

## Words that Burn- Stand up for Human Rights through Poetry

### SPEAK OUT TO BRING FAMILIES TOGETHER

Everyday family life is full of wonderful moments we all take for granted. But refugees in the UK – including children - often find themselves separated from their families because of Home Office rules. This creates additional trauma for people who may have already suffered brutal experiences of conflict and persecution as they fled their homes.

#### What we are calling for:

We are calling for more refugee families to be able to live in safety in the UK. This is vital for integration and to alleviate people's concerns for their loved ones. Amnesty is part of the Families Together Coalition, which is campaigning for:

1. Child refugees in the UK to have the right to sponsor their close family so they can rebuild their lives together
2. The Home Office's definition of 'family' to be expanded so that young people who have turned 18 and elderly parents can come to live in safety with their families in the UK
3. The reintroduction of legal aid so refugees who have lost everything have the necessary financial support to afford to navigate the complicated



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process of being reunited with their families.

Please join us and use the power of your words to help refugee families to reunite and rebuild their lives together in the UK.

#### Context: the current rules

The Home Office rules prevent many families from being together. They don't allow separated child refugees already in the UK to bring any family members to join them. They only allow adult refugees to sponsor their spouse and any children under 18 to join them in the UK. Any child who has turned 18 cannot automatically come to live with them, even if that child is still dependent on them.

Find out more about Amnesty's campaigning for families together including how you can get involved: <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/FamiliesTogether>

## REFUGEE RIGHTS

Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that everyone has the right to seek, and to enjoy in other countries, asylum from persecution. The 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (the Refugee Convention) builds on this.

Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights protects your right to respect for your private and family life. This is part of UK law through the Human Rights Act.

Article 9 of the Convention on the rights of the child says that children have the right to live with their parent(s), unless it is bad for them.

## MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN A MINUTE

Take the 'Make a Difference in a Minute' challenge and write a poem that you can perform in one minute or less to show your support for reuniting refugee families. It can be:

- **A group collaborative poem (using resources from [burn 1](#)) about your family, some aspect of your family or why your family is important to you.**  
*or*
- **An individual poem about your family, some aspect of your family or why your family is important to you.**

You can [submit your poem](#) in written form, as an audio clip or as a 1-

minute video. As well as submitting your poem to Amnesty International UK, **please share it on social media, using the hashtags #FamiliesTogether #WordsthatBurn.**

Some poems will be showcased on the website and we will let you know if your poem is selected for this. We may also send your poem to the Home Secretary as part of the campaign to reunite more refugee families in the UK.

*Inspire your students to think about what being separated from families feels like:*

[amn.st/Familyfree](http://amn.st/Familyfree)

## SPEAK OUT TO BRING FAMILIES TOGETHER

**Sentence Starters you may like to use for a collaborative poem**

- Being with my family is like...
- Being without my family is like...
- A family is...

Find out more about the Words That Burn project:

[www.amnesty.org.uk/wordsthatburn](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/wordsthatburn)

Encourage students to consider the treatment of refugees from a different perspective:

[amn.st/exist](http://amn.st/exist)