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## **SNEB Issues Statement Denouncing Involuntary Separation of Immigrant and Refugee Infants and Minor Children from their Families**

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (October 30, 2018) – The Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior (SNEB) denounces the involuntary separation of immigrant/refugee infants and immigrant/refugee minor children from their families and cites this practice as contributing to immediate and future harmful impacts on eating attitudes and behaviors.

“Childhood, especially for preschool age youth, is a vital stage for obtaining optimal nutrition, learning to accept and like a variety of foods, becoming aware of hunger and satiety cues, and trusting caregivers to reliably provide safe, nourishing, and adequate food in amounts that they can enjoy and derive comfort,” said SNEB member Barbara Lohse, PhD, RD, CDN, Wegmans School of Health and Nutrition, Rochester Institute of Technology. “Involuntary separation of minor immigrant/refugee children from their families from trusted adults leads to psychological and physical trauma including, but not limited to, trauma that can impact nutrition, food acceptance and development of food aversions. This can lead to disordered eating behaviors including compulsive eating or restriction that can be long lasting and threaten health and quality of life.”

SNEB President Jennifer McCaffrey, PhD, MPH, RD, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign added, “SNEB strives for healthy communities, food systems and behaviors and promotes healthy behavior through policy and practice. Therefore, the practice of involuntary separation of immigrant/refugee infants and minor immigrant/refugee children from their families is a direct affront to SNEB’s vision and mission.”

Members who joined Lohse in preparing this statement include Virginia Stage, PhD, RD, LDN, East Carolina University; Joan Dye Gussow, EdD; Leslie Cunningham-Sabo, PhD, RD, Colorado State University; and Claire Uno, MLIS, Laurie M. Tisch Center for Food, Education & Policy. Members of SNEB’s Advisory Committee on Public Policy also contributed to the development of this statement.

SNEB members with expertise on healthy eating behaviors are available to comment. To schedule an interview, please contact Kayla Jenkins at 317-328-4627 or [kjenkins@sneb.org](mailto:kjenkins@sneb.org).

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### **ABOUT THE SOCIETY FOR NUTRITION EDUCATION AND BEHAVIOR**

The Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior is an international organization of nutrition education professionals who are dedicated to a world where nutrition education is accessible to all and is integral to decisions impacting individual human health, health policy, and environmental sustainability. To learn more, visit [www.sneb.org](http://www.sneb.org).

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