Pandemic, Politics and the Future: Tackling Immigrant Anxiety and Trauma

Hannah Matthews
Deputy Executive Director for Policy
@HNMatthews / hmatthews@clasp.org
November 2020
Shifts in Federal Immigration Policy Priorities

• Increased immigration enforcement and family separation.

• Attempts to remove protections like DACA and TPS status.

• Reduced access to health, nutrition and public benefit programs due to policies like public charge.
Children and Families are Harmed by Anti-Immigrant Policies

- **Family separation** and **fear** of family separation.
- **Withdrawal** from the community.
- Decreased participation in vital **health, nutrition services**
- Loss of or changes in **employment** and income
- **Stress** on providers and community leaders.
Impact of COVID-19 on Immigrant Families

- COVID-19 crisis worsening existing inequities for immigrant families.
- Immigrant workers overrepresented in essential industries (health care, agriculture, etc.) and overrepresented in industries hardest hit by pandemic.
- Many immigrants and their families have been left out of the federal policy response.
  - Economic stimulus payments excluded millions of immigrant workers who pay taxes with an ITIN number.
Federal Context: Looking Ahead
Urgent federal priorities

• Prioritize immigrant families for inclusive COVID relief.
  – Economic stimulus payments
  – Health care and vaccine access.
• Restore DACA and TPS.
• Halt and reform immigration enforcement.
  – Focus on family unity.
  – Strengthen sensitive locations policy.
• Restore trust in government.
• Increase access to health, nutrition, education and other basic needs programs.
  – Roll back harmful public charge rule.
  – Outreach and education strategies.
  – Trauma-informed services.
Children Thrive Action Network

- CTAN is a new network of advocates and service providers at the national, state, and local levels who work directly with or on behalf of children in immigrant families.

  - **Mission**: To defend and support children in the United States in mixed-status families.

  - **Vision**: A society where all children have equal opportunity, including the resources and protections they need to grow and thrive, where diversity is embraced and celebrated, and where all children are valued and cared for regardless of where they or their parents were born.

  www.childrenthriveaction.org