

End Child Detention

# CLOSE

THE HOMESTEAD  
DETENTION  
CENTER

*Children belong in  
schools and homes,  
not prison camps.*

The Homestead detention center in Florida is the largest detention site for child migrants in the United States. Currently about 2,000 children are being held at Homestead, and this number is expected to grow.

Join the American Friends Service Committee, community members, immigrant advocates, and many others in calling for the closure of the Homestead detention center.



## Join us in this campaign!

- 1 Sign on and share our petition** calling for the closure of the Homestead detention center, which is run by the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).
- 2 Organize children and youth** to write letters to Congress and to the children at the Homestead detention center. Join others across the country in actions to deliver our messages.
- 3 Participate in our National Week of Action** to End Child Detention (from June 9-16) in Homestead or organize echo actions in your community.

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To join as a partner in this campaign or for more information, contact:

Kristin Kumpf  
AFSC's Director of Human  
Migration and Mobility  
[migrantaction@afsc.org](mailto:migrantaction@afsc.org)



American Friends  
Service Committee

[afsc.org/Homestead](https://afsc.org/Homestead)

## **The children being held at Homestead came to the U.S. seeking refuge—but faced detention instead.**

Most children detained at Homestead fled violence and poverty in Central America and are seeking asylum in the United States.

Many were separated from their families by U.S. immigration officials. The Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) have prosecuted thousands of parents for simply entering the United States, separated them from their children, and, in many cases, deported them. As a result, thousands of children have been left in the care of the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Then, as relatives or other sponsors in the U.S. have stepped forward to offer to care for the children, HHS has passed on their information to DHS – leading to the detention of at least 170 sponsors and preventing many more from stepping forward.

This cruel process has led to a massive increase in the number of children in ORR custody, and many spending weeks or months in inhumane detention – with lasting traumatic effects.

## **Homestead is a child prison.**

Children at the Homestead facility sleep in military-like dorms and rooms that can hold from 70 to 250 kids. They're not allowed to leave the compound. And they're overseen by guards and tracked as they move from room to room.

## **Detaining young people is extremely harmful.**

Keeping children in detention causes lasting trauma – and the cost of that to children, families, and our communities is incalculable. The American Association of Pediatrics has said that even short periods of time in detention can cause psychological trauma and long-term mental health risks.

Because Homestead is an “emergency influx center,” the only one in the country, children are not protected by agreements that ordinarily ensure licensing and other standards are met.

Miami-Dade School Superintendent Alberto Carvalho has criticized the shelter for its lack of transparency and expressed concerns about the inequity of the quality and standards of education provided to children in detention.

# OUR DEMANDS

We call on the Office of Refugee Resettlement and Health and Human Services to:

- Close the Homestead detention center immediately.
- Stop using emergency influx facilities.
- Reunite children with their sponsors as quickly as possible.
- End collaborations with DHS that interfere with reunifications.

We call on the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Justice to stop detaining and separating families.

We call on Congress to:

- Prohibit the use of emergency influx facilities.
- Prohibit HHS from sharing information with DHS that could lead to the detention and deportation of sponsors.

More: [afsc.org/Homestead](https://afsc.org/Homestead)