



**PEACE AND JUSTICE NETWORK**

**Presbytery of Grand Canyon**

## **Together, We Can Ensure Children Are Not Alone at Immigration Proceedings (February, 2022)**

In 2021, the Young Center helped more than 1,500 immigrant children. Executive Director Gladis Molina told the story of one of these young people. Julia\* arrived in the United States and was taken into protective custody while pregnant and with a toddler. Because she was 17, Julia was at risk of being moved to adult immigration jail on her 18th birthday and being separated from her baby. Before her quickly approaching birthday, Young Center advocates persuaded the government to release Julia and her baby to her father. They also helped Julia's father prepare for her arrival and upcoming medical and parental needs. (\*Child's name changed to protect her privacy)

The Young Center addresses access to justice by advocating for the best interests of children who are from all over the world—Central America, Mexico, Guinea, Ethiopia, India, China—to ensure they are recognized as children with rights and protection needs all their own.

Founded in Chicago in 2004, today the Young Center has offices in Houston, San Antonio, Phoenix, Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., New York, Harlingen, and Chicago. The children served by the Young Center are those considered the most vulnerable, for example, children who have been abused, infants who are the subject of international custody battles, children who have developmental disabilities, young girls who want to live with their traffickers, those who have lost their parents to violence, and more. You can learn more about the work of the Young Center at [www.theyoungcenter.org](http://www.theyoungcenter.org).