

# Deportation risk increases food insecurity

September 29 2016

---

Nearly 3.5 million children of Mexican descent live with an unauthorized immigrant parent; the vast majority of these children are U.S. born citizens, according to data from the Pew Hispanic Center. Researchers from the University of Missouri have found that local immigration enforcement policies that seek to apprehend and deport adults, can increase food insecurity risks for Mexican non-citizen households with children. Stephanie Potochnick, assistant professor in the Truman School of Public Affairs, says that any immigration policy that seeks to deport adults must have support systems, such as access to food stamps, in place to help improve outcomes for the children left behind.

"This research provides the first national-level evidence that local immigration laws negatively influence the health and well-being of immigrant families, specifically Mexican non-citizen families," Potochnick said. "Evidence suggests that local-level immigration enforcement can generate fear and reduce social service use among Hispanic immigrant families who often live in the shadows, making it difficult to understand the health impacts of such policies."

Potochnick and her team analyzed data from a nationally representative dataset, which included Mexican non-citizen households with children. They found that a locally enforced deportation program was positively associated with food insecurity risk among Mexican non-citizen households with children; those households were 10 percentage points more likely to experience food insecurity than their peers living in communities without the deportation program.

"Approximately 30 percent of Mexican non-citizen households in our sample already experience high levels of food insecurity, so an increase of 10 percentage points is a significant change to their health," Potochnick said. "As long as immigration policies aim to deport adults, policymakers need to understand that there are consequences for the citizen children left behind."

"Local-level immigration enforcement and [food insecurity](#) risk among Hispanic immigrant families with children: national-level evidence," recently was published in the *Journal of Immigrant Minority Health*.

**More information:** Stephanie Potochnick et al. Local-Level Immigration Enforcement and Food Insecurity Risk among Hispanic Immigrant Families with Children: National-Level Evidence, *Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health* (2016). [DOI: 10.1007/s10903-016-0464-5](#)

Provided by University of Missouri-Columbia

Citation: Deportation risk increases food insecurity (2016, September 29) retrieved 22 June 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2016-09-deportation-food-insecurity.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.