



GUIDE

WORLD CHILDREN'S DAY ACTION

SHOWING SOLIDARITY AROUND THE WORLD WITH CHILDREN SEEKING SAFETY

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Every year, tens of thousands of children travel alone or with family to the U.S. southern border seeking safety from horrific violence or persecution. They come in search of asylum or other forms of protection. The majority are from Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador, but they also come from Africa, South Asia, Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and elsewhere.

Unaccompanied children are who apprehended by immigration authorities at the U.S. border may initially be detained at a Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) facility for up to 72 hours before being transferred to a facility overseen by the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). Children are detained for weeks, even months, in these ORR facilities, when they have families or other sponsors waiting to welcome them.

In July 2019, Amnesty International released a [report](#) that found the U.S. government violated the rights

of unaccompanied children seeking asylum in the U.S., holding them in prolonged and indefinite detention at the “temporary influx” facility in Homestead, Florida, USA. Between March 2018 and August 2019, over 14,300 children were held at Homestead.

In October 2019, Amnesty International released a [briefing](#) exposing how Comprehensive Health Services (CHS), the private contractor operating Homestead, is contributing to the U.S. government’s violation of these children’ rights. By running the center and providing core services, the for-profit company is enabling the government to detain children at Homestead. CHS is a subsidiary of Caliburn International, LLC (Caliburn), and its current contract is up on 30 November 2019. In late October, it was reported that the U.S. government is not renewing its contract with CHS. However, the U.S. government is seeking to keep the facility on “warm status” in 2020 to be able to detain kids again.



AIUSA continues to call on the U.S. government to [close](#) the Homestead facility permanently, to stop the protracted use of temporary influx facilities such as Homestead, and to stop the detention of children on account of their immigration status. It is never in the best interests of the child to be detained. If detention is necessary in exceptional circumstances, children should be placed for the shortest period of time possible in small-size, state-licensed, permanent ORR shelters while they are reunited with their families in the US or matched with other appropriate sponsors.

AIUSA is also urging companies to not contract with the U.S. government to operate this facility. AIUSA considers that, because of the circumstances of the situation at Homestead and the number of years that the U.S. government had been holding children there in prolonged and indefinite detention, it would not be possible for any company to operate this center without contributing to the U.S. government's violations of the human rights of children at Homestead.

WHAT ARE WE DOING?

On 20 November 2019, World Children's Day, Amnesty International activists around the world will drop banners in solidarity with children seeking safety.

What does it mean to drop a banner? A banner drop or banner hang is the act of placing a banner in a public space as a form of protest that raises awareness and signals to our elected leaders and campaign targets our concerns. It's a powerful and effective strategy used to relay a clear and succinct message to reach many people in your community.

HOW DO WE DO A BANNER DROP?

Before you get started

Do not delay as this could take time:

**FAMILIES BELONG
TOGETHER AND FREE.**

Amnesty International



**CHILDREN DESERVE
SAFETY AND FREEDOM.**

Amnesty International



- 1 Reach out to refugees@aiusa.org and sign up for the action to get your banner drop kit!
- 2 Banner drops vary in legality depending on where you choose to make the drop. Here are some guidelines for Amnesty International members to follow:
 - Decide where to drop your banner: Scout locations with high foot traffic and high visibility such as:
 - At city hall
 - Your school
 - In a park
 - Outside a church
 - Possibilities are endless
 - Just make sure it's safe, both for yourself, and for others in the event it gets dislodged. Determine ownership/control of site of banner drop including both the spot from which it will be hung, and area(s) it will cover/obscure/block/interfere with, if any.
 - Check to see if any type of permit (governmental) or permission (private ownership) is required for accessing the site from which the banner is dropped and/or for a demonstration, parade or any other type of public gathering (either stationary or moving) and apply for/obtain such permit/permission. Comply with the terms of any such permit/permission (including any restrictions as to location, duration, number of participants, etc.) and provide copies to all participants.

Questions you might ask:

- Do we need a permit?
- How do we obtain the permit?
- What restrictions are there to the permit?
- Is there an application wait time?

- In the absence of any needed permission/permit (especially if it was specifically denied), be prepared to be asked/ordered to leave the location and to take the banner, and promptly to do so – unless you are willing to face possible summons/arrest and have cleared with the appropriate AIUSA personnel the approval of the organization to put yourself, and the organization, at risk of this occurrence.

Planning

- 3 Decide how you want it to be displayed:
 - Will it be horizontal or vertical? Be aware that if it's too wide, it could be harder to get all in one frame for a photo or video.
 - How will you attach and secure it? Could weather be an issue?
- 4 The banner drop action is for 20 November 2019. Plan accordingly!
 - Friendly reminder to factor in permit application waiting periods in your planning.
 - Engage people in your community in the action. Invite others to join you, including friends, family, neighbors, fellow advocates, and other local organizations or groups who are aligned with the action's mission and values.

Making the banner

Get creative and have fun!

- 5 **Materials:** you will see included in our banner drop kit that we have sent you the following materials:
 - 4 x 8' cotton banner with AI logo in the corner
 - Yellow, red, and black paint & paintbrushes (see [here](#) tips on how to use them)
 - Stencils A-Z and of the AI logo
 - Cord to hang up your banner

While these materials are for you to create a banner, please feel free to purchase and use your own if you're able to. You can use a bedsheet, etc. instead of our cotton banner if you want something bigger than 4 x 8'. Given the 4 x 8' size of the banners we provide, you may want to purchase more paint if the paint we provided is not enough. And if you choose to drop your banner instead of hanging it, consider using a heavy weight to hold down the banner.

- 6 Write **ONLY** one of the following messages and decorate the banner:
 - Children deserve safety and freedom
 - Families belong together and free
 - #SayNoToHomestead
 - Do not contract to operate Homestead
 - Don't be in the business of holding kids in prolonged and indefinite detention

Make sure to run your final planned message by refugees@aiusa.org.

Hanging the banner

- 7 Hang or drop your banner at the location you previously designated either with the cord or heavy weight. Make sure to have your permit or permission for the banner drop at your designated location, if needed.

Promote your action

- 8 Enlist someone to take photos and record a video of your group working on, hanging up, and in front of the banner.
- 9 Share your action on social media using the hashtags #IWelcome or #SayNoToHomestead depending on your banner's message, and tagging @amnestyusa so we can amplify on our channel. Please note: do not use other hashtags or stray from the messaging in #6 in the tweets themselves.
- 10 Send any photos and videos to your field organizer and refugees@aiusa.org.

Closing out the banner drop

- 11 Hold onto and store your banner somewhere safe, for when your field organizer contacts you with any future actions or mobilizations that would benefit from having your banner. If you do not wish to keep it, please consider mailing it to our DC headquarters (we can support with mail costs) at:

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