

FAMILIES TOGETHER

Schools Speak Out
September 2023

ACTION GUIDE

Imagine fleeing war and having to leave your mum, dad, brother or sister behind during your escape. Finally you reach safety in the UK and your application for asylum is eventually granted.

But your family are still in danger. The rules in the UK mean they are unable to join you. You worry about them all the time. If you are a child under 18 you are placed in care instead of living with your parents, brothers and sisters. The uncertainty and stress this causes means it's difficult to properly rebuild your life.

The Families Together campaign calls on the government to change the rules to make it easier for refugee families to be reunited safely in the UK. The COVID-19 pandemic showed us how important family ties are for our wellbeing. Refugee families should not be separated.

What Can You Do?

This action guide outlines what you can do to campaign for a change in the rules keeping refugee families apart.

1. Learn, and then teach others about Refugee Family Reunion - page 2

2. Collect Families Together postcards or jigsaw messages to send to your MP
- pages 2 & 3

3. Meet or write to your MP to hand in your school's messages and call for change - page 3



Photo: Marie-Anne Ventoura / Amnesty International UK

You may submit this campaign for the LEARN, EMBED or SHARE criteria of the Schools of Sanctuary Award.

Oxfam's guide to developing youth leadership in school is [here](#)



UK law is keeping vulnerable child refugees away from their parents. You have the power to change this. Fix the rules and bring families together.

1. Learn, and then teach others about Refugee Family Reunion

Use the PowerPoint presentation and the workshop activity to learn more about the Families Together campaign. Then strengthen your learning and develop your confidence by teaching others.

- In school you could adapt the script of the presentation so it's in your own words, and present it to an assembly or to your class.
- In school you could lead the 'How does the law affect refugees' workshop.
- At home you could discuss the presentation with your parents or brothers and sisters. Can you explain the key points in 5 minutes, or in 1 minute?
- At home you could complete the activities in the 'How does the law affect refugees' workshop and take notes to prepare for writing a message to your MP.

2. Collect Families Together messages to send to your MP.

Aim to inspire and organise as many young people as possible at your school to write Families Together messages to send to your MP.

There is an online 'postcard' template and a jigsaw template to download, print and use. Make sure the young people who write messages understand the Families Together campaign and write their messages thoughtfully and respectfully. Follow your school's safeguarding and privacy policies. For example, ask young people to only write their first name and age on their messages.



How to organise your campaign

First think about how and from whom you will collect messages. You should also think about the different opportunities available to you and which are best - eg: assemblies, PSHE lessons etc.

For example, you could plan to present your campaign in an assembly and then hold a stall at lunchtimes to collect postcard or jigsaw messages. Ask your teacher for help to decide what's best.

Next think how you'll explain the Families Together campaign to your school community. Activity 1 should help you to do this well. Young people who write a message to your MP complete the following statement.

I am calling on the UK Government to keep refugee families together because...

Help young people to write powerful and persuasive messages

3. Send the messages to your MP

Once you have collected completed messages, think about how to hand them in to your MP.

- Find your MP's contact details by entering your school's postcode [here](#)

Oxfam has a school guide to organising a meeting with your MP [here](#).
- Amend the downloadable cover letter to tell your MP about your campaign.
- Ask to meet your MP to discuss your campaign and ask them to support refugee family reunion. If your MP is not available to meet, send them your messages with the covering letter.
- Ask your teacher to help with spreading the word on school social media. Use @oxfamcampaigns and #FamiliesTogether
- Let Oxfam know how you get on and ask us if you need help or have questions.

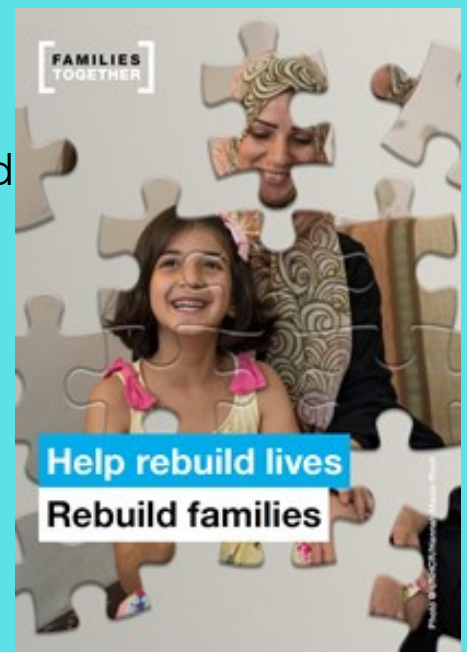


Photo: [Wikimedia Commons](#)



Dear Prime Minister,

Children need their

families.

Please reunite

them.

**FAMILIES
TOGETHER**

DO WHAT'S RIGHT

UK law is keeping vulnerable child refugees away from their parents.
You have the power to change this. Fix the rules and bring families together.