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THE NATIONAL FOSTER PARENT ASSOCIATION CALLS FOR IMMEDIATE PLANNING TO CONVENE A WHITE HOUSE SUMMIT TO END AND TREAT CHILDHOOD TRAUMA CAUSED BY SEPARATION FROM FAMILIES

ORLANDO, FLORIDA, June 26, 2018 – The National Foster Parent Association (NFPA) today issued a call to action to all lawmakers to intervene and stop the deplorable and inhumane treatment of immigrant children being separated from their families at our borders and find and support relatives or foster parents trained in trauma-informed care.

“Professionals must be brought in to help the adults with whom they are now living help the children manage the feelings and behaviors resulting from these horrific experiences. The abusive actions inflicted on these children by government policy are well documented to impair brain and social development of children and leave lifetime scars. We must have a zero tolerance for harming children. We must find and support relatives and foster parents who are skilled and supported to provide round-the-clock safe and nurturing care,” explained Irene Clements, Executive Director who has cared for over 100 infants, children, and young people.

Further, incoming NFPA President, Karen Poteet stated, “But we cannot stop there. We must also address the needs of over 600,000 children who have been separated from parents and are in the child welfare system. This includes 110,000 children who go missing each year from our own foster care system or run away. Many children worry about losing their parents, for these children their worst fears have come true. Our country must take a research-based approach to ending childhood trauma, period. We must be a country that protects all children in our borders, whoever they are.”

The National Foster Parent Association is calling for immediate planning to convene a White House Summit to End and Treat Childhood Trauma caused by separation from family, whether resulting from immigration policies, the opioid crisis, physical or sexual abuse, parental imprisonment or institutionalization, exploitation, abandonment or even when parents are the heroes who are leaving children through military deployment.

In a statement released today, the NFPA is drawing attention to the traumatic histories being inflicted on children not only through immigration policies that treat these children and their families as criminals, but also the lack of swift and decisive action on ending the opioid crisis that leads thousands of children to the underfunded and over stressed foster care system. We have the knowledge and resources in this country to begin to heal the trauma of family separation. We just need the will to provide a safe, nurturing childhood for those who one day will be deciding our future.

About the National Foster Parent Association

The vision of the National Foster Parent Association is to have families and communities in which there is no child abuse and neglect and no unnecessary separation of children and parents. The National Foster Parent Association is a non-profit, volunteer organization established in 1972 because of the concerns of several independent groups that felt the country needed a national organization to meet the needs of foster families in the United States with a focus on education, networking, and advocacy. The NFPA is the respected national voice for foster parents, relative caregivers, and adoptive parents. To help achieve this mission, the Association provides resources through its website and holds an annual education conference to promote best practices. For more information, visit www.NFPAonline.org.

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