

# POV

Community  
Engagement & Education

DISCUSSION GUIDE

**Don't Tell Anyone**  
(No Le Digas a Nadie)

A Film by Mikaela Shwer



Immigration has driven growth and development in the United States since the country was founded, but our relationship with immigrant communities continues to be complicated and at the center of political debate. As a first-generation American (my parents are South African) growing up in Arizona, I could feel how polarizing the immigration debate was, and I could never quite understand the lack of empathy I saw splashed across the news. I believe coming to the United States with no papers is not something anyone would do lightly; often people leave behind families they'll never see again and risk everything to make the journey and start a life here. But while I empathized with the undocumented community, I had never met anyone from it, so my connection never went much further.

By 2012 I had settled in New York City and was working as a film editor. That summer, President Obama announced a new program that would allow certain undocumented youth to apply for renewable two-year work visas and exemption from deportation. I felt energized as I began to read stories of DREAMers, as the participants in the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act came to be known. As DREAMers spoke to the press, I was able to put faces with the personal stories of this group that had once been vague in my mind.

The media recounted stories of youth with impressive bachelor's degrees who could now find work and showed images of rallies across the nation. In July, close to a month after the president's announcement, I opened up New York magazine and saw Angy Rivera standing with a serious demeanor in a shirt that read, "Undocumented, Unafraid, Unapologetic," accompanied by a small article primarily about her online advice column, "Ask Angy," the first and only such column for undocumented youth. Angy's demeanor in both the photo and the interview intrigued me; I was drawn to her and wanted to know more about her.

My first shoot for the project was at an open-mic event at La Casa Azul Bookstore in East Harlem, and I was blown away by the power of each performance. The poems, songs and dances shared by everyone were incredibly thought provoking. I was also struck by the composure and raw emotion expressed by such a young group. They shared heartbreaking memories and sadness over the rights they were not able to acquire, as well as frustration with an immigration system that was a roadblock to their futures.

About two months into filming, Angy was working with her attorney Lauren Burke to file the paperwork for her visa application when she revealed that for years as a child she had endured sexual assault at the hands of her mother's boyfriend. With this new information, Lauren knew Angy was eligible for a U visa—a type of visa provided to victims of abuse willing to report the crime to the police.

As Angy talked to me about the assault, I knew the focus of the film would shift from "Ask Angy" and a chorus of stories and experiences to a more personal tale of one woman's journey—albeit one that represents so many others. Angy put her trust in me, and I think she knew how important it was to tell this part of her story in order to help other victims speak out and find community and counseling.

This journey with Angy, her mother, Maria, her siblings and her entire community has been extremely eye-opening to me, and I've taken away lessons for my own life from every interaction. I know that Angy's story and the stories of many others can only help our national conversation.

With 12 million undocumented immigrants in the U.S. today, there is a renewed focus on how to recognize and systematize this substantial and extremely integrated group operating outside of established government agencies. The disconnect between rhetoric and action has created a sphere of uncertainty for the undocumented community. Through Angy and her community, we have witnessed firsthand the all-too-real consequences of being undocumented in the United States. Depression, sexual assault and suicide are just a few of the issues plaguing undocumented youth. Our hope with this film is to make the political personal and create a healthy dialogue on how to support our neighbors and friends in the undocumented community.

**Mikaela Shwer**, Director/Editor



**Filmmaker Mikaela Shwer.**

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## INTRODUCTION

Since the age of 4, Angy Rivera has lived in the United States with a secret that threatens to upend her life: She is undocumented. Like many undocumented youth, she was brought to the U.S. as a young child and has no apparent options for a pathway to citizenship.

Now 24 and facing an uncertain future, Rivera becomes an energetic activist and popular blogger for undocumented youth. Tired of the burden of secrecy, she publicly announces her undocumented status, creating a rift with her terrified mother, who believes that silence is necessary for survival. Buoyed by the support of her community, Rivera steps out of the shadows a second time to share her story of

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sexual abuse, an experience all too common among undocumented immigrants.

**Don't Tell Anyone (No Le Digas a Nadie)** (86 min.) follows Rivera's remarkable journey from poverty in rural Colombia to the front page of *The New York Times*. It is a film about courage in the face of seemingly insurmountable obstacles and the determination to fight for justice.

In an inspiring way, Rivera's story confronts viewers with the complexities and human costs of immigration policies in the U.S. As a springboard for discussion, the film provides a sense of urgency to immigration policy debates.

**Don't Tell Anyone (No Le Digas a Nadie)** is well suited for use in a variety of settings and is especially recommended for use with:

- **Your local PBS station**
- **Groups that have discussed previous POV films related to immigrant families and immigration policy, including *Sin País (Without Country)*, *The Sixth Section*, *Neuland*, *Made in L.A.*, *90 Miles*, *Farmingville* and *Well-Founded Fear*.**
- **Groups focused on any of the issues listed in the Key Issues section**
- **High school students, youth groups and clubs**
- **Faith-based organizations and institutions**
- **Cultural, art and historical organizations, institutions and museums**
- **Civic, fraternal and community groups**
- **Academic departments and student groups at colleges, universities and high schools**
- **Community organizations with a mission to promote education and learning, such as local libraries.**

**Don't Tell Anyone (No Le Digas a Nadie)** is an excellent tool for outreach and will be of special interest to people looking to explore the following topics:

- **activism/protest/resistance**
- **blogging**
- **citizenship**
- **DREAM Act**
- **education**
- **family**
- **immigrants**
- **immigration policy**
- **Latinas/Latinos**
- **law**
- **leadership**
- **mixed-status families**
- **mother-daughter relationships**
- **sexual assault**
- **social justice**
- **undocumented immigrants**
- **visas**
- **women's issues**
- **youth activism**

## USING THIS GUIDE

This guide is an invitation to dialogue. It is based on a belief in the power of human connection, designed for people who want to use **Don't Tell Anyone (No Le Digas a Nadie)** to engage family, friends, classmates, colleagues and communities. In contrast to initiatives that foster debates in which participants try to convince others that they are right, this document envisions conversations undertaken in a spirit of openness in which people try to understand one another and expand their thinking by sharing viewpoints and listening actively.

The discussion prompts are intentionally crafted to help a wide range of audiences think more deeply about the issues in the film. Rather than attempting to address them all, choose one or two that best meet your needs and interests. And be sure to leave time to consider taking action. Planning next steps can help people leave the room feeling energized and optimistic, even in instances when conversations have been difficult.

For more detailed event planning and facilitation tips, visit [www.pov.org/engage](http://www.pov.org/engage)

## Immigration and the United States

As of 2013, there were approximately 41.3 million immigrants living in the United States. Immigrants can be subdivided into six basic categories: 1) those who were born outside the U.S. but have naturalized and become U.S. citizens, 2) those who are lawful permanent residents of the U.S. or green card holders, 3) those on visas that provide a path to obtaining legal permanent resident status (such as the U visa, explained below), 4) those on longer-term visas with no path to permanent status but who have the ability to work in the United States (such as those with work visas and DACA holders), 5) those on short-term visas in the U.S. with limited or no ability to work (such as student or tourist visa holders) and 6) undocumented immigrants. Of the more than 40 million immigrants in the United States, an estimated 11.4 million are undocumented.

Immigration law is one of the most complicated sections of law in the United States. There are numerous restrictions to paths to citizenship, especially for those who are poor and/or not highly skilled and able to fill jobs where demand is high. Due to complicated and strict regulations and requirements for eligibility, as well as long wait times, some immigrants, especially those with mixed-status families, see no choice but to remain in the U.S. without papers—in other words, to remain “undocumented.” Undocumented immigrants include immigrants who crossed the border without legal status, immigrants who entered with false documents and immigrants who entered the U.S. on legitimate visas and then overstayed their visas.

Reasons for immigrating to the United States vary. Some people come to the U.S. fleeing persecution, human rights abuses, torture, physical or sexual abuse or war, while others are brought to the country against their will by human traffickers. Some immigrants travel to the U.S. in the hopes of finding employment or better economic opportunities and/or to reunite with family members. Some, like Angy Rivera, are brought here by their parents as children.

On June 15, 2012, President Obama created Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, a program allowing young people like Angy to live and work in the United States for a set period of time. DACA does not provide a pathway to obtaining permanent legal status in the United States, so participating immigrants may need to seek assistance from immigration attorneys to help them determine whether they qualify for more permanent relief.

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## The U Visa and the T Visa

As the film explains, some immigrants who become victims of serious crimes in the U.S. may be eligible for humanitarian relief in the form of a U or T visa. Many immigrant youth like Angy who sought legal assistance with their DACA applications found that, due to these past crimes, they were eligible for those forms of relief. Both the U visa and the T visa are nonimmigrant visas, as they allow for temporary residency only.

**U visa:** A U visa is given to a victim of physical or mental abuse who has been useful to law enforcement in the investigation or prosecution of a crime. The U visa was created when Congress passed the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act (VTVPA) in 2000. If U visa holders are under 21 at the time of their applications, they may be eligible to petition for U visas for spouses, children, parents or unmarried siblings under 18. Once immigrants turn 21, however, they are eligible to apply only for their spouses and children. Because Angy was already over 21 when she discovered the U visa, she was unable to apply on behalf of her mother, Maria, who appears in the film. However, a person who can show that they were an indirect victim of the crime and also participated in the prosecution of the crime may be eligible to apply for their own U visa. That is how Angy's mother, Maria, is granted a U visa in the film.

**T visa:** The T visa was created at the same time as the U visa, when Congress passed the VTVPA in 2000. A T visa is given to someone who is or has been a victim of human trafficking. These visas allow victims to remain in the U.S. to assist in the investigation and prosecution of human trafficking suspects. In order to be eligible for a T visa, an applicant must be living in the United States and must be or have been a victim of human trafficking according to U.S. law.

After a period of three years, immigrants in possession of U and T visas may apply for green cards or lawful permanent residence in the United States. After five years, these immigrants may apply to become U.S. citizens.

Due to the complicated nature of immigration laws, organizations like Atlas: DIY encourage any undocumented immigrant to have a full consultation with a trusted community-based attorney. For more information, visit the

**Resources** section of this guide.

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## Mixed-Status Families

According to the Migration Policy Institute, the majority of people who qualify for lawful permanent residence in the United States are able to do so because they are family members of U.S. citizens or residents, employees of U.S. companies or refugees or asylum seekers who have been granted protection in the United States. A mixed-status family is one in which family members have different immigration statuses—some members are U.S. citizens and/or legal residents, while others remain undocumented, despite family and marriage ties to the United States. In **Don't Tell Anyone (No Le Digas a Nadie)**, Angy Rivera and her mother, Maria, are undocumented, while Angy's sister and two brothers were born in the U.S., making them U.S. citizens.

There are an estimated 9 million people living in mixed status families in the United States (meaning at least one adult is undocumented and one child is U.S.-born). Of those families, approximately 4.5 million U.S.-born children have at least one undocumented parent. A study conducted by the Applied Research Center in 2011 found that at least 5,100 U.S.-born children of undocumented immigrants were living in foster care as a result of their parents being detained or deported.

Under current law, undocumented immigrants are banned from the United States for three to 10 years before they can apply for legal re-entry. Many detained parents are therefore faced with a decision of whether to take their United States-

born children with them to their native countries, or to leave those children behind while they seek legal ways to immigrate (which many parents never find).

Research shows that children of deported parents exhibit significant behavioral changes, including anxiety and anger, and face increased odds of lasting economic turmoil and social exclusion.

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## Vulnerable Populations in the Immigrant Community

In the film, Angy says that immigrants who are also gay, homeless or abused aren't often discussed. As the film shows, undocumented immigrants live at the margins of American society—often unable to access basic services, such as health care and higher education. They also often avoid reporting crimes to the police for fear of deportation. Youths who are undocumented and also LGBTQ, homeless and/or victims of abuse are especially vulnerable.

**LGBTQ:** There are approximately 267,000 LGBTQ-identified individuals among the adult undocumented immigrant population, and an estimated 637,000 LGBTQ-identified individuals among the adult documented immigrant population. Both documented and undocumented members of the LGBTQ community are more likely than the general population to experience economic discrimination, and in many states it is still possible to fire someone based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. Furthermore, without legal status, undocumented immigrants are frequently exploited by their employers and are often afraid of reporting such abuses for fear of deportation. Though official data is scarce, the combination of these factors means that it is likely that the income of undocumented immigrants who are also LGBTQ is extremely low, making it more difficult for them to access housing, health care and education.

**Abuse:** Youth in migration—meaning youth who move frequently and irregularly—are especially vulnerable to physical and sexual abuse, exploitation and human trafficking. Due to their legal status and fear of deportation, the abuse they suffer often goes unreported, but in order to be eligible for a U visa, a victim must first report the crime.

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## Undocumented Students

There are an estimated 65,000 undocumented students who graduate from United States high schools every year. These students face numerous challenges in continuing on to post-secondary education. Paying for college is a financial challenge for many, but especially so for undocumented students. Legally, undocumented students cannot receive any federal aid, including loans, grants, scholarships or work-study funding. Even private scholarship funds often require students to be U.S. citizens or legal residents (including green card holders and those on student visas), although some programs are more flexible.

Eighteen states currently allow undocumented students to pay in-state tuition at public universities, and undocumented students are eligible for state-based financial aid in five states (California, Texas, New Mexico, Minnesota and Washington). Nationwide, private colleges and universities are able to implement their own financial aid policies. Some are willing to grant funding, including scholarships and work-study opportunities, to undocumented students. Others implement policies similar to those at state institutions.

Due to these additional financial challenges, many undocumented youths never attend college. Although roughly 25 to 30 percent of all 16- to 24-year-old U.S. citizens enroll in college or university, only about 10 percent of their undocumented peers do the same.

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## The DREAM Act

The DREAM (Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors) Act was first presented to the United States Congress in 2001, in response to the condition of approximately 5.4 million undocumented youths in the United States. Of this number, one million are under the age of 18, and 4.4 million are between the ages of 18 and 30. Also referred to as "1.5 generation" (meaning that they were brought to the country as first generation immigrants, but have lived most of their lives here and therefore tend to identify with second generation immigrants), these young adults were brought to the United States by their parents as children and are growing up in a society in which they do not have legal access to many rights of citizenship.

The DREAM Act has not become law and has been revised and submitted to Congress numerous times. It failed to pass the Senate by five votes in 2010. The DREAM Act was introduced to Congress again in 2011, in the form of a bill proposing a system through which undocumented students with high school diplomas or GEDs would be able to achieve permanent residency either by serving in the armed services or by attending college in good standing for two years.

In June 2012, President Obama issued an executive action to temporarily halt deportation of young, undocumented immigrants who were brought to the United States illegally as children, and the Secretary of Homeland Security announced the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, which allows individuals who came to the United States as children to request deferred action for two years, subject to renewal. During this period of "deferred action" from deportation, these young people are eligible to apply for documentation that allows them to work and study in the United States. In 2014, President Obama issued a series of executive actions around immigration, including expanding DACA to include undocumented parents of U.S. citizens or green card holders. Referred to as Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA), the program defers the deportation of eligible parents and grants them work authorization for three years. While DACA does not provide the opportunity to obtain citizenship or permanent residency as the DREAM Act would, it has raised the hopes of many undocumented immigrants.



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## Immigration Myths vs. Facts

### **Myth #1: Immigrants Don't Pay Taxes**

Immigrants pay taxes, just like anyone else—between \$90 and \$140 billion a year in federal, state and local taxes. According to the Internal Revenue Service, 50 to 75 percent of the estimated 11 million undocumented immigrants living in the United States pay income taxes. Moreover, it's estimated that immigrants collectively earn about \$240 billion a year, pay about \$90 billion a year in taxes and use only about \$5 billion in public benefits—often because undocumented workers are afraid they'll be deported if they access public services. On average, undocumented immigrants pay about 6.4 percent of their income in the form of state and local taxes.

### **Myth #2: Immigrants Refuse to Learn English**

While 73 percent of immigrants to the United States do not speak English at home, the Pew Hispanic Center shows that 68 percent of U.S. residents over the age of 5 who speak Spanish at home also speak English proficiently. Another study published by the Population and Development Review concluded that English is not under threat as the primary language spoken in the United States—even in Southern California, home to the largest concentration of Spanish-speaking immigrants.

### **Myth #3: Immigration to the United States Has Increased in Recent Years**

Though the number of immigrants in the United States has risen in recent years, the U.S. has also seen huge growth in population (at the start of the 20th century, the overall U.S. population was less than half what it is now), and therefore the percentage of immigrants relative to the overall population of the U.S. has actually declined. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in the early 20th century, the foreign-born population was about 15 percent of the total population, whereas now it stands at about 13 percent, so the rate of immigration relative to the U.S.-born population has decreased.

**Myth #4: Immigrants Steal American Jobs**

The largest wave of immigration to the United States since the 1900s coincided with the lowest national unemployment rate and fastest economic growth. Many studies have shown that even among low-paid and minority groups, immigrants do not cause citizen unemployment. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce reports that eight million undocumented immigrants are now involved in the United States workforce. If these eight million workers were deported tomorrow, eight million new jobs would not suddenly be available to unemployed Americans. Instead, this loss would have significant effects on the U.S. economy, as deporting eight million immigrants would also remove eight million consumers, taxpayers and entrepreneurs. In fact, according to the Partnership for a New American Economy, as of 2011, 28 percent of all new U.S. businesses were created by immigrants.

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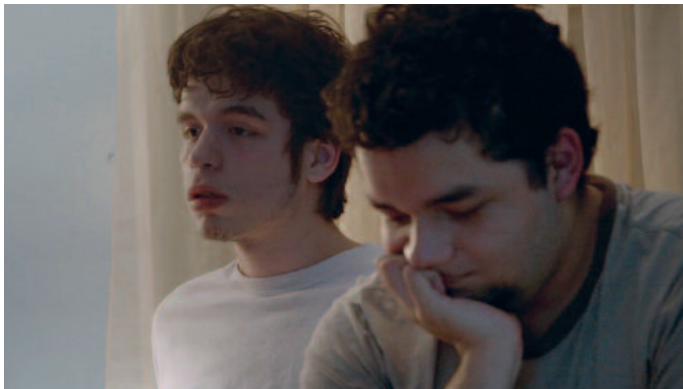
[http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/frequently-requested-statistics-immigrants-and-immigration-united-states#Current and Historical](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/frequently-requested-statistics-immigrants-and-immigration-united-states#Current%20and%20Historical)

Selected People Featured in **Don't Tell Anyone (No Le Digas a Nadie)**

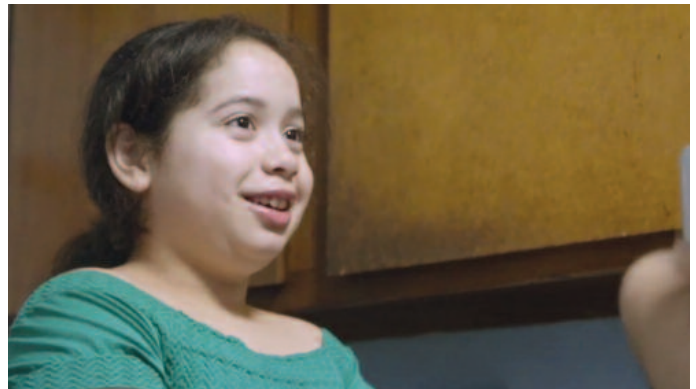
**Angy Rivera** – activist who gained fame with “Ask Angy,” a popular advice blog for undocumented youth and a YouTube channel boasting more than 27,000 views



**Maria Yolanda Rivera** – Angy's mother



**Luis (left) and Saul (right)** – Angy's brothers



**Gabriela** – Angy's sister



**Lauren Burke** – Attorney and executive director, Atlas: DIY; in the film, Angy's legal advisor

**Immediately after the film, you may want to give people a few quiet moments to reflect on what they have seen or pose a general question (examples below) and give people some time to themselves to jot down or think about their answers before opening the discussion:**

- Describe a moment or scene in the film that you found particularly disturbing or inspiring. What was it about that scene that was especially compelling for you?

- If a friend asked you what this film was about, what would you say?
- What did you learn from this film?
- Did you see anything familiar in this film? What “spoke truth” to you?

## DISCUSSION PROMPTS

### Politics and Policy

What is one lesson you learned from the film that you wish everyone in your family or community knew? What do you think would change if everyone knew it?

What did you learn from the film about activism? What did you learn that you could apply in your own community or life?

What would be the benefits and/or drawbacks to society of providing Angy Rivera and her mother with a pathway to citizenship? Why do you think the U.S. hasn't been willing or able to develop a policy to make that possible?

Angy is happy to receive her visa but recognizes the irony “that being abused makes you eligible, being raped makes you eligible, but not just living here and having a family and giving back—that doesn't matter.” If you could write the perfect immigration law, what would it say? What would it require of people like Angy and her family?

Angy says, “Sometimes my mom would tell me stories about the violence and poverty in Colombia. About the gangs, the drugs and the traffickers that she was scared of.” She is angry that her mother “is criminalized for wanting to raise her daughter in a safer living condition.” Do you see her mother as a criminal? How do Maria's motives for coming to the U.S. compare with those of immigrants in previous generations?

Marco, a DREAMer like Angy, says, “Food is the only connection I have to a place I haven't seen in 15 years.” That's nearly his entire life. What policy and/or social goals would be achieved by deporting him to the country where he was born? In your view, should DREAMers be treated

differently under the law than other undocumented immigrants? Why or why not?

Angy performs at an open mic. Do you see this as a political act? How does it contribute to social change?

Angy explains, “Abuse and violence is very common in the undocumented communities. We live under fear and we're trying our best to be invisible. We don't trust anyone in an authority position, or we're scared that any wrong thing is going to lead to deportation. It's hard for many of us to come forward.” What sorts of policies would encourage undocumented crime victims or witnesses to come forward and why is it important that they be able to do so? What sorts of policies are obstacles?

### Going Public

As part of making her status public, Angy wears a T-shirt bearing the word “undocumented.” What do you think would happen if, on a single day, every undocumented immigrant in the U.S. wore a similar T-shirt? What would happen if everyone wore a shirt saying “undocumented”?

When Angy first wears the “undocumented” T-shirt, she says, “I was super anxious about facing all these fears and all the shame.” Why do you think she experienced shame?

Angy explains, “Like you have coming out of the closet for LGBTQ, you have coming out of the shadows with your immigration status.” Do you think that is a valid comparison? What do these “coming out” experiences have in common? In what ways are they different?

Initially, Angy doesn't seem to appreciate fully her mother's objections to the decision to go public, and Maria doesn't



seem to appreciate fully her daughter's frustration. How would you explain the position of each to the other?

Former New York State poet laureate, Audre Lorde, wrote, "When I dare to be powerful, to use my strength in the service of my vision, then it becomes less and less important whether I am afraid." She also wrote, "When we are silent, we are still afraid. So it is better to speak." How would these apply to Angy and the other activists in the film?

Angy's choice to go public is rewarded when a stranger offers to pay for a semester of college for her. She says she learned from that experience, "That saying your story and sharing it with people does make an impact, because if I wouldn't have spoken out... this wouldn't have happened." What are the other benefits of speaking out? What were the costs to Angy of speaking out?

Angy describes an exchange on her blog as follows: "Somebody emailed me asking me why was I getting people to come out, if I thought that that was safe, and was I just trying to get people deported." As part of her response she wrote, "We must accept the fact that we're undocumented. Being quiet about it isn't going to change anything." She invites undocumented people to come out, assuring them that they are not alone: "Coming out is only scary if you let it be, if you let it take over and limit you." In your view, is this sound advice?

Angy notes, "When you don't know other people who are undocumented, you tend to feel alone, isolated and depressed. After we started coming out, we started providing support to other young people who wanted to share their stories, too." How does going public about status help build community? What strategies could those who choose to keep their status secret use to build community?

How does Angy's experience coming out about her undocumented status influence her decision to go public with her childhood experience of abuse by her stepfather?

## Perceptions and Stereotypes

Angy's friend Juliana observes, "In the movement like this, you have to be upfront with your story because there's so many news media and people already telling others what we are like, and it's important to put a real face, like listen, 'I am a human. This term undocumented that you're using, like, that's me.'" What have you learned from media about undocumented immigrants? In what ways did the film confirm or counter that portrayal?

In a YouTube video Angy writes, "I am undocumented. People think they can treat me like crap. Call me 'illegal.'" What's the difference between "undocumented" and "illegal"? Why would Angy and her peers object to the latter term?

Angy asserts, "Who I am is so much more than 'Angy, the undocumented girl.'" What sorts of traits do you associate with the label "undocumented"? Do you think those traits adequately describe Angy? What labels have been used to describe you? Were they accurate?

Angy's brother Luis shares an analogy he heard from an opponent to granting the undocumented legal status: "He compared it to someone going inside a stranger's house and saying, 'It's okay. I live here now.'" Do you think this analogy is valid?

Sonia, a speaker at a youth event, says, "We're not illegals, we're not sp\*cs, we're not n\*ggers, we're not wetbacks, we're not coons, we're not mammies and we're not chinks. I am not your model minority. I am not your token DREAMer. I am not your fixed identity. I am not what makes you comfortable." What's her main message? What links the different groups she names?

## When Personal and Political Collide

Angy says, "This is more than a legalization struggle; it's a psychological war that measures character and patience. They want to see who will break down first." What do you think she means? Who is "they"?

Angy says her mother raised her "in an environment where speaking out about your status is wrong." In what ways are secrets helpful and in what ways are they damaging? What are the effects on a community or society of a generation being actively taught to fear?

Angy describes worrying about routine traffic stops because, in "a mixed-status family, the biggest, biggest fear is always deportation. My siblings are citizens, but my mom and I could still be deported." How would you reconcile this reality with America's strong endorsement of "family values"?

Angy finds that she can't do things that her peers take for granted, like find a job, get on a plane or obtain financial aid for college. She says, "We get so focused on the legal stuff, how legislation affects us, and we don't think about the everyday stuff, like going to the post office or dating somebody." What other everyday tasks are difficult for people without documented legal status?



Angy remembers “not being able to speak English and being made fun of for my accent, or having my ESL teacher remind me that, ‘In America, you don’t speak Spanish,’ and that I shouldn’t be speaking it. I hated that feeling of not being able to be understood or to speak with other people.” Have you ever experienced something similar? What did it feel like? What do you think Angy would have felt if her teacher had encouraged her to learn English without telling her not to speak Spanish?

Angy reports that like most students, she was told, “Just do really well and [do] extracurricular activities and get good grades and everything will fall into place for you and you’re going to do big things,” and so I had believed all that, and none of that actually happened. It wasn’t just my hard work that was going to get me into school, and no matter how much I did or I gave back, none of that mattered because I didn’t have a Social Security number.” What would you do or say to keep undocumented students motivated?

### Family Experiences

If you could ask Angy or her mother, Maria, a single question, what would you ask and why?

Imagine speaking with Angy or Maria and completing this sentence: “Your story is important because...”

Looking at a newspaper article featuring her activism, Angy questions her mother, asking, “What did you think of the article, Mom? Aren’t you proud of me? How come you don’t say anything?” Imagine that you could coach Maria and feed her lines. What words would you provide to help Maria express her thoughts at that moment?

Luis denies being affected by his sister’s and mother’s undocumented status, but Angy points out that despite his denial he “spent like an hour talking about being afraid of being put up for adoption and your family being deported.” How do you think Angy’s siblings are affected by being the citizens in a mixed-status family?

Angy remembers that with regard to her abuse case, “Translation in the United States wasn’t that good, so they actually had me translate for my mother about what was happening, so I’m the one who had to tell her the ICS told me we were going to be taken away that night. I knew it was happening, and I was crying, and I was holding on to her. I didn’t want to let go, but once I got put into the van to be taken away, my brothers were the ones that were hysterical, and so I stopped crying to hug them and make sure they were okay.” How would you change the system so that abuse victims aren’t put in the position of explaining things that they themselves don’t fully understand? How would you help Angy’s family and families in similar circumstances heal?

**Additional media literacy questions are available at:**  
[www.pbs.org/pov/educators/media-literacy.php](http://www.pbs.org/pov/educators/media-literacy.php)

- Work with local officials and organizations to take action around legislation on the federal and state level related to policies regarding immigration and/or mixed-status families.
- In the film, a teacher asks Angy how to support undocumented students. Review the practices in your own school or district and modify where needed to help undocumented students succeed. Consider holding a fundraiser for undocumented students who want to attend college but are not eligible for financial aid.
- Create an insert for your congregation, club or organization newsletter that provides accurate information about immigrants and works toward immigration relief.
- Host a speak-out for undocumented youth and their allies. Offer to read a statement for anyone who wants to share a story but doesn't feel safe and fears risking deportation as a result of speaking out.

## RESOURCES

### Filmmaker Website

#### **DON'T TELL ANYONE (NO LE DIGAS A NADIE)**

[www.nodigasfilm.com](http://www.nodigasfilm.com)

The film's website provides information on the film and how to support Angy's work.

## Original Online Content on POV

To further enhance the broadcast, POV has produced an interactive website to enable viewers to explore the film in greater depth. The **Don't Tell Anyone (No Le Digas a Nadie)** website—[www.pbs.org/pov/donttellanyone](http://www.pbs.org/pov/donttellanyone)—offers a streaming video trailer for the film; an interview with the filmmaker; a list of related websites, articles and books; a downloadable discussion guide; a standards-aligned lesson plan with streaming clips; a downloadable reading list; and special features.

## DREAMers

### **ASK ANGY**

[www.facebook.com/AskAngy](https://www.facebook.com/AskAngy)

This is the Facebook page for Angy Rivera's popular blog.

Also see her YouTube channel:

[www.youtube.com/user/AskAngy](http://www.youtube.com/user/AskAngy) and follow her on

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/AskAngy> - @AskAngy

### **ATLAS DIY**

[www.atlasDIY.org](http://www.atlasDIY.org)

Featured in the film, this organization is an incubator of education, empowerment and community for undocumented youth and their allies. It provides a range of resources on legal rights, activism, accessing services and more.

### **CENTER FOR COMPARATIVE IMMIGRATION STUDIES: "IN THEIR OWN WORDS: A NATIONWIDE SURVEY OF UNDOCUMENTED MILLENNIALS"**

<http://ccis.ucsd.edu/wp-content/uploads/Tom-Wong-In-their-own-words-WP-191.pdf>

Research conducted by Tom Wong and Carolina Valdivia in May 2014 was used to draw up this comprehensive report. The findings showed, among other interesting things, that undocumented millennials have a high rate of civic engagement, despite the fact that they cannot vote. A summary is available at: [www.undocumentedmillennials.com](http://www.undocumentedmillennials.com)

**NEW YORK ASIAN WOMEN'S CENTER**

<http://www.nyawc.org/>

This organization helped Angy file for her U visa and provided counseling. The New York Asian Women's Center helps women and children overcome domestic violence and other forms of abuse by empowering them to govern their own lives.

**NEW YORK STATE YOUTH LEADERSHIP COUNCIL (NYSYLC)**

[www.nysylc.org](http://www.nysylc.org)

The advocacy organization in which Angy Rivera is active is run by undocumented youth and provides the tools and resources they need to challenge immigration policy and create change. The organization's website also includes archived posts of the "Ask Angy" blog.

***THE PROGRESSIVE: "DREAMING WITH MY MOTHER"***

[www.progressive.org/news/2012/11/179243/dreaming-my-mother](http://www.progressive.org/news/2012/11/179243/dreaming-my-mother)

This is an article that Angy wrote. She reads from it in the film.

**General Information on Immigration****AMERICAN IMMIGRATION COUNCIL: "THE DREAM ACT"**

[www.immigrationpolicy.org/just-facts/dream-act](http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/just-facts/dream-act)

This organization offers a good summary of the 2011 federal DREAM Act legislation.

**CENTER FOR IMMIGRATION STUDIES**

[www.cis.org](http://www.cis.org)

This think tank is dedicated to providing reliable, research-based information to guide U.S. policy discussions about immigration and immigrants.

**NATIONAL COUNCIL OF LA RAZA**

[www.nclr.org](http://www.nclr.org)

The National Council of La Raza is the largest Hispanic civil rights organization in the U.S. Resources available on the group's website include research and policy analysis.

## HOW TO BUY THE FILM

To purchase **Don't Tell Anyone (No Le Digas a Nadie)** for educational or institutional use, visit Women Make Movies at [www.wmm.com/filmcatalog/pages/c923.shtml](http://www.wmm.com/filmcatalog/pages/c923.shtml)



Produced by American Documentary, Inc., POV is public television's premier showcase for nonfiction films. The series airs Mondays at 10 p.m. on PBS from June to September, with primetime specials during the year. Since 1988, POV has been the home for the world's boldest contemporary filmmakers, celebrating intriguing personal stories that spark conversation and inspire action. Always an innovator, POV discovers fresh new voices and creates interactive experiences that shine a light on social issues and elevate the art of storytelling. With our documentary broadcasts, original online programming and dynamic community engagement campaigns, we are committed to supporting films that capture the imagination and present diverse perspectives.

POV films have won 32 Emmy® Awards, 18 George Foster Peabody Awards, 12 Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Awards, three Academy Awards®, the first-ever George Polk Documentary Film Award and the Prix Italia. The POV series has been honored with a Special News & Documentary Emmy Award for Excellence in Television Documentary Filmmaking, two IDA Awards for Best Continuing Series and the National Association of Latino Independent Producers (NALIP) Award for Corporate Commitment to Diversity. More information is available at [www.pbs.org/pov](http://www.pbs.org/pov).

### POV Digital [www.pbs.org/pov](http://www.pbs.org/pov)

Since 1994, POV Digital has driven new storytelling initiatives and interactive production for POV. The department created PBS's first program website and its first web-based documentary (*POV's Borders*) and has won major awards, including a Webby Award (and six nominations) and an Online News Association Award. POV Digital continues to explore the future of independent nonfiction media through its digital productions and the POV Hackathon lab, where media makers and technologists collaborate to reinvent storytelling forms. @povdocs on Twitter.

Front cover: **Angy Rivera.**

All photos courtesy of **Don't Tell Anyone (No Le Digas a Nadie)**

### POV Community Engagement and Education

POV's Community Engagement and Education team works with educators, community organizations and PBS stations to present more than 650 free screenings every year. In addition, we distribute free discussion guides and standards-aligned lesson plans for each of our films. With our community partners, we inspire dialogue around the most important social issues of our time.

### American Documentary, Inc. [www.amdoc.org](http://www.amdoc.org)

American Documentary, Inc. (AmDoc) is a multimedia company dedicated to creating, identifying and presenting contemporary stories that express opinions and perspectives rarely featured in mainstream media outlets. AmDoc is a catalyst for public culture, developing collaborative strategic engagement activities around socially relevant content on television, online and in community settings. These activities are designed to trigger action, from dialogue and feedback to educational opportunities and community participation.

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