Today’s piece was prepared by Rewa Choudhary, MD, from a NY Times article [A Troubling Prognosis for Migrant Children in Detention: ‘The Earlier They’re Out, the Better’](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/18/health/migrant-children-mental-health.html)

The article addresses the psychological trauma that migrant children held in U.S. detention centers may face in the short and long term. Carey refers to psychological research on institutionalized children that shows that these individuals have an increased risk of anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress and attention-deficit disorder. Children who experience separation from a caregiver may possibly be at lifelong risk of cardiovascular disease and emotional problems. Because of the paucity of public information on how long the approximately 2000 children will be held in detention centers, the conditions of the centers and the resources available to children and families within the institutions, the risk of mental health repercussions for these children is difficult to predict.

The article appropriately relies on medical organizations and experts in child psychology and pediatrics for evidence on this issue, citing the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners and the American Academy of Pediatrics. Carey is successful in maintaining scientific impartiality and balance by focusing on quality pediatric psychological literature. The article does not overreach in its scientific claims, and qualifies the statements about risks that institutionalized children face with an understanding that there is much that is unknown in this field. Medical experts cannot predict how the child migrants currently being held at the border will fare and how this traumatic experience will affect their mental health. The article ends on a somewhat optimistic thought, noting that some children are emotionally resilient enough to recover. Therefore, the lay consumer will grasp the vital message of this article: that children exposed to trauma may have positive health outcomes if provided with the appropriate resources.

**RESOURCE ON TRAUMA TO CHILDREN:**

[The National Child Traumatic Stress Network](https://www.nctsn.org) *U.S. Department of Health and Human Services site with information on trauma and treatments for pediatric professionals*

And that’s today’s Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics: IN THE NEWS!