

37th LD Resolution Recognizing June as Stolen Children's Month

WHEREAS, the forced separation of families through the so-called “child welfare” system (family policing system), foster system and adoption practices, immigration enforcement, incarceration, and institutionalization has disproportionately harmed Black, Latine, Indigenous, immigrant, and other marginalized communities; and

WHEREAS, forced family separation is rooted in structural racism and the legacies of slavery, genocide, and colonization; and

WHEREAS, millions of children have been removed from their families and placed into the foster system, Indigenous boarding schools, youth prisons¹, immigration detention facilities, and other institutions—severing bonds with parents, siblings, and communities that sustain their well-being; and

WHEREAS, these separations do not provide safety, stability, or healing, and instead expose children to long-term trauma, and heightened risks of homelessness, incarceration, trafficking, and rehoming; and

WHEREAS, once separated, children are vulnerable to abuse, neglect, and further state-perpetuated harm; and

WHEREAS, dominant narratives about family separation—shaped by racism and classism—have historically excluded the voices of those most directly impacted, erasing the grief of parents forced to live without their children and silencing the truths of youth and kin who have survived these systems; and

¹ See, e.g., Prison Policy Initiative, “Washington State Profile,” Prison Policy Initiative, accessed Sept. 12, 2025, <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/profiles/WA.html> (noting, “Washington State has an incarceration rate of 373 per 100,000 people (including prisons, jails, immigration detention, and juvenile justice facilities), meaning that it locks up a higher percentage of its people than almost any democratic country on earth.”); Washington State Department of Children, Youth & Families, “Disproportionality & Disparity in Child Welfare Dashboard,” accessed Sept. 12, 2025, <https://dcyf.wa.gov/practice/oiaa/agency-performance/racial-equity/disproportionality-disparity-cw> (noting that statewide, Black/African American children and American Indian/Alaska Native children have are overrepresented compared to their representation in the underlying population at nearly every stage of the family policing system); Shana Lombard, “Washington works to reconcile its history of Indigenous boarding schools,” High Country News (Dec. 12, 2023), <https://www.hcn.org/articles/indigenous-affairs-washington-works-to-reconcile-its-history-of-indigenous-boarding-schools/> (noting that Washington State was home to at least 17 Native boarding schools).

WHEREAS, forced family separation is an act of state violence and should never be considered an appropriate response to poverty, disability, or systemic neglect; and

WHEREAS, children, parents, and kin who have survived the foster system, adoption, youth incarceration, immigration detention, and deportation must have their voices centered in efforts toward truth, healing, and systemic transformation; and

WHEREAS, the state does not prioritize funding for community-led restorative justice programs to enable healing from the harms of family separation, nor does it prioritize providing material resources to families as a form of accountability for state violence; and

WHEREAS, [Stolen Children's Month](#) is a national community-led campaign, founded by a Washington State resident, to honor the children stolen and the families harmed by forced separation, to uplift survivor voices, and to demand urgent changes to laws and policies that uphold family destruction; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the **37th Legislative District Democrats** recognize the month of June as [Stolen Children's Month](#), and call upon the Washington State Democratic Central Committee (WSDCC) to do the same; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the 37th Legislative District Democrats transmit copies of this resolution to and call on the Governor of Washington, the Washington State Senate, the Washington State House of Representatives, and local governments throughout the state to proclaim June as **Stolen Children's Month**.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the 37th Legislative District Democrats call on Washington State to:

- Acknowledge our collective responsibility to end of forced family separation in all of its forms;
- Listen to, uplift, and center Black, Latine, and Indigenous people with lived experience to ensure truthful narratives about the devastating impacts of family separation;
- Be guided by the leadership of directly impacted parents, youth, and kin in developing and implementing laws, policies, and practices that protect the unity, integrity, and dignity of all families;
- Support and fund Healing Circles and survivor-led programs that provide reconciliation, repair, and pathways to healing for families separated by state systems;
- Ensure that legislators, advocates, and service providers receive education on family policing, systemic racism, and abolition frameworks so that policies are informed by lived experience and grounded in justice; and