

## A Call for Letters of Encouragement

Want to reach out to women and children in detention at the border? Here is a “can-do” project you and/or your friends- even children may be happy to do.

The Proyecto Dilley, a partner of the Immigration Justice Campaign in San Antonio, TX serves the immigrant mothers and children seeking asylum that are detained at the South Texas Family Residential Center in Dilley, TX. 53 families detained in Dilley have been there for over 100 days, 35 of those have been there for over 300. They have waited out 3-10 months of depression, medical neglect, reheated food, nonexistent education, and the anxiety of an uncertain future, all just hoping for the chance to be safe in the United States. They have had to sue for their rights to a fair asylum process.

They are now watching guards come in to work after a weekend at the bars in one of the states hardest-hit by COVID-19, and then leave their masks off and hug the detained children. They have seen judge after judge decide they can't force ICE to release them. They are now preparing themselves to be asked if they want to send their children alone to sponsors, or keep them detained in a congregate setting where their growth has stunted, development has been repressed, and behavior has regressed-- and where coronavirus is slowly but surely spreading among the staff.

These 53 families have no idea what future is in store for them. They would love to hear from people all over the country who are supporting them and rooting for them. **That's why we're renewing our call for letters of encouragement for our detained families.** Children are also welcome to send drawings. Unfortunately, due to STFRC rules, we cannot pass out any food or gifts of any kind, even stickers. Subject of the letters may include:

- your belief that they deserve justice
- your best wishes/prayers/blessings for them
- your encouragement to fight for their families
- your thanks to them for having the courage to seek asylum despite all the road blocks and bad treatment.
- what you/ your family/ your friends/ your community/ your congress people have been doing to fight for them

The vast majority of our families speak Spanish; we have one family that speaks Haitian Creole and another Portuguese.

Please mail letters to: Mackenzie levy  
C/o Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid  
1111 N. Main Ave  
San Antonio TX 78212

Due to privacy concerns, and the fact that we are no longer physically present in the detention center due to COVID, our paralegal Mackenzie will collect all of the letters and mail them individually to each family. If you are writing multiple letters please place each letter into a blank envelope and then place all envelopes into one larger package to send together. Don't forget the stamp on each envelope or make a check out to Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid to cover cost of mailing your letter.

