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Separation of Children from Primary Caregivers 20 June 2018

We, the Board of Directors of the International Society for the Study of Trauma and Dissociation, are concerned about the policy and practice of separating children from their parents at the border.

The stable attachment children form with their primary caregiver is crucial for healthy brain development. Disruption in that bond sets children on a course of severe emotional distress. Children forced to endure such a separation have an increased likelihood of developing severe and persistent mental illness, substance abuse, and involvement in the criminal justice system. Adverse childhood exposure is also associated with increased likelihood of developing chronic diseases (i.e., asthma, cardio-pulmonary diseases, metabolic disorders, obesity).

As an organization dedicated to studying and educating people and professionals about the impact of childhood abuse and trauma, we seek to inform the public and responsible policy makers of the profoundly detrimental consequences of separating children from their parents and ask that every effort be made to keep families together.

If you would like additional information about Trauma & Dissociation or to share a comment, please contact ISSTD Headquarters at info@isst-d.org