

THE MENTAL HEALTH IMPACT OF  
IMMIGRATION DETENTION

# CAGED DREAMS

Discussion Guide by Johannes Favi



# SYNOPSIS

“Caged Dreams” details the stories of Johannes Favi, Beatriz Batres, and Felipe Diosdado, who were previously detained in Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) custody and suffered long-lasting trauma due to their incarceration. The goal of the film is to paint a vivid picture of the emotional experience of immigration detention and the deep impacts on a person’s mental health and their loved ones.

Many Americans are shocked to learn that the United States government systematically deprives the liberty of hundreds of thousands of immigrants, refugees, and people seeking asylum, creating a system of immigration detention run by ICE. There are approximately 200 ICE jails across the country – the largest detention system in the world.

# SYNOPSIS

ICE racially profiles and separates people from their loved ones and community every day based on what they look like, the language they speak, and where they work. ICE's record of abuse is well-documented by people detained, immigrant rights advocates and the Department of Homeland Security's own Office of Inspector General.

Johannes Favi, a father of three, was previously detained at the Kankakee Detention Center in Illinois, Beatriz Batres, a mother of three, was detained with her child at the Artesia Family Detention Center in New Mexico in 2014 (now shut down), and Felipe Diosdado, a father of two who has resided in the U.S. for more than two decades, was previously detained at the Dodge Detention Center in Wisconsin after applying for a license at the DMV in his home state of Illinois.

# SYNOPSIS

Together, Johannes, Beatriz, and Felipe are striving to raise awareness of the unspoken trauma people experience and continue to live after their release from immigration detention.

Currently, the number of people in ICE detention is at an all time high under the Biden administration, more than double than when he first took office. Immigration detention as a whole is unnecessary, rife with systemic abuses and completely arbitrary. Rather, people navigating their immigration case should be able to do so with their families and in their community -- not behind bars in immigration detention. For every person has the right to move and live freely, in community and with their family, without fear of being separated from their loved ones or displaced from their home.

This film was created as part of Detention Watch Network's Freedom Fellow project.

# SYNOPSIS

About the Director, Johannes Favi:

Johannes is originally from Benin in West Africa and has been building community in the Midwest in the fight for state legislation to end immigrant detention in Illinois. Johannes is the inaugural Freedom Fellow with Detention Watch Network and also serves as board member for the Illinois Community for Displaced Immigrants in Chicago. He received the 2021 Jeanne and Joseph Sullivan Human Rights Award from the National Immigrant Justice Center.

# WELCOME

The objective of this discussion guide is to facilitate meaningful conversations and reflections on the issues highlighted in the documentary *Caged Dreams*.

This guide intends to:

- Raise awareness about the trauma people experience during and after detention.
- Foster understanding and empathy towards immigrants in detention.
- Spur actions to support and elevate the voices of people detained and end detention.

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# PRE-SCREENING

## DISCUSSION PROMPTS

- What is immigration detention?
- Who operates the immigration detention system and who is responsible for its oversight?
- Who are the target populations affected by immigration detention in the U.S. ?



# INITIAL REACTIONS

## DISCUSSION PROMPTS

- Briefly share your initial reactions to the documentary.
- What scenes or stories stood out to you the most?
- How did your understanding of immigration detention change after seeing the film?



# UNDERSTANDING IMMIGRATION DETENTION

- What were your perceptions of immigration detention before watching the documentary? How have they changed?
- Were you aware of the detention conditions and legal processes that individuals in immigration detention go through ?
- Do you know how immigration detention is funded and who benefits from it ?



# TRAUMA IN IMMIGRATION DETENTION

- How does the trauma experienced in immigration detention affect mental health both short and long-term ?
- How does trauma from detention affect the reintegration process for immigrants upon release or deportation?
- How does detention-related trauma affect families and communities of people detained?



# POLICY AND LEGAL ASPECTS

Communities have pushed for state legislation to end immigrant detention. As of September 2023, seven states have passed state legislation to ban private prisons and/or private immigration detention centers.

- Are there similar efforts in your nearby communities?
- What role can policy change play in ending the horrific and traumatic experiences immigrants face in detention ?
- How can people detained hold the government accountable ?

# ADVOCACY

- What actions can you take to support the rights of immigrants in detention?
- How can communities and organizations contribute to the advocacy for changes in the immigration detention system?
- What are some ways to raise awareness and educate others about the realities of immigration detention?

DATE:

NAME:

# TAKEAWAYS

What are your key takeaways from the documentary and this discussion?

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DATE:

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# TAKEAWAYS

What will you do differently or start doing as a result of watching this documentary and participating in this discussion?

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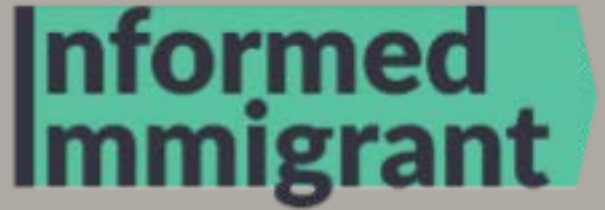
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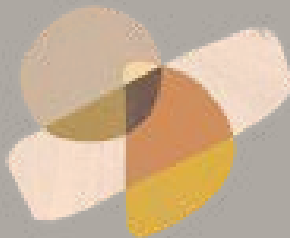
# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



SAMHIN



The  
CENTER for  
VICTIMS of  
TORTURE



AMERICAN  
PSYCHIATRIC  
ASSOCIATION



MHTTC

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network  
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

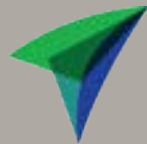




# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



**Black Mental**  
Wellness



**uLink**  
By Servicio UniTeller, Inc.



 **AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION**



**UNHCR**  
The UN Refugee Agency



**Maryland.gov**

ADMINISTRATION FOR  
**CHILDREN & FAMILIES**



SOCIETY OF  
CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY  
DIVISION 12  
American Psychological Association

# KFF

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF  
CHILD & ADOLESCENT  
PSYCHIATRY

WWW.AACAP.ORG



The University of Texas at Austin  
Texas Institute for  
Child & Family Wellbeing  
Steve Hicks School of Social Work



# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Radical Healing, Abolition and Popular Education Resource Guide](#)
- [Illinois Community for Displaced Immigrants Resource Guide](#)
- [Helpful Mental Health Resources For Immigrants](#)
- [Maryland Resources For Immigrants](#)
- [My Undocumented resources for undocumented immigrants](#)
- [Resources, Programs & Services For Immigrants and Refugees](#)
- [Services and Resources for Immigrants](#)
- [Resources to Help Undocumented Families Know Their Rights](#)
- [UNDOCUMENTAL HEALTH](#)
- [Mental health help for undocumented students](#)

# Thank you!

