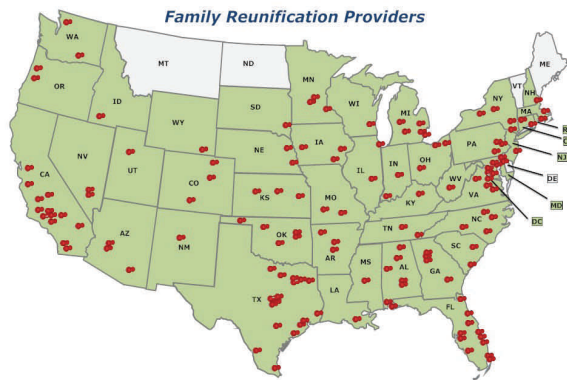


Post release services are culturally sensitive and individualized to the special needs of each referred child. These services are provided by community-based agencies with expertise in family preservation, services for immigrants and refugees, culturally sensitive foster care, family counseling, domestic violence intervention, juvenile justice supervision and services for victims of trafficking. Our program employs an empowering family strengthening and kinship navigation approach to assist the children as they are integrated within their approved sponsor's family.

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops/Migration and Refugee Services



Providers as of October 2010

Services are provided in over 168 cities throughout the nation. Frequent areas of service include Los Angeles, CA; Houston, TX; Miami, FL; Austin, TX; and Phoenix, AZ.

The USCCB Safe Passages Program is funded by the Office of Refugee Resettlement. USCCB is composed of the Catholic Bishops of the United States.

## Join Our Network

**If your agency is interested in joining our network of providers to serve undocumented children and their families, please contact us at (202) 541-5409 or email us at [migratingchildren@uscgb.org](mailto:migratingchildren@uscgb.org)**

### *Migration and Refugee Services*

*Creating a world where immigrants, refugees, migrants, and people on the move are treated with dignity, respect, welcome, and belonging.*

Gift of the United States Government



**United States Conference of Catholic Bishops  
Migration and Refugee Services  
Children's Services  
3211 Fourth Street, NE  
Washington, DC 20017**

**Phone: 202-541-5409  
Fax: 202-722-8711  
E-mail: [migratingchildren@uscgb.org](mailto:migratingchildren@uscgb.org)  
Website: [www.usccb.org/mrs/cshome.shtml](http://www.usccb.org/mrs/cshome.shtml)**

**Connecting Undocumented Children with their Families**

**Safe Passages  
Family Reunification**



Little Girl by Mari - iStock Photo

**United States Conference of Catholic Bishops/Migration & Refugee Services/  
Children's Services**



## What We Do

USCCB/MRS has been providing post-release services for children in immigration proceedings throughout the United States and its territories since 1993. We continually seek to increase the knowledge and capacity of service providers so that they can better meet the specific needs of unaccompanied undocumented children.

The goal of our program is to ensure that children are placed in safe family environments, which provide for their physical and emotional well-being. We also work to ensure that children are on a path towards permanency by helping them obtain immigration relief, whenever possible. Our national office provides:

- ◆ Outreach to new providers across the country so that we can expand our capacity to serve undocumented children in immigration proceedings, anywhere in the country
- ◆ Initial orientation and training of all new providers
- ◆ Ongoing technical assistance (TA) to providers. TA covers issues specific to the population and includes: the immigration custody and court systems, migration experiences of unaccompanied children, navigating community resources specific to this population, empowering families through a family strengthening model, child trafficking and smuggling, juvenile justice issues, and related services
- ◆ Ongoing case consultation for our providers from a bilingual social worker with experience in the intersection of child welfare and immigration
- ◆ Oversight and monitoring of our network providers to ensure quality services and to track outcomes for children
- ◆ Coordination with national immigration legal service providers to ensure legal representation for children

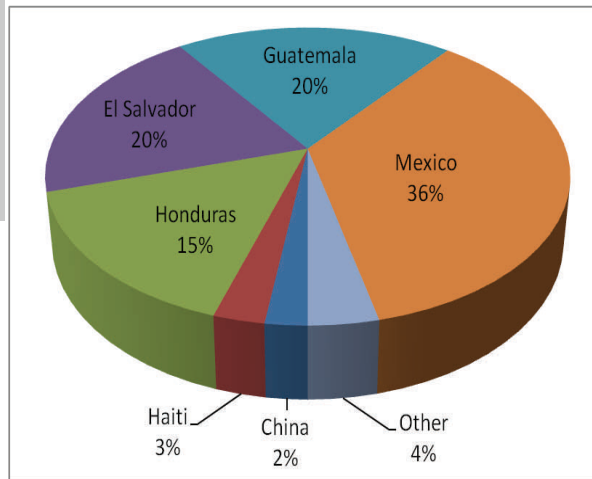
## Client Needs

Children's needs include one or more of the following:

- ◆ Advocacy for School Enrollment
- ◆ Mental Health/Behavioral Needs
- ◆ Juvenile Justice History
- ◆ Pregnancy/Parenting
- ◆ Substance Abuse
- ◆ Medical/Developmental Needs
- ◆ Trafficking Concerns
- ◆ Sponsor Concerns
  - ⇒ Criminal background concerns
  - ⇒ Lack of relationship
  - ⇒ Undocumented status
- ◆ Navigating the Immigration Process

## Countries of Origin

Each year, thousands of unaccompanied, undocumented children are apprehended at our borders and through internal immigration enforcement. In fiscal year 2010, USCCB served undocumented minors from sixteen (16) countries.



## Maria\*

Maria is an 11 year-old girl from Mexico. While living there, she was a victim of verbal and physical abuse by her alcoholic father. When Maria's mother learned of the abuse, she was desperate to bring her daughter to join her in the United States. As a result of the trauma Maria experienced, she struggled with feelings of anger and depression. She also had a history of self-harming behavior (cutting) and had made one past suicide attempt. In addition, Maria has been separated from her mother for the past five years, and would need time and support to strengthen their relationship.

Following reunification, the local worker connected Maria with individual therapy sessions to address her mental health concerns. The local worker also assisted with school enrollment, provided referrals to medical providers, and offered guidance on how to access these services in the community. She was able to identify the counseling department within her own agency as a resource through which Maria and her mother successfully engaged in family counseling.

The local worker also provided information to educate Maria's mother on the warning signs of depression and self-harming behavior, in order to better prepare her to recognize these signs in the future. Lastly, the local worker connected Maria with a pro bono legal service provider to assess her options for legal relief. Maria is now emotionally stable and has established a healthy relationship with her mother.

\*Name has been changed