

## Parents' Testimonials on Family Incarceration

### Statements from Berks County Residential Center: [2015-2016](#)

“Our children, who range in age from 2 to 16, have been **deprived of a normal life**. We are already traumatized from our countries of origin. We risked our own lives and those of our children, so we could arrive on safe ground. While here, **our children have told us they sometimes consider suicide, made desperate from confinement**. The teenagers say that being here, life makes no sense. **One of our children said he wanted to break the window to jump out and end this nightmare.**”

“**We have spent birthdays here, Christmas, the New Year, Mother’s Day, Father’s Day**. It’s difficult to explain [to our children] why we are still here.”

“Our children have suffered psychological damage, and many of them have suffered health-wise, because of this confinement, and not to mention the **racist abuse and poor treatment from certain members of the staff** in this detention center, but especially by the agents of ICE that play and mock our dignity as immigrants. We came here seeking refuge. We came to this country to save our lives and the lives of our children.”

“I knew a few days after I arrived here, and I realized that this was going to be very hard. I try to go outside, distract myself with some activities. **We are not delinquents who should be imprisoned.**”

“**We have not robbed or killed; why are we imprisoned?**”

“My son suffers from a skin disease...and since we arrived in the United States, it developed itself so much to the point he even has symptoms on his genitals. When scratched it bleeds and [the detention center health staff] did not give me any medications for it or to calm him down, also **his behavior has changed, he cries because he does not want to stay here any longer**, it has already been over four months and I am still here.”

“My son is 6 years old, he is desperate because of such confinement. It worries me a lot that something bad could happen to him here. **He’s very hyperactive, aggressive, the desperation has made him this way. He cries a lot because of this despair. I am afraid** that something bad will happen to him.”

“**My children are desperate and do not want to eat anymore. Just cry and get depressed**. I don’t know what to do anymore because they want to be with their father. Their father is in Austin and they tell me they want to be with him. Please help me, please give me the opportunity to defend my case out of detention.”

“I am worried my two-year-old son is distressed due to so much detention. We have been detained for almost two months. **He does not want to eat, he cries a lot during the night.**”

“My daughter has been having diarrhea for about three weeks now and we went to see a doctor, but they did not give us any medication. With every passing day **her behavior is getting worse and the psychologist just tells me to be patient. I need you to give me the adequate medication** and that you give me the opportunity to take my case outside of here. I am not a criminal. You gave the opportunity to other persons that have been deported to leave, why did you not give it to me. It has been **more than four months that I have been detained.**”

“My problem is that I don’t sleep, and I have headaches because I think a lot about my case and my family. **My son cries a lot** because he does not want to be here. We have been detained for a long time; three months, and we do not want to stay here, **I feel badly for my son.**”