



## Children at the Border

# Dear Reader,

The *ExchangeEveryDay* for July 25 was a report by Marjorie Kostelnik from the University of Nebraska on a recent discussion with her students about what the early childhood community could do about “the children at the border”:

*They thought a statement from NAEYC was important — a way to be on the record as ‘Standing Up for Children.’ However, they also wanted us all to be more proactive and to include their generation in the process. They noted that over the past several days the airwaves and digital news images have been full of anger, fear, and hate. What they wanted was to create an alternate perspective of acceptance, love, and tolerance. Their suggestion was to create a Pinterest site of ‘Faces of Love’ or ‘Faces of Caring’ showing the proactive things people are doing to support these children and others who come to the U.S. as ‘refugees.’ For example, our state has taken in 200 children over the past few months quietly. Just next door in Iowa, communities are gathering now to discuss ways to help. The students wondered how other states and communities are reacting and if NAEYC couldn’t coordinate a site illustrating positive actions as models for others to consider. I am sharing this with you because I was struck by the active nature of their ideas and by their desire to be involved in some way — I wanted you to know we have some innovative leaders coming along.*

Many subscribers shared their views on this controversial subject, including this comment from Wendy Sanders from La Quinta, California:

*Certainly I appreciate helping students develop compassion and I believe every American is concerned about these children’s well being. Hopefully, though, as college educators we also challenge students with the complexity of this problem. The immediate solution is compassion and caring for these children. The long-term solution — if it were easy, we would already have a national legislation — makes students think and problem solve more deeply. What is the long-range plan? What about the next 40,000 children? Is there a limit to what the USA can accept before communities can no longer meet the children’s needs? Is there a reason, then, to accept children living in poverty all over the world? What kind of national policy or action would help the rest of the families still in Central America? How do we accept children without endorsing the often violent and inhumane ‘coyote’ process? Is it sound child development process to separate children from their parents — this is a difficult conversation related to international adoption in general. In no way am I against providing the best care for children, especially refugees, but what we are promoting here is putting a band-aid on a critical international problem that will only increase if we do not promote fair and reasonable immigration and international aid.*

No one can see things from all perspectives. We are energized when controversial subjects can be addressed through respectful discussions. Such conversations inform and educate our ideas and actions. To view the comments around this topic and to add your own, go to Children at the Border: [www.childcareexchange.com/eed/issue.php?id=3657](http://www.childcareexchange.com/eed/issue.php?id=3657)