

The Effects of Parental Separation on Children

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Many medical associations and thousands of mental-health professionals have criticized the Trump administration's [policy of dividing immigrant families at the southern border](#), including the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Psychological Association. In many cases, professionals cite the negative health effects parental separation has on children.

In response to the backlash over his immigration policy, President Donald Trump called on Congress Tuesday to give his administration the power to detain and deport migrant families as a unit, saying he considered that the “only solution to the border crisis.”

Between May 5 and June 9, more than 2,300 children were separated from about 2,200 adults who were detained, administration officials said Tuesday. Medical professionals explain the effects of such separation.

Yes, in the first three years of life, children undergo a rapid period of brain development. Constantly changing caregivers could impair the development of a child's executive functions, such as the ability to regulate behavior and pay attention, said Megan Gunnar, director of the University of Minnesota's Institute of Child Development.