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**Media Contact**

Heidi May Wilson, National PTA  
[hmay@pta.org](mailto:hmay@pta.org), (703) 518-1242

## **National PTA Urges Congress and the Administration to Halt Zero-Tolerance Policy Separating Undocumented Children and Families**

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (June 20, 2018)—[National PTA urges](#) Congress and the administration to immediately stop the zero-tolerance policy that is resulting in harmful separation of undocumented children from their parents and family members. Our association also seeks immediate reunification of families presently separated under current enforcement policy.

“The separation of a child from their parent creates emotional stress and trauma that can adversely impact every aspect of their life,” said Jim Accomando, president of National PTA. “Keeping families together and ensuring that undocumented children—and all children—are treated with dignity and respect, are adequately cared for, and have the opportunity to reach their full potential and become productive members of society is essential and in the best interest of our nation.”

[National PTA has long believed](#) that every child residing in the United States—regardless of their immigration status—has the right of access to a high-quality public education, adequate food and shelter, and basic health care services. Two of our association’s founding principles are to promote the safety and well-being of all children and youth and to advocate for children and families who are most vulnerable.

“At National PTA, our motto is ‘*Every Child, One Voice*,’” said Nathan R. Monell, CAE, National PTA executive director. “Our association raises our voice for the children and their parents and family members who have been separated at the border. Reuniting them as quickly as possible and keeping them together is critical.”

National PTA supports the following statements:

- Family unity is a core principle of society. Children belong with their parents, family members or legal guardian.
- The [1997 Flores Settlement Agreement](#) (*Flores*) lays out the protections and expectations regarding the detention, release and care of all children—both accompanied and unaccompanied undocumented children—arriving in the United States.
- The separation of families for purposes of immigration enforcement, management or detention is never in the best interest or well-being of children. Children should not be used as a deterrent to enter the United States.
- If a child is separated from their parent(s) during immigration detention, federal policy should ensure that children are reunited as soon as possible with their parent(s) in accordance with *Flores* to maintain family unity while they pursue their immigration and protection claims.

“National PTA urges policymakers to work together to address the issue of immigration in a fair, appropriate and equitable way,” added President Accomando. “We encourage our 4 million members to mobilize by reaching out to their members of Congress, urging them to stop the policy separating families; reunite families presently separated; and pass bipartisan, comprehensive immigration reform.”

#### **About National PTA**

National PTA® comprises millions of families, students, teachers, administrators, and business and community leaders devoted to the educational success of children and the promotion of family engagement in schools. PTA is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit association that prides itself on being a powerful voice for all children, a relevant resource for families and communities, and a strong advocate for public education. Membership in PTA is open to anyone who wants to be involved and make a difference for the education, health and welfare of children and youth. For more information, visit [PTA.org](http://PTA.org).