



For Immediate Release

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DHS Performing “Wellness Checks” on Unaccompanied Children in New Jersey

April 22, 2025, Jersey City, New Jersey – The New Jersey Consortium for Immigrant Children (NJCIC) is able to confirm reports that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), alongside other federal law enforcement agencies, such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), and the U.S. Marshals Service, have begun performing “wellness checks” on unaccompanied children who have been released to sponsors in New Jersey.

These “wellness checks” are purportedly part of a [nationwide](#) campaign to find missing unaccompanied children and prevent human trafficking. However, recent ICE memoranda obtained by advocates through FOIA requests show that as part of these checks ICE will “take necessary steps for immigration enforcement,” “enforce final orders of removal”, and “pursue criminal options for [unaccompanied children] who have committed crimes.” As noted by Priscilla Monico Marín, NJCIC’s Executive Director, “Although the federal government claims the purpose of these “wellness checks” is to prevent trafficking, they are actually part of the country’s ongoing efforts to terrorize the immigrant community, this time targeting the most vulnerable--unaccompanied children and their families.”

The fear caused by these wellness checks takes a toll on the mental health of unaccompanied children. As noted by Samantha Rumsey, NJCIC’s Legal Director, “These visits can be very traumatic for the unaccompanied children we represent, even if they do not lead to immigration enforcement actions. No child should wake up to ICE agents and federal law enforcement officers on their doorstep, demanding to search their home. It’s absolutely terrifying,” adding, “These visits undermine the immigrant community’s trust in the federal government and willingness to engage with agencies that perform legitimate welfare checks on unaccompanied children, such as ORR and NJ’s Division of Child Protection and Permanency. As such, we urge the federal government to prioritize the best interests of children and cease these needless checks.”

About the New Jersey Consortium for Immigrant Children

The New Jersey Consortium for Immigrant Children (NJCIC) is a state-wide legal services and policy advocacy organization dedicated to empowering young immigrants. We provide holistic youth-centered legal representation, lead systemic change to advance immigrant rights, and build community through collaboration and education. We envision a just and equitable NJ where young

immigrants can flourish and lead full, fearless lives. For more information or to join our efforts, visit our website at <https://njcic.org/>