

# How The Juvenile Justice System Can Better Work With Immigrant Youth

By DIANE ORSON · 14 HOURS AGO

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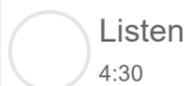
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*This July 26, 2018, file photo shows people lining up to cross into the United States to begin the process of applying for asylum near the San Ysidro port of entry in Tijuana, Mexico.*

GREGORY BULL / ASSOCIATED PRESS



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President Trump threatened on Friday to close the southern border unless Mexico stops migrants from entering the U.S. illegally.

"Mexico's tough. They can stop 'em, but they chose not to," he said. "Now they're gonna stop 'em. And if they don't stop 'em, we're closing the border".

Among those people entering the country are children and teens.

Now, new guidance is being offered to judges who work with newly arrived immigrant youth entering the juvenile justice system.

Many of these young people have faced trauma – violence, separation from loved ones, and adjusting to life in a new culture. Dr. Julian Ford is a professor in the Department of Psychiatry at UConn Health and one of the authors of the guidance.



*Dr. Julian Ford is a professor of psychiatry at UConn Health.*

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"In many cases the traumas that they've experienced and the ways in which they've had to survive, and sometimes ways that have gotten them into trouble because of their need to protect themselves and sometimes resort to means that are not socially or even at times legally approvable, they are still trying to find a safe place in this world," Ford told Connecticut Public Radio.

Ford said that judges may often be first people to recognize what these youth have been through.

"What we've found is that when judges show interest in youth, this is often the thing that begins their actual turnaround, and where they can actually begin to recognize if they've made mistakes, how they can make corrections and make restoration and how they can move forward in their lives," he said.

The primer also points judges toward available social services for newly arrived immigrant youth.

It was created by the National Center for Youth, the Refugee Trauma and Resilience Center and UConn's Center for Trauma Recovery and Juvenile Justice.