President Trump has now signed an Executive Order stopping family separation at the U.S. border. **Sadly, the damage is done.**

Like a scene and soundtrack from a dystopian movie, we saw screaming children ripped from their parents’ arms and heard sobs from inside child-filled cages. One cannot help but be haunted by these sights and sounds.

This is certainly about immigration and border security. But, this is more significantly about families. And most especially, this is about children and the lifelong emotional wounds that they will be left with because of the trauma of this cruel policy.

We often say that children are resilient. It’s true. But resilience does not mean you are not forever changed. You might survive trauma, but you are never the same person.

For children, the impact of trauma is life changing. Besides emotional challenges like fear and anxiety and the inability to trust, trauma impacts the brain in such a way as to interfere with learning and academic achievement. By traumatizing these children, we have stunted not only their emotional growth but their academic growth and thus, access to a lifetime of economic opportunities that require academic success.

In its publication, "Essentials for Childhood Framework" the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) explains: “Young children experience their world through their relationships with parents and other caregivers. Safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments between children and their caregivers provide a buffer against the effects of potential stressors... and are fundamental to healthy brain development. They also shape the development of children’s physical, emotional, social, behavioral, and intellectual capacities, which ultimately affect their health as adults.”

Many of these children will remain in this country. They will become Americans. But by inflicting this trauma we have compromised their full access to the American Dream at the threshold — or more precisely — at the border. And we as a country will experience the effects of these traumatic events in the decades to come.

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