

Separated families – call for children’s drawings

The [Refugee Family Reunification Project](#) is looking for drawings done by children who are separated from one or both parents, as part of our [campaign to support faster refugee family reunification](#). Thousands of children are experiencing years of separation: as of April 2024, close to 42,000 refugee family members were waiting abroad for reunification in Canada – many of those family members are children.

We believe sharing children’s drawings will help to raise awareness among politicians and the general public about the human lives impacted by the extraordinarily long delays, particularly the children affected, who – we can all agree – deserve to be with their parents. We hope this will help build momentum for a policy to issue Temporary Residence Permits so that children of refugees can be quickly reunited with their parents in Canada.

Our plan

- Over the summer 2025, we hope to collect a series of children's drawings, with a short text to accompany each drawing, giving some personal (but not identifying) information about the child.
- In September 2025, we will prepare a booklet presenting, in a visually attractive way, a selection of the drawings (with the accompanying text) and the advocacy call.
- In fall 2025, we plan to invite organizations and individuals to use the booklet (either electronically, or by printing copies) in conversations with Members of Parliament, other government representatives and potential allies.

If there is interest, and offers to partner with us, the drawings could also be used to develop:

- Small local exhibitions, for example in a public space or in an organization’s reception area
- Greeting cards, to share with politicians or potential allies, for example in a campaign at the holiday season

Can you help?

We are looking for organizations, lawyers and others to help us reach families who might be willing to share children’s drawings for this project. The following two pages outline the request to families. Note that we are anxious to ensure that no one (parent or child) feels pressured to participate – so we have added a couple of other options for participation.

Questions or suggestions? Contact us at reunification@mailbox.org

Promoting faster refugee family reunification

Children's Art Project: invitation to refugee families

The Refugee Family Reunification Project is requesting drawings done by minor children (under 18 years) who are separated from one or both parents, as part of our [campaign to support faster refugee family reunification](#). The Refugee Family Reunification Project is a Canadian volunteer-run organization working to address gaps related to family reunification for refugees.

Through the Children's Art Project, we plan to present selected drawings in a short document and online to raise awareness of the impact of separation on families, especially on children. The drawings might also be presented in a virtual or physical exhibition.

How it will work

- Separated families* submit one or more drawings created by a child (or by several children). These could be drawings done at any time since the separation. The drawings can be of any subject – they don't need to be about their family.
- Families should also submit brief information about the child such as the age, which parent the child is separated from and for how long and a small detail about the impact of separation or the circumstances for the child and other family members they are with.
- The Project will select drawings from among those submitted and will contact the families whose drawings have been chosen in order to:
 - o Request consent to publish the drawing
 - o Get a high resolution image of the drawing
 - o Finalize the text to accompany the drawing (we will not publish any information that would allow the family to be identified)

Please send any drawings with text and contact information to reunification@mailbox.org.

We will not publish any drawings submitted without first confirming the family gives permission, having received full information about how they will be presented.

Deadline: 30 August 2025

* We are interested in drawings from children where:

- One or both parents have been accepted as refugees in the refugee determination system in Canada (and are thus Protected Persons)
- The parent has submitted an application for Permanent Residence, including the child, and the application is still in process.
- A child under 18 years is separated from one or both parents (for example, the child is overseas with one parent and they are waiting to reunite in Canada with the other parent)

Example drawing



Jazmin from Venezuela is 6 years old and has been separated from her dad Daniel since 2022. The family has suffered multiple displacements – Daniel is in Canada, while Jazmin, her mother and siblings are now in a third country, waiting to join Daniel. Jazmin captioned her picture "I love you, Daddy".

Other ways to get involved

There are other ways to participate in the campaign for faster family reunification:

- Visit your local Member of Parliament to ask for faster refugee family reunification – there are tools to help you do this at <https://refugeefamilyreunification.ca/en/advocacy/take-action>
- Write to us about your family's experiences of separation if you would like us to share some of your story anonymously on the website to raise awareness: reunification@mailbox.org
- Contact the Refugee Family Reunification Project if you want to get involved in other ways: reunification@mailbox.org