Increasing numbers of unaccompanied children are migrating to the United States. They have significant needs related to their legal rights, physical and mental health, and education. While many organizations are involved in the custody, care and monitoring of these children, no one organization is primarily responsible for the care and monitoring of these children.

Unaccompanied Minors have been the victims of many traumas. Frequent and/or continuous trauma is often the precipitating factor for migrating to the United States. Many children may also be traumatized by the process of migrating to the United States. The effects of these traumas can be exacerbated by the child’s developmental status and predisposition.

The Society for Developmental Behavioral Pediatrics advocates for practices and procedures that will support the needs of these children:

- Recognition of Unaccompanied Minors as refugees, thus providing them the rights of refugees
- Identification of a single organization to be responsible for the monitoring of these children over time
- Provision of a Guardian who has the legal rights to consent to treatment for these children
- Granting of Medicaid coverage to ensure health care access
- Access to immediate education services. Many children do not have and cannot access documentation such as immunization records that required for entrance into school.
- Implementation of consistent clinical screening tools to assess for mental and physical health status
  - These tools should be in multiple languages
  - Resources include:
    - Fostering Health North Carolina ([http://www.ncpeds.org/?page=FHNC](http://www.ncpeds.org/?page=FHNC))
    - AAP Immigrant Health Toolkit ([www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org))
- Implementation of a consistent system of documentation and communication of information for each child that provides information to other care providers, including physical and mental health history, educational information, and legal information and prevents exploitation of children and adolescents.

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SDBP organizational information