agencies, in some of the sites.

Second, other factors besides parental detention and deportation may contribute to the difficulties these children encounter. These other factors could include unauthorized immigrant families’ prior economic hardship, difficulties integrating linguistically and culturally, fear of interacting with authorities, or experiences with the criminal justice system.

Third, the study team does not have quantitative evidence of the extent and scope of such difficulties encountered by these children. Administrative data were not available in any of the sites, and the team could not conduct rigorous causal analysis of the links between parental detention and deportation and child hardship. Nor could the researchers control for the relative impact of parental detention and deportation and other factors above on child hardship.

Fourth, findings about barriers and promising practices are based on the perspectives of the discussants, as well as the study team’s observations across sites. The study team does not have evidence that promising practices result in better service delivery, as the team did not conduct any formal evaluations. Quantifying the effects of adopting the new or different social service delivery strategies highlighted as “promising approaches” in the report was outside the scope of the project.

Fifth and finally, the study team did not evaluate ICE's efforts to implement the PID or other initiatives aimed at protecting children with parents in custody, though study participants expressed varying opinions about the agency's implementation of these initiatives. Moreover, the PID was new at the time of the study team's visits, and ICE may have implemented new initiatives since that time. Changes in ICE's enforcement priorities since the study visits may also strongly influence the protection of children with detained or deported parents. Thus, the constantly changing US immigration enforcement policy context can make interpreting some study results challenging.

Appendix B. Immigration Enforcement Context

Between FY 2003 and FY 2013, 3.7 million immigrants in the United States were deported to their home countries, with 91 percent of these from Mexico and the Central American countries of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras (Rosenblum and McCabe 2014). The vast majority of these were unauthorized immigrants, though some were legal permanent residents who had committed serious crimes warranting their deportation. At the time this report was written, no data on the legal status of those deported had been released. One-third (1.3 million) were apprehended or arrested in the US interior, with the other two thirds arrested on the nation’s borders—predominantly the southwestern border with Mexico. An additional several million were “voluntarily returned” to Mexico but almost all of these were border apprehensions, as individuals apprehended in the interior of the United States were generally deported through formal mechanisms (Rosenblum and McCabe 2014).

To provide greater understanding of the scope and context of immigration enforcement, this appendix summarizes recent enforcement policy changes, trends in ICE parental deportations, and the enforcement contexts of the five sites included in the study.

Downward Trend in Total Removals

The total number of formal deportations (“removals” in federal government terminology) was mostly constant at about 400,000 between FY 2009 and FY 2013, but declined to 316,000 in FY 2014. No official data have been released, but the media have reported that ICE only removed 127,000 migrants (including both interior and border removals) during the first half of FY 2015. If this trend continues, removals will total about 250,000 for the fiscal year, the lowest number since FY 2006, when they totaled 208,000 (Caldwell 2015).

For several years (particularly FY 2006 through FY 2010), the Bush and Obama administrations focused increasingly on enforcement in the interior of the United States, but enforcement efforts have recently shifted back toward the border. The share of interior removals peaked at 49 percent (188,000 removals) in FY 2011, and fell to 32 percent (102,000 removals) in FY 2014 (ICE 2014a; Rosenblum and McCabe 2014). Thus, the number of interior removals fell 46 percent between FY 2011 and FY 2014, and was falling during the period the study team was in the field.

Increasing Interior Enforcement Capacity

From 2006 through 2010, ICE increased its interior enforcement capacity by cooperating with state and local law enforcement agencies. There were three main collaborative programs: the Criminal Alien Program (CAP), 287(g), and Secure Communities (Rosenblum and Kandel 2012). These programs were based in state prisons and local jails, where unauthorized immigrants who had been booked into the facilities were identified using DHS data and information.

Under CAP, prisons and jails shared inmate information with ICE and granted ICE officers access to inmates to conduct interviews either in person or via telephone or videoconference (ICE 2011a). Under 287(g) agreements—named for the authorizing section of US immigration law—state and local law enforcement officers were trained in immigration law and procedures and then authorized to investigate, apprehend, and detain subjects based on suspicion of illegal presence and other immigration violations.

Secure Communities was a fingerprint-sharing program between ICE and the FBI that screened people for immigration violations as they were booked into facilities. The Criminal Alien Program and 287(g) were limited in their geographic coverage, but by 2013 Secure Communities covered all of the over 3,000 law enforcement jurisdictions in the country (ICE 2013b). Immigrants brought into ICE custody through these programs were almost always in the custody of local law enforcement—and were often incarcerated—before they came into contact with ICE.

ICE also expanded its own enforcement capacity through the Fugitive Operations Program (FOP). The FOP was composed of teams of ICE officers who conducted enforcement actions at worksites, in residential areas, and in other locations. The FOP teams focused on noncitizens committing serious crimes, those with prior removals, and those ordered removed but failing to leave the country (Rosenblum and Kandel 2012).

The Narrowing of ICE’s Enforcement Priorities

The share of removals focused on criminals and ICE’s other enforcement priorities has risen in recent years, and in 2013 virtually all removals fit these priorities. In 2011, then ICE director John Morton issued a pair of memoranda describing “civil enforcement priorities” for apprehending, detaining, and deporting migrants, and recommending the exercise of “prosecutorial discretion” in focusing

enforcement on certain groups of noncitizens (ICE 2011b, c). The priorities memoranda set three general priorities for civil enforcement:

- individuals representing terrorism or security threats, and those with criminal convictions of any kind;
- those with prior removal orders (i.e., those reentering the country illegally after a previous removal and those failing to appear for removal hearings in immigration courts); and
- recent border crossers.

The 2011 memoranda also directed ICE officers to consider all the characteristics of migrants (such as their criminal convictions, immigration history, parental status, community ties, and health and other vulnerabilities) at several stages in the enforcement process, including

- selection of targets for ICE operations;
- apprehension of individuals by ICE officers;
- determination of whether to detain or release individuals in ICE custody; and
- determination of whether to remove individuals from the United States.

In December 2012, the ICE director issued a new memorandum to local field offices further clarifying that only noncitizens committing felonies, multiple misdemeanors, or serious immigration violations should be transferred from state or local jails to ICE custody (ICE 2012b).

The implementation of these civil enforcement priority memoranda narrowed the scope of deportations from the interior substantially. In FY 2013, 45 percent of all removals and 87 percent of interior removals had been convicted of crimes. Only 13 percent of interior-removal convictions were for immigration-related offenses such as misdemeanor illegal entry, felony illegal reentry, and document fraud (Rosenblum and McCabe 2014). Ninety-nine percent of all removals fell into the definition of civil enforcement priorities set forth in ICE's 2011 memoranda (ICE 2013c).

Though ICE's definitions of serious criminals and the other priority groups remained controversial, the move toward targeted enforcement represented a significant departure from the 2006 to 2009 period, when worksite raids and other forms of less discriminate enforcement were common (Chaudry et al. 2010). In fact, in FY 2013, the number of individuals removed from the interior without any criminal convictions was only 17,000, down 78 percent from 77,000 in FY 2009. The trend toward more restricted interior enforcement was confirmed during the study team's visits in 2013, when ICE officers

and immigration lawyers reported that ICE was closing or suspending a substantial number of removal cases based on the agency's enforcement priorities.

The 2014 Immigration Accountability Executive Action

The November 2014 IAEA further refined ICE's enforcement priorities and restricted the scope of interior enforcement in two important ways. First, DHS secretary Jeh Johnson issued a new enforcement priorities memorandum that further limited the priorities for enforcement to

- terrorism and security threats;
- individuals convicted of felonies, serious misdemeanors such as driving under the influence, or multiple misdemeanors (as opposed to a broader class of crimes in the 2011–12 memos);
- those with prior removal orders issued since January 2014 (as opposed to those with orders issued at any time); and
- recent border crossers (those entering within one year as opposed to three years) (DHS 2014).

Second, the administration announced the termination of the Secure Communities program and its replacement with a new Priority Enforcement Program. Under the Priority Enforcement Program, ICE will only take individuals into custody after they have been convicted of a serious crime or crimes meeting the new enforcement priorities. Under Secure Communities, individuals could be taken into custody immediately after booking at local jails (i.e., before they even went to court on their criminal charges), regardless of the crime (DHS 2014). At the time this report was written in June 2015, the extent to which ICE had implemented these two major policy changes had not been assessed. Once implemented, though, the narrowing of enforcement priorities and changes in the Secure Communities program promise to further reduce the number of interior removals.

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals and Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents

In 2012, just before this study was launched, the Obama administration greatly expanded the rules surrounding prosecutorial discretion to exclude an entire class of unauthorized youth from deportation. In June 2012, DHS announced Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals for unauthorized youth who were ages 15 to 31 and had arrived in the United States before age 16 (USCIS 2012). Additional eligibility criteria included: continuous US residence since June 2007, school enrollment or completion of a high school degree or its equivalent, and lack of conviction for a felony or three or more misdemeanors. Eligible youth were given work permits and their deportation was deferred for two years, with a possible renewal for another two years. As of 2012, up to 2.1 million unauthorized youth were estimated to be potentially eligible for DACA, with 1.2 million of those currently eligible (Batalova, Hooker, and Capps 2013). In the first 32 months of the program (August 2012 through March 2015), 750,000 unauthorized youth applied, and 665,000 applications were approved (USCIS 2015).

In November 2014, after the study's site work was completed, the administration announced an extension of DACA to a broader population of unauthorized youth. DACA eligibility expansions would include moving up the start date of continuous residence from June 2007 to January 2010, removing the maximum age requirement, and extending the benefit eligibility period from two to three years. The administration also announced a new, much larger program, Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents. This program would provide the same benefits as DACA (i.e., relief from deportation and work permits for three-year periods) to unauthorized immigrant parents of US citizens and LPRs of any age. To qualify for DAPA, parents would also have to have continuous US residence since January 2010 (DHS 2014). An estimated 5.2 million unauthorized immigrants—nearly half the total population of 11 million nationally—could qualify for DACA or DAPA under these new rules (Migration Policy Institute 2014).

In February 2015, a federal district court judge in Texas placed a temporary injunction on the expansion of DACA and the new DAPA program. At the time this report was written in June 2015, the Obama administration was appealing the injunction, but most analysts anticipated that it would not be lifted for several months (National Law Review 2015). The original DACA program remained in place, under the 2012 rules, and applications were still being accepted for it.

Deportation of Parents

Data have recently become available on the deportation of parents with US-citizen children, and these data suggest that, like all removals, parental removals have declined and become more targeted.

According to data from ICE's tracking system, 205,000 noncitizens who were deported between July 2010 and September 2012 claimed to have at least one US-citizen child (Wessler 2012). Annualizing these data (which are for a 27-month period), an estimated 90,000 parents of US-citizen children were deported per year over this period.

But the pace of parental removals appears to have fallen, even though data for recent years are not complete. During the second half of calendar year 2013, for example, there were 33,000 removals of parents with US-citizen children—a 28 percent decline from the 46,000 parental removals during the second half of 2011 (ICE 2014a, b). At the time this report was written, data on parental removals during the full 2013 fiscal year had not yet been made public, nor were there any data on parental removals for 2014 or 2015.

Parental removals have become increasingly targeted. For example, in calendar year 2013, 86 percent of removed parents had criminal convictions and 98 percent met ICE's enforcement priorities (ICE 2014b, c). At the same time, parental removals were more likely than total removals to originate in the interior of the United States. In calendar year 2013, 63 percent of parental removals (45,000 out of 72,000) occurred based on interior arrests, versus just 30 percent of all removals (ICE 2014b, c).

When parental removals occurred based on border apprehensions, these apprehensions may have been returning parents who were previously deported. In FY 2010, 56 percent of all noncitizens apprehended by the Border Patrol at the US-Mexico border had been deported previously, and it appears that a growing number of these return migrants were attempting to rejoin their families in the United States (Cave 2011). Data for parental removals during the second half of 2013 suggested that at least 10 percent of these removals were for reentry after prior removal (ICE 2014b). A recent study of Border Patrol data suggested that 15 percent of removals from the border during FY 2011–12 were parents of US-citizen children, amounting to 102,000 parents attempting to reenter the country illegally during this two-year period (Human Rights Watch 2015).

Data on deportation of fathers versus mothers have not been released, but data on the gender of deportees suggest that the vast majority were fathers. Over the period FY 2002 through FY 2013, 91 percent of all removals were men (Rosenblum and McCabe 2014).

Data on nationalities of deported parents were also unavailable, but data on overall removals suggest that nationals of Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras made up a disproportionate share of them. From FY 2001 through FY 2013, 91 percent of all removals—and 87 percent of those from the interior—were nationals of these four countries (Rosenblum and McCabe 2014). These four origin countries, however, accounted for only 73 percent of the estimated unauthorized immigrant population in 2012 (Baker and Rytina 2013). Thus, deportation has had a disproportionate impact on Mexican and Central American communities across the United States.

Characteristics of Parents in ICE Detention

Immigration and Customs Enforcement granted the study team access to detainees in four of the five study sites. In three sites, detention staff posted sign-up sheets and participants were selected, typically at random, from among those who signed up. In one site, a social worker in the detention center selected participants. Most were fathers and most had minor criminal convictions, according to their own unverified reports. Only individuals in the low-security inmate population were included; individuals convicted of violent crimes were excluded.

Among all removals in FY 2013, 26 percent were convicted of level 1 or level 2 offenses—which ICE generally defines as felonies or multiple misdemeanors. Another 19 percent were convicted of level 3 offenses—a category including most minor violations (traffic offenses, property crimes, and so forth). The other 55 percent had no criminal convictions, but were mostly people apprehended at the border (Rosenblum and McCabe 2014). The study’s detainee sample mostly had level 2 and 3 violations, according to the detainees’ own reports.

Study team discussions with detainees in 2013 showed that even with the narrowing of ICE enforcement priorities, individuals with a widely varying criminal histories could be deported. The combination of criminal convictions and prior immigration violations was common among removals, accounting for 40 percent of all removals from FY 2009 through FY 2013 (Rosenblum and McCabe 2014). Among the study’s small sample of deportees, the combination of criminal convictions and prior immigration violations—more specifically, prior deportations, was also common.

The criminal and immigration histories of these parents displayed the complexity of cases encountered by ICE in the field. The crimes committed ranged from more serious burglary and multiple instances of driving under the influence, but they also included shoplifting and use of false identification. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers participating in the study reported that

individuals with criminal histories and prior removals were priorities for transfer from local law enforcement through CAP, 287(g), and Secure Communities, as well as for ICE's FOP teams that located and arrested targeted migrants, often at their homes.

A common theme among the detained migrants who participated in this study was the long duration of individuals' residence in the United States. All parents encountered had lived in the United States for more than 10 years, and about half had lived in the country for more than 20 years. All but one had come to the United States as a child.

Variations in ICE Enforcement Activities across the Study Sites

As described in appendix A, study locations were chosen deliberately to provide diverse state and local environments, including involvement in enforcement of immigration laws. In general, the Chicago metropolitan area had the least immigration enforcement activity. Los Angeles County had the most deportations because of the size of its unauthorized population, and the Rio Grande valley had the most activity by multiple law enforcement agencies because of its location along the US-Mexico border. South Florida and South Carolina fell in between the other sites.

The Chicago metropolitan area had one of the most supportive environments for immigrants. The state of Illinois had a longstanding governor's executive order requiring translation and other services for immigrants, and implemented a law extending driver's licenses to unauthorized immigrants in fall 2013. Chicago was also one of the few major cities that prohibited all cooperation between the local police and ICE, with a mayor's executive order dating to 1984 and codified in a city ordinance in 2011.

In 2011 Cook County also passed an ordinance prohibiting the transfer of individuals from the county jail into ICE custody, even when ICE had placed detainers on them. As a result of these ordinances, city and county authorities would not transfer individuals directly to ICE custody. By 2014, there were just under 300 Secure Communities-initiated removals from Cook County out of more than 3,500 statewide, even though Cook County had a large majority of the state's unauthorized population (ICE 2014d; Migration Policy Institute 2015). Instead, ICE obtained information on foreign-born individuals booked into city or county jail via the Secure Communities database and used this information to obtain updated address information on these individuals. The agency then sent FOP teams to the locations of individuals who were priorities for immigration enforcement.

Some of the suburban counties surrounding Chicago, however, had a history of cooperation with ICE and transferred significant numbers of individuals into the agency's custody. In fact, the "collar counties" surrounding Chicago accounted for the majority of Secure Communities-initiated removals from Illinois (ICE 2014d). In one jurisdiction visited for the study, local jail personnel commonly called ICE's CAP officers when a foreign-born individual was in custody. CAP officers interviewed such inmates over the phone to determine their immigration status and removability. Contacts in the community reported that traffic stops and roadblocks leading to transfers into ICE custody were common in immigrant communities in some of the Chicago suburbs, but rare within Chicago.

California was also generally supportive of immigrants: in 2013, the state passed several pieces of legislation protecting immigrants, including one extending driver's licenses to unauthorized immigrants and another—the Trust Act—prohibiting state and local law enforcement officers from honoring ICE detainers for individuals charged with minor crimes. The Los Angeles Police Department had a formal policy of noncooperation with ICE—similar to Chicago's—dating to 1979.

Los Angeles County, on the other hand, had a long history of cooperation with ICE. The county initiated one of the earliest 287(g) programs in 2005, adopted Secure Communities earlier than most other jurisdictions, and housed ICE's CAP officers in its jails for years. Los Angeles County also had the largest unauthorized population in the country, estimated at almost 1 million people, or about 8 percent of the national total (Hill and Johnson 2011). As a result, Los Angeles County has generated 9 percent of Secure Communities removals (35,000 out of 375,000) since the program's inception (ICE 2014d).

During the team's visit in fall 2013, Los Angeles County key contacts indicated that significant numbers of individuals continued to be arrested by the local police for traffic violations and other minor crimes and transferred into ICE custody. A 2011 report suggested that 40 percent of 287(g) detainers in Los Angeles County were placed on immigrants with traffic violations or misdemeanors classified as level 3 offenses (Capps et al. 2011). But discussants also indicated that the combination of ICE's 2011 prosecutorial discretion memos and a 2012 update to Los Angeles County's restrictions on honoring ICE detainers had led to a decline in transfers from the county jail to ICE. Moreover, ICE had administratively closed some cases (meaning that the individuals involved in the cases would not be deported), and had released some individuals from detention while they awaited deportation.

In May 2015, the Los Angeles County supervisors voted to terminate the county's 287(g) program, further diminishing the role of county law enforcement agencies in immigration enforcement (Linthicum and Tanfani 2015).

In South Florida, there was a history of cooperation between local law enforcement and ICE, although none of the three main South Florida counties—Miami-Dade, Broward, or Palm Beach—had a 287(g) agreement allowing local officers to screen individuals for immigration status. The three-county area accounted for 7,500 Secure Communities removals—2 percent of the nationwide total and one of the highest totals outside California or Texas (ICE 2014d).

An analysis of 2010 Secure Communities detainers in Miami-Dade County showed that 61 percent were placed on individuals who were not convicted of a crime, or who were convicted of a traffic or level 3 offense. In a significant number of cases, individuals were charged with crimes but never convicted, and then deported anyway (Stepick et al. 2013).³¹ After this analysis and a report on the costs associated with ICE detainers, Miami-Dade County made its detainer policy more restrictive, requiring ICE to cover detention costs and limiting detainers to individuals with serious criminal convictions—policy changes which occurred after the team’s visit. However, the other two large South Florida counties (Broward and Palm Beach) continued to cooperate closely with ICE via the Secure Communities and CAP programs. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers were frequently stationed in local jails in these two counties to screen individuals for immigration status and removability.

South Florida is also located near maritime migration routes from the Caribbean, and the Border Patrol often collaborated with ICE on enforcement in South Florida communities, complicating the enforcement picture. If local law enforcement officers had questions about foreign-born individuals in their custody, they would call Border Patrol offices for assistance. Thus, not all referrals to ICE custody came directly from county law enforcement agencies; some came indirectly via the Border Patrol.

In South Carolina, the smallest of the five states included in the project, the study team visited urban, suburban, and rural jurisdictions. The three South Carolina jurisdictions the team visited are all small in total population and had just over 600 Secure Communities-initiated deportations among them (ICE 2014d). One of the study jurisdictions was home to one of the state’s two 287(g) programs. Arrests at traffic stops and roadblocks in immigrant communities were still common in South Carolina, but not as common as they had been in earlier years. According to study participants, enforcement was more aggressive in suburban and rural areas than in the state’s major cities. The largest absolute number of Secure Communities removals, however, occurred in Greenville, a major manufacturing center not visited for the study (ICE 2014d).

Discussants in South Carolina, like those in South Florida, reported that ICE had closed some deportation cases and allowed some individuals to be released from detention. But they remained

concerned that traffic and other minor offenses lead to the bulk of ICE arrests. According to ICE data, in the rural and suburban counties included in the study, a majority of individuals removed via Secure Communities had level 3 misdemeanor convictions or no criminal convictions at all (ICE 2014d).

The Rio Grande valley in Texas has the one of the most complex law enforcement climates in the nation. From 2013 through 2015, this area was the busiest Border Patrol sector, and apprehensions of Guatemalan, Honduran, and Salvadoran migrants (including unaccompanied children) spiked during these years. The team's visit occurred as this new wave of migration was beginning to rise in 2013, but before its peak in 2014. The substantial activity of the Border Patrol generated 98 percent of ICE detainees in the region. The vast majority of these detainees were first-time migrants. Thus, most ICE detainees in the region were not immigrants with long-standing ties to the United States, though many were coming to join family members who had previously migrated. Unaccompanied children were released into the custody of the US Office of Refugee Resettlement, and most family units (adults and children apprehended together) were released into the general public pending immigration hearings. Thus, a large share of individuals in the Rio Grande valley did not stay in ICE custody very long.

There was considerable drug and migrant smuggling activity in the area, as well as arms trafficking and other associated crimes. The Border Patrol worked closely with ICE (including its Homeland Security Investigations unit), the Texas Department of Public Safety, and the state and local police to combat these crimes. Unauthorized immigrants could be arrested and detained by any of these law enforcement entities, which were generally focused on smuggling networks and recent border crossers, but which also frequently encountered long-term residents who happen to be unauthorized.

The two South Texas counties visited for the study (Cameron and Hidalgo) had significant arrests via Secure Communities: more than 8,000 over the life of the program, or over 2 percent of the national total (ICE 2014d). But the recent spike in apprehensions by the Border Patrol also affected ICE's resources: fewer officers were available to participate in FOP teams and less detention space was available for housing individuals picked up by state and local law enforcement. Thus, interior enforcement in the Rio Grande valley was declining because ICE, like the Border Patrol, was focusing mostly on the new wave of immigrants from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras crossing the border in that sector.

Notes

1. The recent rise in unauthorized migration from these countries has been attributed to their relatively young populations, ongoing high poverty levels, and increasing violence and insecurity (Chishti and Hipsman 2014).
2. No data on the immigration status of deportees were available at the time this report was written.
3. Between July 2010 and September 2012, 205,000 parents of at least one US-born child were deported, out of approximately 800,000 to 900,000 total deportations during that time (Wessler 2012).
4. Secure Communities is a program that uses a database to link criminal and immigration records using fingerprints. When individuals are booked into county jails and state prisons, Secure Communities automatically flags those who have committed immigration violations or been previously deported. Some of these individuals are transferred into ICE custody for deportation after they complete their sentences, depending on state or local policies.
5. ICE is part of DHS and is the agency responsible for interior enforcement of US immigration laws and for detention and deportation. ICE terms formal deportations, which carry bars on legal immigration and additional penalties for unlawful reentry, as “removals.”
6. No official data have been released, but the media have reported that ICE only removed 127,000 migrants (including both interior and border removals) during the first half of FY 2015; if this trend continues, removals will reach their lowest number since FY 2006 (Caldwell 2015).
7. To qualify for DACA, youth must be ages 15 to 30, have entered the United States before their 16th birthday, have resided continuously in the United States since June 2007, and either have graduated from high school or be enrolled in school (Batalova, Hooker and Capps 2013).
8. These changes were announced as part of the November 2014 IAEA. The DACA expansions included changing the required US residence date to January 2010 and eliminating the maximum age. The new DAPA program provides work permits and relief from deportation to unauthorized immigrant parents of US citizens or LPRs; parents must have resided continuously in the United States for five years to qualify. Additionally, the period of eligibility for DACA and DAPA was expanded from two to three years (DHS 2014).
9. Communities with smaller populations are not named in this report to protect the privacy of study participants.
10. In some cases these were state policies, in other cases local policies.
11. After the site visits, Miami-Dade County limited its cooperation with Secure Communities.
12. In most cases, local law enforcement agencies take custody of immigrants first (for nonimmigration crimes), and then refer them to ICE custody for deportation. In many cases, unauthorized immigrant parents spend considerable periods of time in state prisons or local jails before being transferred to ICE. In these cases, children may undergo emotional harm from seeing their parents arrested or from being separated, long before the parent comes into contact with ICE. Nonetheless, prolonged ICE detention and deportation may exacerbate mental health symptoms among children, even when ICE detention is not the cause of the original emotional harm. It is difficult to differentiate the mental health effects of ICE detention and deportation from the original harm stemming from arrest by other law enforcement agencies, and the researchers could not make this distinction during the fieldwork.
13. Individuals apprehended by ICE are given the opportunity to make a call to family and make arrangements for their children.
14. ICE considers the total flow of detainees through the system, transportation requirements, and the level of security required when making detention placement decisions. Sometimes, individuals from countries other than Mexico are detained near airports from which they can be deported to their home countries. Women tend to be housed in different locations from men.
15. The conditions of detention and visitation vary among ICE’s facilities, as some facilities are managed directly by the agency and others are contracted to local law enforcement agencies or private companies. Some

facilities only house ICE detainees, and others also house local offenders. In mixed facilities, ICE detainees are sometimes housed in the same areas as the local offenders and are sometimes segregated. Some facilities were built as local jails, and others were built specifically to serve ICE's detainee populations.

16. The study team did not gather a random sample of families, and so could not calculate the share of families choosing to remain in the United States versus moving to Mexico or another country with any precision. The team also did not conduct research outside the United States and so could not gather data on families that had left the country to join deported parents. The families included in the study all had members still residing in the United States, and in most cases a parent was still in detention. Very few of these families planned to leave the United States when the parent was eventually deported.
17. The Department of Homeland Security issues A-numbers to all individuals with deportation or other immigration cases.
18. The DRIL number is 1-888-351-4024. Live trained operators are available Monday through Friday (excluding holidays) from 8:00 a. m. to 8:00 p. m. (Eastern Time). The e-mail address for the ICE inquiry service is ERO.INFO@ice.dhs.gov.
19. In 2013, Los Angeles County was home to an estimated 1 million of the nation's 11 million unauthorized immigrants (Migration Policy Institute 2015). Los Angeles County accounted for 35,000 out of 375,000 removals via Secure Communities from October 2008 through August 2014 (ICE 2014d).
20. The Emergency Medi-Cal program, for which unauthorized adults are eligible, does not cover mental health services.
21. The 287(g) program, so named for section 287(g) of US immigration law, is a partnership between ICE and state or local law enforcement agencies. Under the program, ICE trains state or local officers to identify immigration status and begin the deportation process (Capps, Rosenblum, Rodriguez, and Chishti 2011).
22. During the five-day site visit to Texas, the study team encountered several such checkpoints where Border Patrol agents checked to determine whether the team had proper identification.
23. ICE's recent outreach to child welfare agencies across the country, described earlier in the report, is designed to address assumptions that accessing parents in detention is not possible and lack of information about how to work with ICE to access them.
24. In 2015, however, the governor eliminated this budget item, thereby threatening financial support for application assistance by these CBOs (Bekiempis 2015).
25. According to the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, there are more than 2,294 Texas colonias, with approximately 500,000 residents. Median household income for colonia residents averages under \$30,000, and residents' poverty rate exceeds 40 percent (Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas 2015).
26. The study team did not focus on less common languages, as the vast majority of deportees come from the predominantly Spanish-speaking countries of Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. Some migrants from these countries, however, speak indigenous languages as first languages and do not speak Spanish very well. The team did not explore the issue of non-Spanish language capacity among agencies in the study locations. The exception was South Florida, where one school district reported hiring indigenous language speakers as described later in this section.
27. ICE's large-scale worksite enforcement actions ended in 2009.
28. The changes in enforcement priorities and the Secure Communities overhaul that the Obama administration announced in November 2014 are described in detail in appendix B.
29. Secure Communities was a program that used fingerprints to link individuals booked into local jails with immigration databases so they could be identified for deportation. As described in appendix B, ICE has discontinued Secure Communities and replaced it with the Priorities Enforcement Program.
30. These laws are described earlier in the report, on pages 20–21 (South Carolina General Assembly 2008, 2011).
31. Although this study was published in 2013, it was conducted using data from 2010, three years before the team's visit to South Florida, and local ICE detainer policies may have changed since that time.

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Errata

The following statement was added to this report on September 23, 2015, for clarification of terminology. The report uses “deportations” to refer only to migrants who were formally removed. This number does not include migrants who were deported without a formal deportation order via voluntary return. Almost 8 million more migrants were deported informally via voluntary return during 2003–13, the vast majority of whom were apprehended at the US-Mexico border and returned within a day or two.

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STATEMENT OF INDEPENDENCE

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