

Policy Statement

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Separation of Children From Family/Guardians

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Separation of Children From Family/Guardians



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The American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) opposes the practice of forced separation of children from their family/guardians in the absence of risks to the child's well-being.

- The risks to the child of remaining with family/guardians must be serious, imminent, and clearly identified.
- Established legal and administrative procedures for separation from family/guardians must be applied consistently and justly.
- If separation is determined to be necessary, it must be for the briefest duration and in the least restrictive manner possible.

- A process for reunification with family/guardians, placement of the child with other family caregivers, or other permanent solution must be outlined in advance of the physical separation.
- Sick or injured children should receive timely and appropriate medical evaluation and treatment when indicated.
- The care of the child in custody must meet recognized humane standards and be clearly documented for each case.

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