

Most Americans Support Returning Elian Gonzalez

The number of Americans who support sending Elian Gonzalez back to his father in Cuba has inched up to 55 percent, while a third say the boy should remain in Florida.

Support for returning Gonzalez to Cuba has grown from 46 percent in December, while opposition has held about steady. This poll was taken a week after his grandmothers left the United States after visiting the boy and meeting with U.S. officials.

	Return to Cuba	Remain in the U.S.
2/6/00	55%	33
1/9/00	52	36
12/12/99	46	33

Gonzalez has been at the center of a political storm since Thanksgiving Day, when he was found clinging to an inner tube off the coast of Florida. His mother perished along with 10 other Cubans attempting to reach the United States. Gonzalez's great-uncle in Miami has sued in federal court to block an INS decision to return the boy to Cuba.

GROUPS – Among the few differences among groups, better-educated Americans are more likely to support returning Gonzalez to his father.

	Return to Cuba	Remain in the United States
Postgrad	61%	25
Some College	54	34
H.S. Grad/Less	52	36

METHODOLOGY - This ABC News.com survey was conducted by telephone Feb 2-6, 2000, among a random national sample of 1,012 adults. The results have a three-point error margin. Fieldwork by ICR- International Communications Research of Media, Pa.

Analysis by Bobbi Jo Fuller

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com on the Internet at:

<http://www.abcnews.com/sections/us/PollVault/PollVault.html>

Here are the full results:

39. I have a question about Elian Gonzalez, the six-year-old Cuban boy whose mother drowned when their boat sank off Florida and whose father lives in Cuba. Do you think the boy should be returned to his father in Cuba, or remain with his relatives who want to keep him in the United States?

	Return	Remain	No opin.
2/6/00	55	33	13
1/9/00*	52	36	12
12/12/99**	46	33	20

*Wording: As you may know, The U.S. immigration service has decided that a six-year-old Cuban boy whose mother drowned when their boat sank off Florida should be returned to his father in Cuba. Other relatives in Florida want the boy to stay with them. Do you think the boy should be returned to his father in Cuba, or remain with his relatives in the United States?

**Wording: As you may know, a six-year-old boy from Cuba was rescued at sea off the coast of Florida recently. His mother drowned and his father in Cuba wants the boy back. Do you think the boy should be returned to his father in Cuba or should remain with his relatives in the United States?