**ISSUE:**
The flow of migrants and asylum-seekers at U.S. borders continues to challenge law enforcement, humanitarian resources, and government agencies. Those brought to America as migrant children or adolescents can face a bewildering range of issues from indeterminant legal status, to family separation, to resulting mental and physical health problems.

**BACKGROUND:**
- **“Dreamers”** include 2.1 million young people brought into the U.S. as children in contravention of law through no fault of their own. In general, they know no other home than America.
- **Past efforts** to resolve their status legislatively failed.
- In June 2012, President Obama created the “Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals” (DACA) program, requiring Dreamers to submit applications to immigration authorities in exchange for protection from deportation and to obtain a work permit. 700,000 applied and their status is under current court review.
- **More recently,** under a highly controversial Trump Administration policy, thousands of migrant children were separated from their parents by U.S. authorities.

**SOLUTION:**
Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle have expressed serious concerns about the welfare of migrant children, introducing many bills with multiple solutions to these interwoven, complex immigration and child welfare issues. Child and adolescent psychiatrists know that trauma is a public health concern that impacts individuals, families, and communities, now and in the future, and must be countered, where possible.

One promising approach, the **“Dream Act of 2019,”** would grant conditional permanent resident status, under specific requirements, thus mitigating negative impacts of trauma and supporting healing and recovery. “Hardship exceptions” for full-time caregivers or an alien’s spouse, native born child, or child brought lawfully into U.S., promote family unity and avoid trauma.

Subsequent lawful permanent resident status would be possible for those Dreamers completing at least two years of higher education, military service, or steady employment.

**CONGRESSIONAL ASK:**