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MAILMAN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Meeting Report Without Appendices

**Young Children in Immigrant Families
The Role of Philanthropy
Sharing Knowledge, Creating Services,
and Building Supportive Policies**

Report of a Meeting, January 18-19, 2006

Kinsey Alden Dinan

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The National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP) is the nation's leading public policy center dedicated to promoting the economic security, health, and well-being of America's low-income families and children. Using research to inform policy and practice, NCCP seeks to advance family-oriented solutions and the strategic use of public resources at the state and national levels to ensure positive outcomes for the next generation. Founded in 1989 as a division of the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University, NCCP is a nonpartisan, public interest research organization.

Young Children in Immigrant Families—The Role of Philanthropy:
Sharing Knowledge, Creating Services, and Building Supportive Policies,
Report of a Meeting held January 18-19, 2006

by Kinsey Alden Dinan

This report provides an overview of the issues raised at the Young Children in Immigrant Families meeting that was held in Miami, Florida on January 18-19, 2006. The meeting brought together members of the foundation community to discuss critical issues related to promoting positive outcomes for young children in immigrant families. Based on the meeting panels and discussions, this report provides a brief description of recent demographic trends related to immigration and immigrant families and explores promising strategies that foundations could support to address challenges faced by young children in these families.

AUTHOR

Kinsey Alden Dinan, M.A., is a Research Associate at NCCP, where her focus is on research and analysis of state and federal policies that promote the economic security and well-being of low-income children and their families. Her areas of expertise also include U.S. immigration policy and issues related to immigrant families and their children.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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linguistically isolated...and rates of...hardship are significantly
higher than among children with native-born parents.*

Executive Summary

A growing number of young children in this country are children of immigrants. The goal of the Young Children in Immigrant Families meeting, cosponsored by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, together with The David and Lucile Packard Foundation, Foundation for Child Development, Annie E. Casey Foundation, Carnegie Corporation of New York, Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees, Four Freedoms Fund, and Early Childhood Funders Collaborative, was to increase strategic investments in this important population and thus promote positive outcomes for these children. The meeting brought together members of the foundation community who focus on issues related to young children and/or immigrant families, along with the following experts on immigrant issues from community-based organizations, policy research organizations, academia, and advocacy groups:

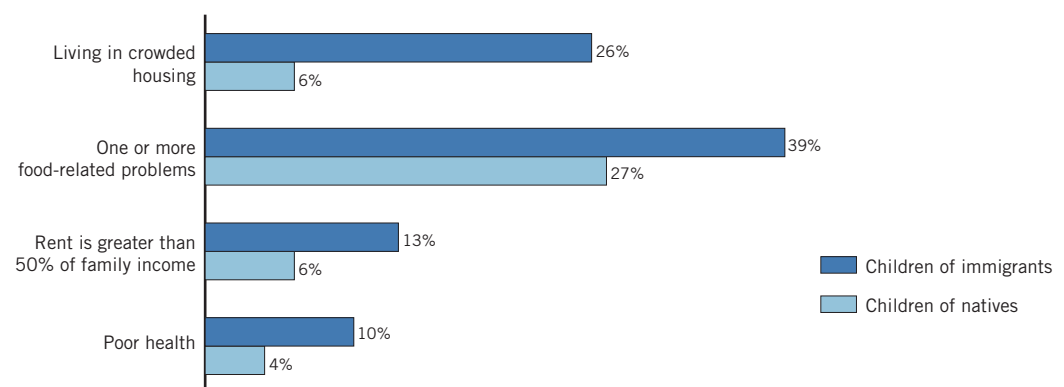
- Ismael Ahmed, Executive Director, Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services
- Tanya Broder, Staff Attorney, National Immigration Law Center
- Randy Capps, Senior Research Associate, Urban Institute
- Sharon Darling, President and Founder, National Center for Family Literacy
- Michael Fix, Vice President and Director of Studies, Migration Policy Institute
- Elżbieta M. Goździak, Director of Research, Institute for the Study of International Migration, Georgetown University
- Donald J. Hernandez, Professor, Children, Youth, and Public Policy, Department of Sociology, University at Albany, State University of New York
- Deecana Jang, Senior Policy Analyst, Center for Law and Social Policy
- Jesse Kao Lee, Hmong Project Coordinator, Ready 4 K
- Cecilia Muñoz, Vice President, Office of Research, Advocacy and Legislation, National Council of La Raza
- Beatriz “BB” Otero, Executive Director, CentroNía
- Frank Sharry, Executive Director, National Immigration Forum
- Rebecca Stark, Program Coordinator, PICO National Network
- Janet Varon, Executive Director, Northwest Health Law Advocates

Over the past 35 years, the foreign-born population in the United States has tripled, reaching 35 million people in 2005. These years also saw a shift in immigrants’ ethnic background—from predominantly white Europeans to Latinos and Asians—leading to increased ethnic diversity in the U.S. population, especially among children. Another important trend of the last 10 to 15 years has been a shift in immigrants’ destinations within the United States. While immigrant families remain highly concentrated in “traditional gateway” states such as California, there has been a growing dispersion of immigrants to new areas, leading to significant increases in immigrant populations in many small communities.

Promoting positive outcomes for young children in immigrant families requires understanding and effectively responding to these trends. Research points to significant gaps in meeting these children’s needs in the areas of education, health care, and economic security. Young children of immigrants, for example, are underrepresented in prekindergarten programs and center-based early care and education (ECE) settings, despite facing relatively high rates of risk factors that can impede school readiness. Immigrant families also face barriers in accessing the health care they need, particularly in the area of mental health.

Finally, immigrant families with children are much more likely than native-born families to be low income and face a range of economic hardships—even with high marriage rates and strong attachment to the workforce (see figure). Their economic vulnerability is further exacerbated by low rates of public benefit receipt as a result of limits on immigrants’ eligibility for benefits, a widespread fear of interacting with government officials among (eligible) immigrants, and other participation barriers. At the same time, there is tremendous diversity among immigrant families, with many children of immigrants living in highly educated and economically secure families that do not necessarily face the risks explored here.

Hardship in immigrant families, 2002



Source: Capps, R. & Fix, M. (2006). Preschool Age Children of Immigrants. Paper presented at Young Children in Immigrant Families—The Role of Philanthropy, meeting held Jan. 18-19, 2006, Miami, Florida. Data are from Urban Institute tabulations from the 2002 National Survey of America’s Families (NSAF).

There are a variety of strategies that foundations can support to improve the education, health, and economic security of young children in immigrant families.

Strategies to Improve Educational Outcomes

- Increase immigrant families' access to high-quality center-based early care and education and prekindergarten programs, with teachers and curricula able to meet the particular needs of immigrant children and English language learners (ELLs).
- Focus on the needs of ELLs in grades K through 12.
- Promote educational strategies that address the needs of ELL students and their families (such as, bilingual education and family literacy programs).

Strategies to Improve Health Outcomes

- Increase access to health services, including efforts to expand public health insurance programs to reach all children regardless of immigration status.
- Provide adequate language interpretation at health facilities to ensure proper communication and relieve children of the burden of translating for their parents.
- Recognize and respond to the high level of mental health needs in some immigrant communities with multiple delivery systems and culturally competent services.

Strategies to Improve Economic Security

- Increase immigrants' access to jobs that offer adequate pay and employer-based benefits.
- Take steps to facilitate immigrants' access to banks and other financial institutions.
- Address the barriers that prevent low-income immigrant families from receiving public benefits.

Key to achieving progress in all of these areas is building capacity within immigrant communities and organizations to both meet immigrants' needs and promote positive policy change. There is currently widespread agreement in this country that our immigration system is broken, but there is an intense debate about how to respond. This debate is reflected in legislative battles at the state and federal level. In the states, for example, more than 300 anti-immigrant bills were proposed in 2005, although nearly all were defeated.

Strategies to Promote Pro-Immigrant Policies at National, State, and Local Levels

- Build strength and leadership within immigrant communities and grassroots organizations, particularly in new immigrant destination areas.
- Promote strong networks and alliances that span issues and states.
- Forge alliances among low-income communities, including immigrant and native-born communities.
- Engage in media and messaging efforts to “win the hearts and minds of Americans.”

In addition to investments in the strategies identified above, funding is needed to ensure continued research regarding young children in immigrant families. Research needs include

nanced demographic research, in-depth examinations of ECE systems' ability to effectively serve children in immigrant families, and communications research. Foundations also can take steps to ensure that their approaches to grantmaking are as effective as possible through, for example, providing more flexible grants, offering longer grant periods, and infusing attention to immigrant children and families across all grantees.

The issues raised at the Young Children in Immigrant Families meeting will only become more pressing as the number of children of immigrants continues to grow. Efforts to ensure these children's success must begin by meeting their needs today, and members of the foundation community have an important role to play in working to achieve this goal.

Children under age 6 with immigrant parents face difficult challenges—about half are low income...one-third of these children are linguistically isolated...and rates of...hardship are significantly higher than among children with native-born parents.

Introduction

Children in immigrant families are an important and growing demographic in the United States. More than 20 percent of all U.S. children—about 13 million—have at least one foreign-born parent. More than three-quarters of these children—and more than 90 percent of those under age 6—are themselves U.S. citizens, although most of their parents are not. Immigrant families exhibit important strengths, including high rates of marriage and strong attachment to the workforce. At the same time, immigrant families are more likely than native-born families to be low income and to face a variety of other challenges that can place their children at risk.

The Young Children in Immigrant Families meeting, held in Miami, Florida on January 18-19, 2006, raised critical issues related to promoting positive outcomes for young children in immigrant families, with the overall goal of increasing strategic investments in this important population. The meeting brought together members of the foundation community who focus on issues related to young children and/or immigrant families at the national, regional, state, and local levels. Presenters included the following experts on immigrant issues from community-based organizations, policy research organizations, academia, and advocacy groups:

- Ismael Ahmed, Executive Director, Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services
- Tanya Broder, Staff Attorney, National Immigration Law Center
- Randy Capps, Senior Research Associate, Urban Institute
- Sharon Darling, President and Founder, National Center for Family Literacy
- Michael Fix, Vice President and Director of Studies, Migration Policy Institute
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- Frank Sharry, Executive Director, National Immigration Forum
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The following pages provide an overview of the main themes that emerged from the meeting panels and discussions. They begin with a brief description of recent demographic trends related to immigration and immigrant families with young children. The focus then turns to promising strategies that foundations could support to address challenges faced by young children in immigrant families in four areas:

- Early care and education (ECE) and school readiness
- Health and mental health
- Family economic security
- Promoting pro-immigrant policies at the national, state, and local levels

The paper concludes with a discussion of issues in need of further research and of ways in which grantmaking methods could be designed to better meet the needs of immigrant organizations.

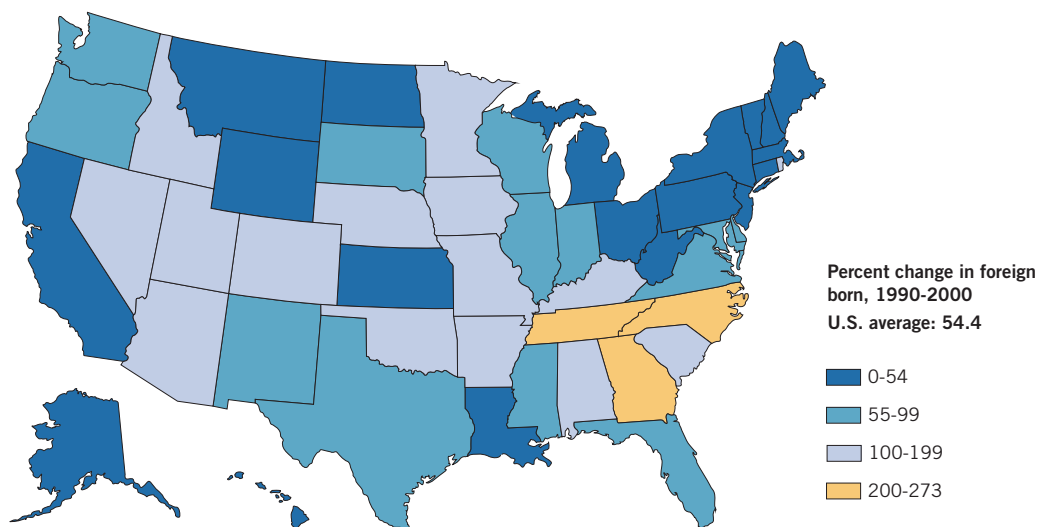
Emerging Demographic Trends

Over the past 35 years, the foreign-born population in the United States has tripled, reaching 35 million people in 2005. At the same time, the percent of the country's children who live in immigrant families has increased, rising from 6 percent in 1960 to about 20 percent today—a figure still well below the rate in the early 20th century. These years also saw a shift in the ethnic background of U.S. immigrants from predominantly white Europeans to Latinos and Asians. Today, more than half of all U.S. immigrants are from Latin America, and one-quarter are from Asia. Immigration is thus contributing to the growing diversity of the U.S. population, especially among children. By 2030, it is estimated that half of U.S. children will be white, non-Hispanic, and half will be comprised of a mix of other races and ethnicities.

Another important trend of the last 10 to 15 years has been a shift in immigrants' destinations within the United States. Historically immigrants have been concentrated in a handful of states. Six states—California, Florida, Illinois, New Jersey, New York, and Texas—still account for nearly 70 percent of the country's total foreign-born population, and the percent of children in these states who live in immigrant families is particularly high. In California, for example, half of all children have at least one foreign-born parent.

In recent years, however, immigrants have increasingly settled in other states, such as Georgia, North Carolina, and Tennessee (see Figure 1). As a result, many small communities have seen increases in their foreign-born population, some as much as 600 percent or more within a single decade, placing strains on local institutions and often leading to fear and hostility among local residents. Immigrants in these new communities also tend to be more recent

Figure 1: Growth of the foreign-born population, 1990-2000



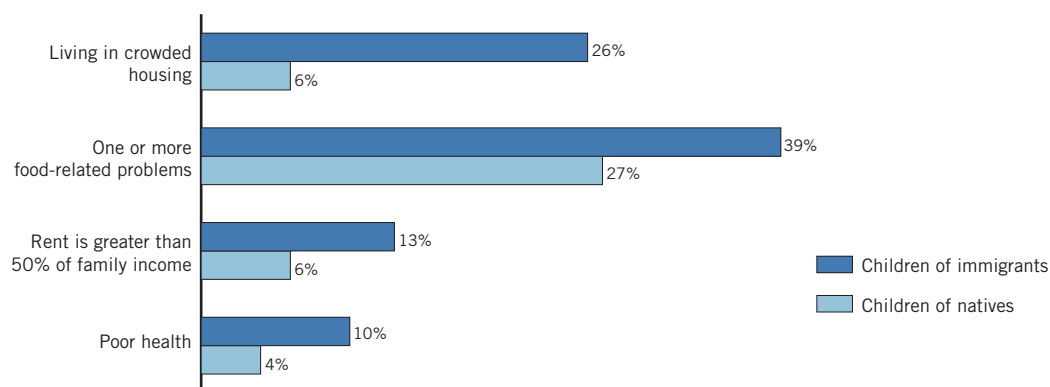
Source: Goździak, E. M. (2006). Beyond the Gateway. Paper presented at Young Children in Immigrant Families—The Role of Philanthropy, meeting held Jan 18-19, 2006, Miami, Florida. Data calculated from U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 Summary Tape File 3 (STF 3) and sample data and Census 2000 Supplementary Survey Summary Tables of the American Community Survey (ACS).

entrants who are younger, poorer, less educated, and more often undocumented than immigrants in traditional destinations.

Meeting the needs of young children in immigrant families requires understanding and effectively responding to these trends. Children under age 6 with immigrant parents face difficult challenges—about half are low income, with family income below 200 percent of the official poverty level; one-third of these children are linguistically isolated—they live in households in which all persons over the age of 13 are limited English proficient (LEP); and rates of food insecurity, crowded housing, and other hardships are significantly higher than among children with native-born parents (see Figure 2).

These risk factors are particularly high within certain ethnic groups, and they persist even with high rates of marriage and employment. Among children in low-income immigrant families, three-quarters have married parents and nearly half have parents who work an average of at least 1,000 hours per year (at least 1,000 hours of work per year for a single parent and a total of at least 2,000 hours per year for two parents). Immigrant families also have relatively high rates of homeownership—demonstrating their long-term commitment to their communities—although rates are lower than among native-born families. Finally, it is important to keep in mind the tremendous diversity that exists among immigrant families. Many children of immigrants live in highly educated and economically secure families and are not necessarily subject to the risks explored here.

Figure 2: Hardship in immigrant families, 2002



Source: Capps, R. & Fix, M. (2006). *Preschool Age Children of Immigrants*. Paper presented at Young Children in Immigrant Families—The Role of Philanthropy, meeting held Jan. 18-19, 2006, Miami, Florida. Data are from Urban Institute tabulations from the 2002 National Survey of America's Families (NSAF).

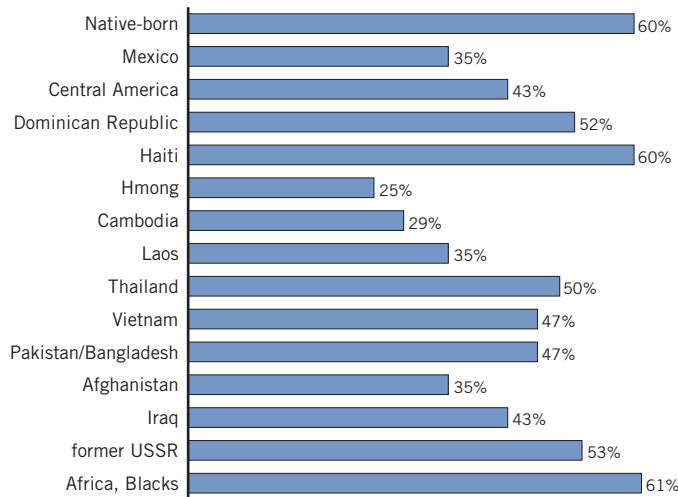
Early Care and Education and School Readiness

One result of rising immigration has been an increase in the proportion of U.S. preschool- and school-aged children who are children of immigrants, along with a significant increase in the number of LEP students—or English language learners (ELLs)—in America's schools. These trends are particularly stark in some of the new immigrant destinations. In North Carolina, for example, overall enrollment in kindergarten through 12th grade was flat over the past decade, while enrollment of ELL students increased by 500 percent.

Research indicates that the U.S. educational system is not adequately meeting these children's needs. As compared to children in native-born families, young children in immigrant families face higher rates of poverty, low parental education, and limited English proficiency—all risk factors that can impede school readiness. Evidence shows that quality early education can help to mitigate these risks. However, children with immigrant parents are underrepresented in prekindergarten programs and center-based early care and education settings (see Figure 3).

In grades kindergarten through 12, ELLs are concentrated in linguistically-isolated schools—schools with a disproportionate share of LEP students—with disproportionately larger classes and less experienced teachers and principals. One indication that many schools are failing to meet ELL students' needs is that most of the ELL students (even in grades 6 through 12) are U.S. born. Further evidence is that schools with large numbers of ELL students are disproportionately likely to be failing the federal educational standards established under the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act and to face sanctions as a result. Depending on how it is implemented, the NCLB Act could have a significant impact on ELL students' educational opportunities. Among other requirements, the NCLB Act compels schools to disaggregate

Figure 3: U.S. four-year-olds in immigrant families enrolled in pre-k/nursery school, by parents' country of origin, 2000



Source: Calculated by Donald J. Hernandez based on U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census 2000 data, 5 pct Public Use Microdata (PUMS) files.

LEP students in their performance reporting and provides for stiff sanctions if these students do not make progress on standardized tests.

Finally, ELL students tend to live in linguistically isolated families, in which their parents (and siblings over the age of 13) do not speak English well either. Research suggests that teaching English language skills only to the children of immigrants—and not to their parents—can result in fragmented families, with language barriers dividing parents from their children (who often lose much of their ability in their first language). Furthermore, it places children in the inappropriate position of having to translate for their parents in a variety of settings, including schools and hospitals, with negative implications for children's mental health and development.

Strategies for improving educational outcomes for young children in immigrant families include:

- 1. Increase immigrant families' access to high-quality center-based early care and education and prekindergarten programs, with teachers and curricula able meet the particular needs of immigrant children and ELLs.**
 - Ensure an adequate supply of ECE teachers and staff who speak both English and immigrants' native languages in locations that are accessible to immigrant communities.
 - Invest more money in educational opportunities for early childhood teachers and staff serving immigrant communities (including those who are themselves immigrants), to increase their understanding of child development issues and related instructional strategies.
 - Focus on the needs of ELLs with curricula oriented toward language development.
 - Support the development of standards for culturally-competent ECE provision (Head Start is a good source of information on this issue).

- Develop diversity curricula (for both immigrant and native-born children) that address issues of responding to difference and living in increasingly heterogeneous communities.
 - Raise awareness of ECE programs in immigrant communities and build connections between immigrant organizations and ECE providers.
 - Increase the overall number of slots in ECE and prekindergarten programs.
- 2. Focus on the needs of ELL students in grades K through 12.**
- Monitor NCLB implementation and ensure that it helps ELL students—by increasing the focus on their specific needs and holding schools accountable for meeting these needs—rather than hurts them by identifying them as a “problem” that is dragging down overall school performance.
 - Work within the regular public school system while also taking advantage of the flexibility offered by charter schools to implement innovative programs.
- 3. Promote educational strategies that address the needs of ELL students and their families.**
- Repair the image of bilingual education, making it clear that it is not a remedial issue, but a strategy for building bilingual skills for all.
 - Increase access to family literacy programs, which recognize that parents are their children’s first teachers and include both separate and joint instruction time for parents and their children.
 - Improve school outreach to immigrant parents, to facilitate their participation in the schools and increase their understanding of the school system and of their children’s performance.

Health and Mental Health

Another critical issue for young children of immigrants is ensuring that they have access to the health care they need. Children of immigrants are more likely to be reported in poor or fair health than children with native-born parents. They are also significantly more likely to lack health insurance, as they have much less access to employer-based coverage and face important barriers in accessing public coverage as well. Immigrant parents face even greater barriers to public coverage. Yet research shows that parents’ access to health insurance has important implications for their children’s health and well-being.

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996 barred many legal immigrants from federally funded public health insurance (undocumented immigrants were already ineligible). Most children of immigrants are U.S. citizens and therefore are not directly affected by these restrictions. However, some immigrant children—and many immigrant parents—are ineligible for coverage under these rules. In addition, as discussed in more detail below, anti-immigrant legislation and rhetoric has contributed to the fear that makes many immigrants reluctant to seek the benefits for which they are eligible. Such fears compound the impact of linguistic, cultural, and other barriers that can prevent

*Among working families with children...immigrant families
are twice as likely as native-born to be low income.*

immigrants from accessing needed health care. On the other hand, some states and localities use their own funds to provide health coverage for immigrants ineligible under federal rules. In most cases, these benefits are limited to legal immigrants, but a handful of states and counties provide health insurance to children regardless of immigration status, and even more provide prenatal care without regard for status.

One of the most pressing health needs facing young children of immigrants and their parents is the need for mental health services. The experience of migrating from one's home country and adapting to a new culture can be traumatizing for children as well as adults—especially when they are met with fear and discrimination in their new homes—as can the pressures of having children serve as mediators and translators for their parents (as discussed above). Many immigrant children also suffer from feelings of abandonment due to periods of family separation that often occur during the migration process, as family members migrate at different times. Finally, some immigrant children, such as refugees, have fled from violence and other traumatizing situations in their countries of origin. The challenge is that access to mental health services is often limited and/or available services are not culturally appropriate.

Strategies for improving health outcomes for young children in immigrant families include:

1. **Increase access to health services, including efforts to expand public health insurance programs to reach all children regardless of immigration status.** (See more about strategies for promoting pro-immigrant policies below.)
2. **Provide adequate language interpretation at health facilities to ensure proper communication and relieve children of the burden of translating for their parents.**
3. **Recognize and respond to the high level of mental health needs in some immigrant communities.**
 - Promote multiple delivery systems, including family-focused programs and school-based mental health services.
 - Emphasize the importance of cultural competency in service delivery and work with communities to engage families in ways that are culturally acceptable.

Family Economic Security

The struggle to achieve economic security is the central issue for many immigrant children and parents. Among working families with children (with more than 1,000 hours per year of work on average per parent), immigrant families are twice as likely as native-born to be low income. This is primarily a result of lower wages—immigrant workers are disproportionately likely to work in jobs with low wages and without employer-based benefits. In addition, two-parent immigrant families have lower maternal employment rates than two-parent native-born families. Exacerbating immigrant families' economic vulnerability is their low rates of participation in public benefits designed to assist low-income working families, such as cash assistance, food stamps, and child care subsidies. Some of the reasons for this are discussed above in the context of public health insurance.

Immigrant families are also less likely to have bank accounts than native-born families. As a result, many face high transaction costs for cashing checks and sending remittance payments to friends and family in their countries of origin. Lack of access to financial institutions also impedes immigrants' ability to save, build good credit, and become homeowners.

Strategies for improving the economic security of immigrant families include:*

1. Increase immigrants' access to jobs that pay adequate wages and provide employer-based benefits, such as health insurance.
2. Take steps to facilitate immigrants' ability to open bank accounts and access other financial institutions.
3. Address the barriers that prevent low-income immigrant families from receiving work supports and other public benefits. (For more on this issue, see strategies for promoting pro-immigrant policies below.)

Promoting Pro-Immigrant Policies at the National, State, and Local Levels

Key to achieving progress in all of the areas discussed above is building capacity within immigrant communities and organizations to both meet immigrants' needs and promote positive policy change. There is wide agreement that the current U.S. immigration system is broken—almost as many immigrants are entering the country illegally each year (more than 500,000) as legally. However, there is intense disagreement about how to respond.

In the U.S. Congress, for example, bilateral legislation was proposed in the Senate last year that includes provisions for increasing the number of visas and offering undocumented

* Given this meeting's short length and its focus on young children, specific strategies for meeting this objective—especially with regard to efforts involving the private sector—were not discussed in detail.

immigrants a pathway to legalization, while at the same time strengthening immigration law enforcement. Similarly comprehensive legislation (although with more punitive enforcement provisions) passed the Senate Judiciary Committee in March 2006 and was sent to the full Senate for consideration.* This bill incorporates the DREAM Act, which would provide a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrant children who grow up in the United States and graduate from high school here. The House, on the other hand, passed virulently anti-immigrant legislation in late 2005 that increases penalties on undocumented immigrants and on Americans who assist them.

At the state level, more than 300 anti-immigrant bills were proposed in 2005. These proposals and the debates they generated had significant negative consequences for immigrant families, sending a hostile message that added to the confusion and fear that prevents (eligible) immigrants from seeking critical services. Still, nearly all of these bills were successfully defeated. Moreover, more than 30 states currently use their own funds to provide at least some services for at least some immigrants who are ineligible for federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) assistance, public health insurance, food stamps, and/or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) as a result of the 1996 welfare changes.

The ambivalence in federal and state policies reflects a deep ambivalence regarding immigration issues among the American people. Between the minority of people in this country who is strongly anti-immigrant and the minority who is strongly pro-immigrant lies a large, undecided group in the middle. Immigrants' advocates must engage in strong efforts to counter the anti-immigrant agenda and push for positive immigration policy reform along with comprehensive policies for integrating immigrant families and meeting their needs. At the same time, it is critical to support broader funding for early care and education, health insurance, adult education, family literacy, and other programs that serve all low-income families, including immigrants.

More generally, in addressing the concerns of immigrant families, it is important to keep in mind that many native-born families experience similar hardships, particularly families who are members of racial or ethnic minorities. However, despite many shared needs and concerns, relationships between immigrant and native-born minority communities are often characterized more by suspicion and mistrust than by solidarity and mutual assistance.

Strategies for promoting pro-immigrant policies at the national, state, and local levels include:

- 1. Build strength and leadership within immigrant communities and grassroots organizations, particularly in new immigrant destination areas.**
 - Support immigrant organizations that function as broad service providers to meet immigrants' wide array of needs.
 - Engage young people and build their leadership skills through outreach strategies and mentoring programs in which immigrant youth serve as a resource for their communities.

* At the time of publication, the full Senate had not yet voted on the issue. For updated information on federal legislation, see the National Immigration Law Center's web site: <www.nilc.org>.

- Encourage the development of early childhood outreach and advocacy agendas in immigrant organizations.
2. **Promote strong networks and alliances that span issues and states.**
 - Build coalitions between grassroots organizations and state and national groups.
 - Strengthen connections between immigrant groups and groups that focus on poverty, early childhood, education, health, and other issues of concern to immigrant families.
 - Use efforts to combat anti-immigrant proposals as opportunities to build new coalitions (depending on the issue, seek to engage unlikely partners—for example, the business community).
 - Share lessons across states, but also ensure that efforts are locally-based and respond to local realities.
 3. **Forge alliances among low-income communities, including both immigrant and native-born communities.**
 - Focus on areas of shared needs, such as increasing business ownership, promoting access to early education, improving schools and school systems, strengthening access to health and mental health services, and addressing income and employment concerns.
 - Build connections between community leaders and among community members (for example, sponsor joint cultural events) to develop multicultural leadership.
 - Build ties between different immigrant communities by avoiding group-based strategies in funding and programming and focusing instead on issue-based approaches.
 4. **Engage in media and messaging efforts to “win the hearts and minds of Americans.”**
 - Invest in media around immigration and immigrants’ stories; address fears and misinformation about undocumented immigrants and about the connection between immigration and terrorism.
 - Frame issues important to immigrant children and families within the broader context of issues important to all children and families; use the vocabulary of equality and equal opportunity.
 - Ensure that efforts to promote positive policies and to combat negative ones include education campaigns that engage the community, in combination with other strategies such as lobbying and litigation.
 - Focus on localities that have seen significant increases in their immigrant populations in recent years.

Key to achieving progress...is building capacity within immigrant communities and organizations to both meet immigrants' needs and promote positive policy change.

Areas for Further Research

In addition to investments in the strategies identified above, funding is needed to ensure continued research regarding young children in immigrant families. Research needs include:

- Nuanced research regarding demographic data and other basic facts: What are the characteristics that make certain groups of immigrant children and families vulnerable? What conditions are low-income immigrant families living in, and what are their needs? What does immigration look like at the state and local levels?
- Analysis of immigrants' contributions to the U.S. economy (for example, through taxes) that debunks myths related to immigrants' "cost."
- In-depth examination of early care and education systems and their ability to effectively serve children in immigrant families: Why are immigrants' children underrepresented in prekindergarten and center-based ECE programs? What barriers exist? What is the impact of parental selection? What are the consequences of teaching English only to children when they live in linguistically isolated households? Would increased access to family literacy programs better serve immigrant families?
- Sustained study of schools with a high proportion of ELL students: How well are they meeting the needs of ELL students? What positive and/or negative changes are occurring as a result of the NCLB Act? Again, what is the impact of teaching English only to children (and not their parents), and how can any negative consequences be addressed?
- Documentation of the harm (including the financial cost) of anti-immigrant legislation.
- Evaluation of immigrant integration and civic engagement strategies.
- Communications research to facilitate more effective messaging.

Grantmaking Methods

Finally, foundations can take steps to ensure that their approaches to grantmaking are as effective as possible in supporting organizations that are working to improve outcomes for young children in immigrant families. Such steps could include:

- Working toward greater cooperation among foundations.
- Providing broader grants so that funds can be used more flexibly, and breaking down silos between funding streams.
- Engaging in efforts to leverage public dollars.
- Offering longer grant periods of five to 10 years (versus two to three years), especially for small and potentially fragile grassroots groups.
- Infusing attention to immigrant children and families across all grantees.
- Promoting foundation and grantee networking around immigrant issues.
- Mapping where resources are and where funds should be directed when they become available.
- Ensuring that as attention turns to immigrants in new destination areas, funding also remains available in the “traditional” receiving areas where most immigrants continue to live.

Conclusion

The issues raised at the Young Children in Immigrant Families meeting will only become more pressing in the coming years. One in five children in the United States is a child of immigrants, and the proportion is growing. The future of these children is America’s future, and efforts to ensure their success must begin by meeting their needs today. Members of the foundation community have an important role to play in working to achieve this goal.