

## **Sin Barreras/Without Barriers Policy Statement**

### **Threats to Children in Custody - Sept. 23, 2019**

This month the U.S. government published a new rule that would effectively overturn the current interpretation of the “Flores Settlement”. Under this Settlement, the government agreed to release children to a parent, other adult relative, or a licensed program, holding them in immigration detention no longer than 20 days. The settlement also required immigration officials to give detained minors a certain quality of life, including food, drinking water, medical assistance in emergencies, toilets, sinks, temperature control, supervision, and as much separation from unrelated adults as possible.

The government’s proposed new rule would allow it to hold an immigrant child in a detention center with a parent for an indeterminate amount of time. Although this means that children will stay with their parent in the detention center, keeping minors in custody for long periods of time is a deeply concerning practice that psychologists say will bring great long-term trauma. Also, the new rule provides for a new federal licensing program for family residential centers that would provide substantially less protection to children compared to current licensing standards.

The proposed rule could take effect as early as November 7, 2019. Sin Barreras encourages all its supporters to write your Congress people and Senators expressing your concern with this proposed rule.