Children Seeking Refuge in the United States

Unaccompanied children have been entering the United States for decades. In fact, the United States has entered into numerous treaties with other countries to ensure the protection, safety and well-being of refugees.

Of the 63,000 unaccompanied children apprehended at the Southern border 56,828 have been reunited with a family member or sponsor. (As of December 2014)

The number of children apprehended at the U.S./Mexico border between 2004 and 2011 averaged 6,800 per year.

States receiving between 4,073 and 7,830 unaccompanied children

States receiving between 1,804 and 2,866 unaccompanied children

Top receiving states of unaccompanied children. (2014 data)

Reasons why these children are seeking refuge in the United States include, but are not limited to, the following:

- To escape violence, abuse, persecution and communities overrun by crime, corruption, endemic poverty and human trafficking.
- To find family members already residing in the United States.
- To seek work to support themselves, their family or their own children.
- Were brought to the United States by human smugglers.

Who are the unaccompanied children entering the U.S. Southern border? (2013 data)

NATIONALITY

- Honduras 30%
- El Salvador 26%
- Guatemala 37%
- Ecuador 2%
- Mexico 3%
- Other 3%

GENDER

- Female 27%
- Male 73%

AGE

- Over 14 years of age 76%
- Under 14 years of age 24%

Resources

AFT Website: go.aft.org/BorderCrisis
Colorín Colorado: www.colorincolorado.org/principals/unaccompanied
For more information, contact Cesar Moreno Perez, AFT Human Rights Department via email: cmoreno@aft.org