



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**STATEMENT REGARDING CHILDREN, FAMILIES, AND IMMIGRATION POLICY**

*Professional network of educational and community-based researchers issues statement as the group gathers at UCSD for annual conference*

The Action Research Network of the Americas (ARNA) joins other professional, scholarly and activist organizations in our commitment to just immigration policies, a decriminalization of those seeking asylum and the immediate reunification of immigrant families that have been torn apart at the border. ARNA is gravely concerned about the state of the more than 2300 children who have been separated from their parents and remain in custody housed in shelters away from their families.

ARNA stands with those who are deeply concerned about challenges to the health and well-being of immigrant families and the need for developing immigration policies that are humane and in the best interests of children and families. We stand in solidarity with those core values that have developed over the course of our history that respect the dignity and worth of all people and that recognize that our institutions must evolve and respond in ways that maintain what is best in a vibrant democratic society.

Therefore, ARNA joins with civil rights groups and professional medical and educational associations in demanding that these children, parents and other family members be reunited as quickly as possible to minimize any long-term harm to their mental and

physical health; and in demanding the decriminalization of asylum seeking. We assert the clear need for children and families to be assessed for and receive any needed mental or physical health care by qualified health care professionals. Furthermore, ARNA believes that a participatory research agenda – shaped by the wisdom, wounds and desires of members of the most affected communities – must be generated to investigate the impact of these policies on immigrant children, families, social workers, volunteers, health care practitioners, and educators. It is important to hold our federal government accountable for the individual, cultural, racial and community level impacts from this failed policy.

*Who is ARNA?*

The Action Research Network of the Americas is an organization dedicated to advancing knowledge democracy and participatory, action-based research approaches in support of those most in need throughout the Americas and around the world. ARNA stands ready to assist in supporting local, trans-local and trans-national participatory research to investigate the impact of these policies. Our goal in doing this is to provide information to policy makers, activists, community members and young people in the next generation, to document the profound impact of this painful moment in our national history, to honor the struggles of those who worked so hard to seek asylum, to hold government accountable, to teach this history, to liberate buried stories of pain and survival, and to develop informed and humane policies that are aligned with our core values of justice and due process in a democratic society.

ARNA stands firmly beside those who are most marginalized in the Americas even as we continue to fight for our own endangered democracy. Throughout the Americas ARNA members collaborate in solidarity with communities resisting state violence, colonization, and “child snatching” practices.

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If you would like more information about this topic, please call Lonnie Rowell at 619-850-5288 or email [lrowell8881@gmail.com](mailto:lrowell8881@gmail.com)