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## Undocumented Children in the US

### Shocking numbers:

- There are 1.8 million undocumented children in the United States.
- California has 40% of the undocumented students (this includes all grade levels)
- Each year, 65,000 undocumented children graduate from public U.S. high schools
- Only 1 out of every 20 undocumented high school seniors attend college. This is largely because they have no access to federal aid or in-state tuition, so the cost is insurmountable.

### Health issues:

- The Pew Hispanic Center estimated in 2005 that 59% of the nation's undocumented immigrants are uninsured, compared with 25% of legal immigrants and 14% of U.S. born.
- Researchers found that during the time right after they arrived in the US, Mexican migrants were nearly twice as likely to experience depression or anxiety issues.

### Some of the reasons for these increased mental health issues:

- Failure to succeed in country of origin
- Dangerous border crossings
- Limited resources once in the U.S. (especially in regards to health care)
- Restricted mobility
- Marginalization and isolation
- Blame/stigmatization and guilt/shame
- Vulnerability/exploitability (especially in regards to fair wages)
- Fear and extreme stress about deportation or troubles with the law

### The DREAM Act

- The Development, Relief, and Education of Alien Minors Act, is a bipartisan bill that would give students who grew up in the United States but were not born in the United States a chance to contribute to our country's well-being by serving in the U.S. armed forces or pursuing a higher education. After a lengthy process, the best and brightest qualified students would be able to earn citizenship.

### Benefits:

- It would contribute to our military's recruitment efforts and readiness
- It would make our country more competitive in the global economy by allowing these young people to live up to their fullest potential
- It will have important economic benefits, since the students impacted by the act could add between \$1.4 to \$3.6 trillion in taxable income to our economy over the course of their careers, depending on how many ultimately gain legal status.

*These facts were compiled from Undocuhealth.com, The Pew Hispanic Research Center, The Advocates for Human Rights, Advances in Nursing Journal, Whitehouse.gov and Dreamact.info.*