

Nearly Six in 10 Support Returning Elian Gonzalez

Nearly six in 10 Americans say Elian Gonzalez should be returned to his father in Cuba, a number that's increased slowly but steadily in the last three and a half months.

Fifty-nine percent in an ABC News/Washington Post poll say the boy should be returned to Cuba, up from 46 percent in mid-December, when fewer were ready to express an opinion. Thirty-three percent say he should remain with his relatives in the United States.

	Return to Cuba	Remain in the U.S.	No opin.
4/1/00	59%	33	9
2/6/00	55	33	13
1/9/00	52	36	12
12/12/99	46	33	20

The political storm surrounding Gonzalez has grown in recent days, as the boy's U.S. relatives and their supporters have resisted efforts by the Immigration and Naturalization Service to have him returned to his father. He was found clinging to an inner tube off the coast of Florida on Thanksgiving Day; his mother had perished along with 10 other Cubans attempting to reach the United States.

GROUPS - Public support for returning the boy to Cuba commands a majority across political persuasions, peaking at 64 percent among independents and dipping to 54 percent among Republicans. It's highest in the Northeast and lowest in the South; it's also highest among higher-income and better-educated Americans.

	Return to Cuba	Remain in the United States
Independents	64%	27
Democrats	60	35
Republicans	54	35

METHODOLOGY - This ABC News/Washington Post survey was conducted by telephone March 30-April 1, 2000, among a random national sample of 930 adults. The results have a 3.5-point error margin. Fieldwork by TNS Intersearch of Horsham, Pa.

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:

25. 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.
4/1/00	59	33	9
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?