



## Frequently Asked Questions about Family Separation and Reunification

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### **Does Bethany have experience caring for refugees?**

Yes.

Bethany has been caring for refugees for more than 40 years. While recent events have put this issue into an international spotlight, Bethany has been working with refugees since 1975. Since 2013, Bethany has helped reunify over 5000 refugee children and families.

### **What happens to children who come to the U.S. unaccompanied or are separated from their families?**

Unaccompanied children are minors who have crossed the border without their parents. It's important to note that this was happening before the "zero tolerance" policy. Unaccompanied children are detained by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and transferred to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

Within 72 hours, children are placed in a child-friendly setting. HHS refers children to organizations like Bethany, where they are placed in licensed foster homes.

Children are assigned a treatment team that includes a clinician, case manager, teacher, and their foster family (when available). The treatment team assesses the needs of the child, and evaluates identified family members.

The treatment team recommends placement of that child to HHS and when approved, we proceed with reunification.

The process for reunifying separated children with their families is similar; however, it may be more challenging to find family members who able to provide care if the primary caregivers are in detention. As separated children are reunified with family, we believe it is important to respect the rights of parents and children to select their preferred reunification plan.

### **What will happen to the separated children who are currently in Bethany's care?**

We will not rest until every separated child in Bethany's care is safely reunified with family. Our mission has always been, and will always be, to keep and bring families together.

### **How many separated children is Bethany caring for?**

The number of refugee children that Bethany cares for fluctuates daily. Bethany has provided services for refugee children for more than 20 years, helping reunify more than 5,000 refugee children and families since 2013.

### **Does Bethany support reunification?**

Yes.

As an organization determined to keep families together, we believe children belong with their families.

We raised our voices to bring attention to the plight of separated children through the media and in Washington, D.C. You can read more about our efforts [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#). We are working with the government to help develop rapid reunification plans for all separated children, not just those in Bethany's care, and to provide alternatives to jail for refugee children and families.

### **How will reunification work?**

We have been informed by HHS that separated children will be reunified with their families and are working with HHS to ensure children are safely reunified with families. You can [learn more](#) about family reunification from HHS.

### **Is Bethany preventing reunification?**

No.

We will not rest until every separated child in our care is reunified with their family. More than one-third of the separated children in our care have already been reunified with family. We are working nonstop with HHS on reunification efforts.

### **Have separated children had contact with their families?**

Yes.

We make every effort for children to communicate with their families by phone. Many children speak to family several times per week but it depends on the varying policies of each detention center where their parents are held.

### **Why does reunification take so long?**

We continue to work closely with HHS to ensure children are safely reunified with families. There are a variety of factors related to the time it takes to reunite children separated from their families including if parents are detained, the availability of other close relatives to care for the children, and verifying the relationship. More information on family reunification can be found on the [HHS](#) website.

**How many children have reunified?**

One hundred percent of children under the age of 5 who were separated during the “zero tolerance” policy that were in Bethany’s care have been reunited with their parents or have travel arrangements for reunification.

Nearly half of the children separated during the “zero tolerance” policy in Bethany’s care have already been reunified with family. We will not rest until every child in our care is reunified with family.

**Why can't you say where the children are staying?**

Due to legal restrictions and safety concerns surrounding these children and their families, we are not able to disclose the location of foster homes.

**Does Bethany plan to put separated children up for adoption?**

No, they will not be adopted. These children have families, and we will continue to pursue reunification with their families. Our top priority is reunifying refugee children with their families of origin.

**Does Bethany Christian Services “sell” children?**

No.

We believe every child deserves a loving family, and our first priority is keeping families together.

**Is Bethany evangelizing to the children?**

No. Children may participate in any religious activity they choose. Our faith drives us to care for children and families in need.

**Is Bethany a political organization?**

No.

While Bethany employees and board members hold a diverse array of personal political perspectives, our shared passion is keeping and bringing families together. Our desire is to serve vulnerable children and struggling families, work with people and organizations across the political spectrum to achieve this goal.

**Do large donors own Bethany Christian Services?**

No.

As a nonprofit organization, Bethany Christian Services has no owner. We have a vast donor base from around the country. You can view our financial statements in our [annual report here](#).

### **Who owns Bethany Christian Services?**

Bethany Christian Services is a nonprofit organization that brings and keeps families together. Bethany is run by a national board of directors who help serve children and families faithfully through leadership, governance, and approving policies. The list of board members can be found [here](#).

### **What is Betsy DeVos' relationship with Bethany?**

Betsy DeVos and the DeVos Family Foundation have been generous supporters of Bethany Christian Services long before Betsy became the Secretary of Education and we are forever grateful for their continued support. While we are extremely grateful to our thousands of donors and supporters from across the country, the idea that any single individual or organization could cause us to change practices is simply false and diminishes the incredible work of all those firmly focused on the well-being of displaced children.

### **What is Brian DeVos' relationship to the organization? Is he a primary reason why Bethany is awarded contracts with the federal government?**

Brian DeVos departed Bethany Christian Services earlier this year to pursue other interests. We are grateful for his commitment to vulnerable children and families during his time with the organization. Our partnership with the federal government to support vulnerable children and families has been part of our 75 year history, long before Brian DeVos was an employee.

### **Has Bethany profited from the government separating children from their families?**

No.

Bethany generates revenue for services it provides to children and families in need from a variety of sources including individuals, foundations, grants and the government, but as a 501c3 nonprofit organization, our revenue covers expenses, not profit.

You can view our financial statements in our [annual report here](#).

### **How much money is Bethany paid for each refugee child in its care?**

Bethany receives approximately \$200 per day (exact amounts vary) to care for refugee children. These funds provide a trauma support team for each child, including a clinician, case manager, trauma-informed teacher and education services staff, and foster family. The cost of caring for unaccompanied children in foster homes is about one-third the reported cost of providing a bed for a child in a tent city on a military base.

**Does Bethany Christian Services profit for its efforts in supporting separated children?**

No.

Bethany does receive funding to support our work with unaccompanied and separated children based on the services these children need, including a clinician, case manager, trauma-informed teacher, and foster family to provide trauma support. This is critical because these children have been traumatically separated from their families and are at significant risk for long-term harm. Additionally, the funds are used to provide essential supplies to the child during their stay with the foster family, including food, clothing, and other materials, as needed. The specific amount of funding varies based on circumstances, but the care provided by Bethany is significantly more affordable than placing children in detention facilities.

**If there is a surplus from these funds, where does that money go?**

Surplus donations are used to support future unaccompanied children in Bethany's care.

**How many children separated from asylum seeking families are in the custody/care of Bethany?**

As Bethany works with HHS on reunification of children with parents and family, the number of separated children in our care is constantly changing.

**What is the age range of children in Bethany's care?**

The current average age of children in Bethany's care is 7 to 9 years old.

**Can you share how much top execs at the organization make in annual bonuses?**

Our focus is on vulnerable children and families and doing what is necessary to reunite EVERY child with their family. Information and salaries for Bethany executives is available in our 990 Form.

**Is DNA testing being conducted on children and parents? If so, who is responsible for conducting such tests?**

We have provided all requested information to HHS to expediate reunification. The requested information may vary depending on the child and the family's unique situation. Further questions on this process can be directed to HHS.