



Februar 19, 2020

The Honorable Chad F. Wolf  
Acting Secretary of Homeland Security  
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Honorable Chad F. Wolf,

A recent Washington Post report confirmed that the Office of Refugee Resettlement is sharing confidential therapy notes with the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency. These notes were obtained from mandatory treatment with detained migrant children and are being used to deny them asylum. This practice is an abuse of the psychotherapy relationship, but more importantly divergent from the values of our great nation.

While we applaud the effort to provide vital mental health treatment to already traumatized children fleeing abuse, neglect, and violence, the practice of using their private traumas, emotions, and thoughts as a means to deny them safe refuge is unethical, betrays trust, and further degrades, traumatizes, and victimizes these vulnerable youth in your care. This is beyond alarming.

We join with our colleagues at the American Psychological Association, National Social Workers Association, and American Counseling Association to call for an immediate end to this practice. Additionally, we urge the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Health and Human Services, and Congress to investigate its prevalence, and for ICE to release migrants who were denied asylum as a result of this breach of ethical standards.

Sincerely,

William Glover  
President  
American Psychoanalytic Association