



DNA Bridge
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DNA Bridge published a DNA-led database strategy for Central American migrant family reunifications



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- As of April 2024, for **446 children**, the parents' contact information is unknown.*
- DNA is not used to identify unknown relationships for these cases
- DNA testing has only been used to verify claimed relationships

*Source: <https://www.dhs.gov/publication/family-reunification-task-force-progress-reports>

Six years since **>5,000 children** were separated by the Zero Tolerance policy in 2017-2018, at least 1,400 children remain separated

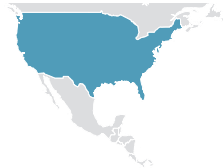
Not using DNA technology can unnecessarily prolong separations

DNA Bridge developed and published this strategy to provide safeguards to assist family reunifications of children separated by the Zero Tolerance policy



Barnert E. Katsanis
SH, *et al*, *Science*
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Migrant children separated from families



Third-party reunification team

- Coordinates logs of outreach
- Manages mouth swab collections
- Coordinates NGO connections

Adults separated from migrant children



United States–based NGOs/ legal representatives

- Coordinates location of children
- Hold keys to names/locations



Central American–based NGOs/legal representatives

- Coordinates location of adults
- Hold keys to names/locations

STR/rapid DNA analysis

Deidentified mouth swabs

Anonymous DNA data

STR/rapid DNA analysis

Deidentified mouth swabs

Anonymous DNA data

Intergovernmental organization

Children STR database



- Manages deidentified DNA data comparisons
- Retains deidentified DNA swabs for additional analysis, as needed
- Communicates matches to third-party team
- Removes from database DNA data from verified matches and destroys swabs

Adult STR database



Third-party team

- Notifies U.S. NGO of match to child
- Connects to Central American NGO/legal representative who can work with advocates for trauma-informed reunification



- Notifies Central American NGO of match to adult
- Connects to U.S. NGO/legal representative who can work with advocates for trauma-informed reunification

Graphic: N.Cary/Science