

THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY
SCHREYER HONORS COLLEGE

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

ANALYSIS OF EDUCATIONAL INEQUITIES IN THE U.S. FOSTER CARE SYSTEM

MADELINE BROWN
SPRING 2022

A thesis
submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements
for a baccalaureate degree
in Psychology
with honors in Social Justice in Education

Reviewed and approved* by the following:

Ashley Patterson
Assistant Professor of Education
Thesis Supervisor and Thesis Advisor

Efraín Marimón
Assistant Teaching Professor of Education; Director, Restorative Justice Initiative; Director,
Social Justice Fellowship
Faculty Reader

ABSTRACT

Many children and young adults who experience the foster care system face a plethora of difficulties; these often come from embedded structural inequities. Education has been found to a vital component of a child's future and access to a comprehensive and safe education is associated with numerous positive consequences. Children and young adults in the foster care often do not have access to adequate education due to structural inequities. The goal of this analysis is to explore the various inequities for those in the foster care system from the beginning of child welfare programs in the United States until now. Additionally, it examines why these inequities exist, what solutions exist, and what needs to be done to further addresses these inequities. The primary methods were research through Google Scholar, JSTOR, and first-hand sources to compile an extensive report on the lack of access to resources for those in foster care along with solutions and a call to action. Through this research, it was found that there is an intense racial disparity in the foster care system as a result of systemic inequities; these are perpetuated in the education system for many children. Additionally, many policies and current practices neglect to educate teachers, provide enough supplies, and address lack of familial care for children in the foster care system. Researched solutions and proposed strategies in this thesis promote inclusivity, mentorship, increasing funding, policy changes, and equitable practices.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	i
LIST OF FIGURES	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
Chapter 1 History of the Foster Care System	1
Development of Modern Foster Care	7
Chapter 2 Make-up of the Foster Care System.....	11
Chapter 3 Aging out of the Foster Care system.....	15
Chapter 4 Educational Barriers for Youth in Foster Care.....	17
The School to Prison Pipeline for Students in Foster Care.....	19
High-School Graduation for Students in Foster Care.....	21
Chapter 5 Education as a Means to Uphold White Supremacy	24
Chapter 6 Benefits of Education.....	27
Chapter 7 Promoting Educational Equity for Students in Foster Care.....	29
Chapter 8 Conclusion.....	37

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Advertisement for “Orphan Trains” that carried children without parents to families in the Midwest until they found a family that selected them to help work on their farm (Blakemore, 2019).	3
Figure 2: Indigenous children at the Carlisle School that took Indigenous children from their families to forcefully assimilate them into white Euro-centric ideals (Little, 2018).	6
Figure 3: Map showing how many children or young adults are in foster care by state in the United States (Wardrip, 2014).	11
Figure 4: Figure showing the overrepresentation of children of color in the foster care system in the United States (NCSL, 2022).	12
Figure 5: Graph displaying the number of children and young adults of each age, from ages 1-20, in the United States (Statistia, n.d.).....	14
Figure 6: Graphs showing the percentage of youth and young adults in foster care who graduate high school in the United States (What To Become, 2021).....	22
Figure 7: Breakdown of how children of color are more likely to experience underfunded schools (PAFairFunding, 2021).	25

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I want to thank and acknowledge Dr. Ashley Patterson. She has inspired me beyond belief and has encouraged me to not only grow as an advocate for others, but as a person. There have been numerous moments that made this process difficult yet listening to her passion for teaching and education motivated me to push on.

Additionally, I would like to thank Esq. Efraín Marimón. He has continuously pushed me to grow as a person and advocate for social justice, and I will forever be grateful for this. He provided much needed help and assistance with this thesis, and it would not have happened without his kindness and support.

I would also like to thoroughly thank The Schreyer Family and Schreyer Honors College for providing me with the incredible opportunity to analyze a topic I am so passionate about. Not only has Schreyer provided me with this, but with a wonderful educational experience as well.

Furthermore, I would like to thank my closest support system of friends- especially my best friends Adira and Peyton. Their hard work on their theses pushed me to put my best effort into mine, and their passion continuously inspired me.

Finally, I would like to deeply acknowledge and thank my family, especially my mother, Dr. Christine Brown, and father, Scott Brown, who encouraged me to learn more about the world and always fight for others. Not only did they constantly drive me to work hard, but they provided helpful insight and advice throughout this entire process. Without their unwavering support in difficult moments along with their desire to add something to this world, this thesis would not have reached its full potential.

Chapter 1

History of the Foster Care System

The History of the Foster Care System

The Foster Care System refers to the system in the United States that places children and teenagers into state approved homes following removal from their parent or guardian deemed unfit. Systems of welfare have existed throughout history primarily through religious organizations but have evolved to become government operated. Throughout the United States' history, foster-type services and education programs have been utilized to uphold white supremacy. The system was designed *by* white people and *for* white people. For example, the removal of Indigenous children from their parents under the guise of education has been an important tool in the genocide of Indigenous peoples in the US. Furthermore, Black children were separated from white systems of welfare for centuries in the United States, and in the few instances in which they were included, they received extremely harsh treatment (Hogan & Siu, 1968). From the very beginning of their forming, these institutions are plagued with inequities.

Dating back to the 16th century in Europe, white children without families- traditionally children whose parents had passed away- were often housed by local families in exchange for work. The "English Poor Laws" in the 1500s legalized this form of indentured servitude for children (Voices for Children, 2020). The Poor Laws of the Elizabethan times were an early form of social welfare that prioritized children as aids for work. This dates back to the perceived role of a child, as many viewed white children and young adults as important helping hands-on farms, in factories, and around the house.

As Europeans moved to the United States and took land from Indigenous groups, they carried over the legal system of the English Poor Laws. During the late 18th century and the early 19th century, some Black children were placed in these indentured servitude families, but limited documentation shows they were treated with more abuse and neglect than white children (Billingsley & Giovanni, 1972). The majority of Black children in the United States at this point in history were forced into slavery and were not thus provided with any chance at social services. At this point in time, the limited systems of welfare relied heavily on local communities and religious organizations to provide the necessary supports.

Following the revolutionary war, poorhouses were established to house many widowed women and their children, as it was societally difficult for them to be financially independent without husbands. As the United States underwent rapid industrialization, high poverty rates and treacherous working conditions resulted in a need for new social welfare. Inspired by the poorhouses from the 18th and 19th centuries, religious institutions and various organizations created separate housing for children without parents- known as orphanages. Black children were excluded from this developing system and placed into separate and lower quality housing. This is exemplified through the creation of the Care of Colored Children organization, in which there were no Black people on the staff, leader board, or included in planning. (Hogan & Siu, 1968). During this time period, orphanages were commonly overcrowded. Managers of these orphanages received financial compensation based on the number of children they housed, so the goal was to maintain high numbers of children and youth with minimum cost. Thus, there was extremely low-quality living conditions and little to no attempts to find alternative homes for children without parents (Simms, 91). With a goal of earning money, many organizations were

formed without prioritizing the well-being of children and young people; from its early days, the system was racist, classist, and not designed to address the root issues.

It is important to note that many individuals and charitable organizations wanted to address the growing number of children forced to live on the streets of cities. However, there was often the underlying motive of fear and disdain for those who are poor or living on the streets. Started by Charles Brace, the organization known as Children's Aid New York created schooling and extracurricular programs, provided food, and provided housing for many children without parents. In a more controversial movement, known as Orphan Train, Brace placed white children without parents out of cities and with families in the Midwest (Voices for children, 2020).



Figure 1: Advertisement for “Orphan Trains” that carried children without parents to families in the Midwest until they found a family that selected them to help work on their farm (Blakemore, 2019).

This is a recurrent example of children as tools for providing labor; many held the belief that children without parents needed to earn safe housing and access to food. On the trains, children were subjected to a selection process by the families who wanted their labor; if not chosen, the children had to remain on the train until they were selected by a family (Simms, 1991). While these movements wanted to put children in homes, they neglected to consider a child's need for safety and compassion. There were no regulatory measures, background checks, and a lack of check-ins on the children. As the current systems were indentured servitude masking as religious charity, there was a lack of acknowledgment of the emotional needs of children who lost their parents. By the mid-late 19th century, there was a change in the system of welfare for children without parents. Massachusetts became the first state to offer financial compensation for governmentally approved foster homes within their community. People began to advocate for improved treatment for children who lost their parents; many began to realize that it is cruel and harmful to remove children from their communities. Thus, there was a push for the government to attempt to both regulate and incentivize foster care. Not only were families provided with a stipend, but they were supervised and visited to ensure they were providing the child with a safe home. While this was a marked shift from the previous systems, it was still wrought with issues. Check-ins and supervision were limited at best and did not focus on the emotional well-being of the child. The only focused attempts at education through these early stages of foster care were through parishes and religious organizations.

The role of state and local government agencies increased in the late 19th century. States began to play a role in the guidelines and expectations; Pennsylvania decided that families fostering two or more biologically unrelated children without a license was a misdemeanor

(Voices for Children, 2020). This rule's implementation stronger solidified the role of state governments in the foster care system.

In the late 1800s there was a distinct shift in foster care. Before, it mostly functioned to place children without parents with families- mostly to work. During this time, the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) won a case against church-sponsored foster parents who abused their child, which lead to a new trend of helping children who are experiencing abuse (Simms, 1991). Shortly after, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children was established to rescue children from abusive situations- the organization even had the power to arrest people. As more organizations such as the SPCC developed across the country, attitudes shifted in favor of re-unification. During the beginning of the 20th century, people began to oppose the rescue societies and advocate for the government's involvement in strengthening families rather than removing children from them.

At the same time that foster care was improving for white children, the United States was forcefully taking Native children away from their families and placing them in boarding schools. The effort was masked as education, but its goal was to erase Native history and culture. Christian churches and the US government were not removing Native children for their well-being but instead to abuse them, teach them Euro-centric and US-centric history, force them to speak English, prevent them from their spiritual practices and to keep them from their families. As white children were being treated with more kindness in social welfare programs, Indigenous children were being mistreated in the United States' colonial conquest.

Figure 2: Indigenous children at the Carlisle School that took Indigenous children from their families to forcefully assimilate them into white Euro-centric ideals (Little, 2018).



Following emancipation of African American slaves in the United States, the Bureau added reuniting children who were formally slaves with their biological parents. This was a mostly performative effort, as it was extremely hard to trace families who had been separated with no documentation. Furthermore, the Bureau made no efforts to aid Black children who had been enslaved, and the majority of social welfare was segregated and extremely unequal. Black children who were separated from families were extremely excluded from the growing foster care system, and thus lacked access to education, safe housing, food, and care from the government. There were many Black mutual aid societies that provided child welfare services for Black children, as the federal system continued to neglect Children of Color. The role of the government in the foster care system continued to increase in the early 20th century with The Children's Bureau publishing the Minimum Standards of Child Welfare, which prioritized a

child remaining with their biological parents. Further standards from the Bureau included educational programs, protective services, and placements for children who suffer from abuse. This was the first time the federal government took responsibility for foster care and the wellbeing of children separate from Christian charities and societies (Hogan & Siu, 1968). As the 20th century progressed and the federal government assumed responsibility, everyone was included in the system. Though, the treatment for Black children was much harsher than the treatment for white children.

These factors display how the system was never designed to truly value children in the United States but to separate white children from Children of Color, forcefully implement Euro-centric narratives, and to punish families of low socioeconomic status. The foster care system had numerous attempts at education and care for white children, but they were inadequate and underfunded. Thus, many structural inequities are built into the system.

Development of Modern Foster Care

The federal government officially assumed responsibility of the foster care system in 1935 when the Social Security Act was passed (Voices for Children, 2020). This act aimed at providing welfare for people in the United States with focuses on older adults, those with disabilities, mothers, children, public health, and unemployment (Social Security Act, 1935). It is through this act that the government allocated funding for child welfare. As federal grants became available for child welfare with mandatory state inspections of families and homes looking to foster children. This was a major step in not only the control of the system, but in attempted regulation of foster homes. Though, it is important to note that many inspections

operated under racist assumptions. Black and Indigenous children became overrepresented in the system due to government inspectors operating under white ideals and assuming families of color to be harmful when they were not. Following the grants and inspections, Washington introduced Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), in which a volunteer follows a child through their placements to advocate for their individual needs. CASAs helped with consistency, court reports, and advocacy, and evolved into what is now a social worker.

During the mid-late 20th century, the number of children who were removed from their families dramatically increased due to severe economic hardship, widespread drug use, and mass incarceration. As a result of this, there was a movement to prevent removal of children, limit placement shifting, and find permanent homes for children in the system. There was a short-lived decline in foster care children following this push to avoid removing children from their families unless absolutely necessary. The guidelines for what was absolutely necessary were not considerate of the levels of emotional and mental abuse many children suffer, and many issues went undetected. Examining further the causes of the influx of children in the system, mass incarceration and the war on drugs were implemented by United States governmental officials in the late 20th century as means to oppress People of Color, specifically Black and Brown people in the United States. As Black communities- that were already underfunded- were flooded with drugs that were then made illegal, the government removed their children from their care. Furthermore, social workers and case managers were more likely to claim abuse and unsafe conditions in Black households due to racial biases. These factors lead to an overrepresentation of Black children in the foster care system. The word of the social worker is extremely powerful, even without evidence (Simms, 1991). Due to the increases of children and young adults being placed into the foster care system, it became increasingly difficult to find safe placements. As

many foster homes were overcrowded, not thoroughly inspected, or operating for money, many children and young adults were placed into unsafe and not loving placements.

The foster care system is complex in that there are many different types of foster homes. Foster homes, licensed and approved by the government, take the responsibility of providing for children and young adults who experience the foster care system. There are relative/kin homes, which primarily include various levels of biological family members. This is the first and most desirable option (KCV, 2018). Following this is non-relative kin, which usually takes the form of trusted friends and community members to the child. Then, there are non-relative foster homes, which are approved foster parents. There are also respite and therapeutic care which aim to provide additional aid to children with emotional or physical disorders; this option is very rare (KCV, 2018). Additionally, there are group homes in which multiple children in the foster care system live together under the care of an approved adult. Black, Indigenous, and Brown children and young adults are overrepresented in group homes. The last type of foster care is independent living, in which an older young adult in foster care lives on their own to transition out of the system.

In the current system, funding comes primarily from Social Security; states are provided certain allocations of funds which means that the any changes to Social Security based on who controls the funding in the federal government has immense impact on the resources available in the foster care system. Due to these changes, there is a lack of stability in the majority of foster care programs. Moreover, there is continuously a lack of funding due to the United States' low prioritization of social programs and welfares. This lack of funding leads to case workers being overloaded, staff being insufficiently trained, few resources to advocate to each child's needs, and a lack of incentivization for communities and foster families (Simms, 1991). With a lack of

resources, many placements do not address the emotional and therapeutic needs of the children and young adults there, which can lead to behavioral and mental health difficulties. When these needs go unaddressed, youth become vulnerable. As a result, many group homes and foster placements are not nurturing homes.

These factors create great structural weaknesses within the system. As the system was designed to prevent poverty, and to perpetuate colonialism, and to uphold capitalism, there is a severe lack resources. Resources such as increased funding, access to quality therapy, access to educational help, and access to basic needs such as clothes, food, and personal supplies. It is important to note that here are many groups and organizations advocating for reform and providing aid. One example of these is Carrying Hope- an organization which provides youth in foster care with a backpack full of basic supplies they need when changing placements. Another example is the Annie E. Casey Foundation that pushes for reform in policy and organizes community support for the foster care system. These organizations provide valuable resources and aid, but the foster care system as a whole still fails to fully support the children and young adults who experience it. The current system of foster care does not have enough funding or workers to adequately support the hundreds of thousands of children and youth who experience it.

Chapter 2 Make-up of the Foster Care System

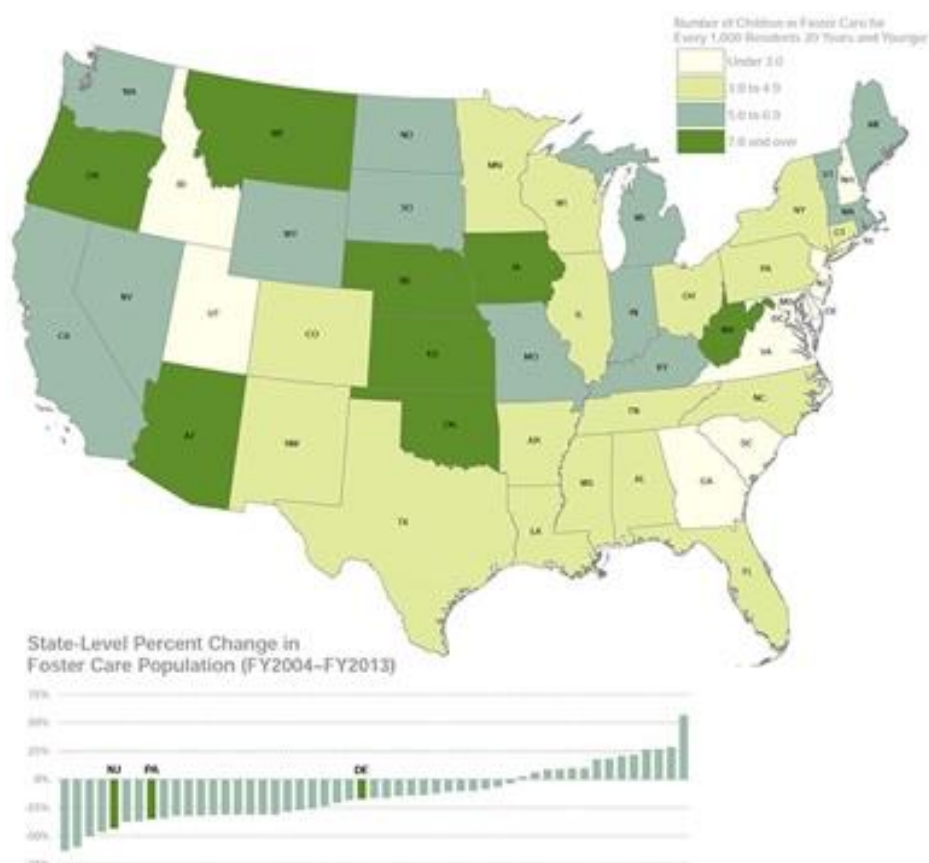
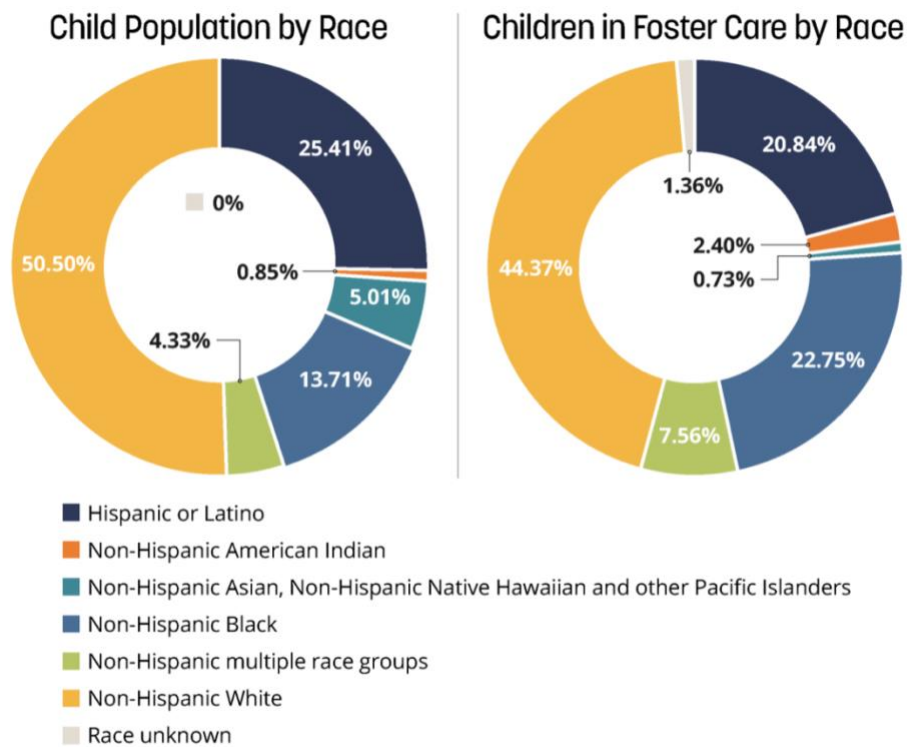


Figure 3: Map showing how many children or young adults are in foster care by state in the United States (Wardrip, 2014).

There are nearly half a million children and young adults currently in the foster care system- about 430,000. The number of children and youth entering foster care has steadily been increasing as a result to numerous societal factors including mass incarceration, the war on drugs, the opioid crisis, and periods of economic turmoil. Foster care functions at both federal and state levels, so it is important to examine a state by state breakdown of the system. Not every state has the same number of children and young people in the foster care system, as some states were more intensely affected by social, economic, and political issues. For example, West

Virginia has one of the highest percentages of children in foster care due to the extremely high rates of poverty and opioid use. While these factors do not necessarily indicate abusive or unsafe parents, they are risk factors for families being unable to provide safe and healthy homes for their children. In Figure 1, an apparent pattern is that states with sparser populations often have high rates of children and young adults in the foster care system. This is, again, strongly tied to substance abuse, as rural environments are an extreme risk factor for alcohol and substance abuse (SAMHSA, 2013). Substance abuse is linked to child maltreatment and neglect with children whose parents abuse substances being more likely to experience any type of abuse or neglect (Child Welfare, 2003).



Source: Annie E. Casey Foundation's Kids Count Data Center, 2018

Figure 4: Figure showing the overrepresentation of children of color in the foster care system in the United States (NCSL, 2022).

Within the foster care population, there is a lack of one uniform way to define race and ethnic groups, which makes it challenging to understand trends and specific breakdowns. However, it is still apparent that children of color are immensely overrepresented as compared to white children and youth. The overrepresentation is a key aspect in the foster care system, for many inequities result from systemic and institutionalized racism and classism. Black, Indigenous, and People of Color are more likely to be reported for neglect (Hogan & Siu, 1968) due to racial biases. Additionally, children of color are more likely to remain in foster care for longer than white children, as they are less likely to find a permanent home or be reunified with their biological families (NCSL, 2022). The American Bar Association noted multiple factors that play a role in the overrepresentation of children of color, all of which result from deeply rooted racism in the United States (NCLS, 2022). The first factor is that BIPOC are overrepresented in poverty compared to their overall population due to centuries of oppression (Creamer, 2020); there is a strong correlation between poverty and maltreatment/neglect of children (NCLS, 2022). Second, many People of Color have limited access to resources and support services due to housing inequities and redlining. These factors have forced Black Americans into low quality housing in underfunded neighborhoods, and thus many Black families lack access to services necessary to provide children with safe and healthy lives. The third factor is that there are geographic restrictions, which is also the result of segregation and systemic oppression. Additionally, as previously noted, social workers and other professionals in the foster care system hold racial biases. These racial biases include ideals that BIPOC are more neglectful, harmful, and incapable of caring for their children.

Moreover, there is a wide variety of age groups represented in the foster care system. The system assumes responsibility for children aged 0-21 until they age out of the system. The largest age group is children aged 1-5, which makes up roughly 35% of the foster care population. This is followed by children aged 6-10, 11-15, 16-20, and less than one year old. Understanding the various age groups within foster care is imperative to reform, as interventions, resources, and supports can look different for children and young adults of various ages.

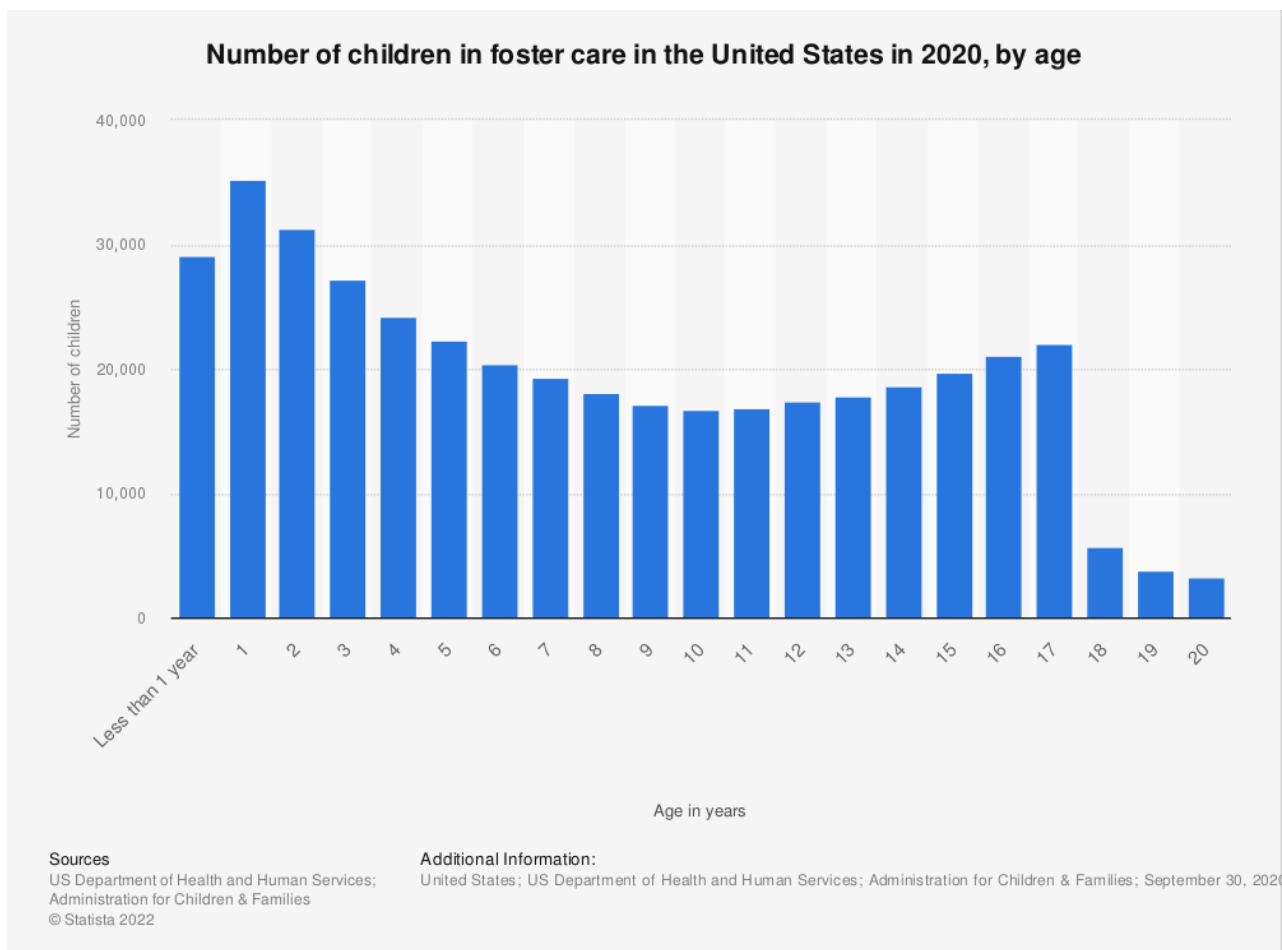


Figure 5: Graph displaying the number of children and young adults of each age, from ages 1-20, in the United States (Statista, n.d.)

Chapter 3

Aging out of the Foster Care system

When a young person turns the legal age of emancipation (16-21) and has not been reunited with family or adopted, they age out of the system. Over 20,000 young adults age out of the system each year, and many face very negative outcomes due to the lack of supports within the United States foster care system. These negative outcomes could include homelessness, not pursuing higher education, early pregnancy, criminality, addiction, and mental health issues. In order to prevent these negative outcomes, there are ways to foster success. Success is used in this thesis to mean addressing the needs of those who age out of foster care and providing them with resources and support to follow the path they desire. Education is an important factor in allowing children and young adults to experience success.

The most current form of legislation includes the addressing of foster care in COVID relief legislation passed by congress. In this legislation, they increased eligibility for foster care and increased funding allotted to providing those aging out of foster care with housing and employment. Many states also raised the age and supports to the mid-twenties, so that those aging out can stay in the system longer. With these allocations, they aimed to provide temporary aid during times of difficulty. Additionally, the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program provides funding and assistive post-secondary education programs. It does this through educational and training vouchers programs to help those aging out have access to education. There is also the Foster Care Independence Act that provides state-based support programs and expand Medicaid to include those aging out of foster care. Lastly, as a preventative measure there is the Adoption and Safe Families Act that aims to promote family permanency and

accountability within the system to prevent some of the negative costs of aging out with little resources and support.

However, support for those aging out of foster care remains limited and surface level. Educational equity can be a valuable resource for those aging out, as the goal is to provide each student with the resources they need to live a healthy life. Educational outcomes can promote independence and confidence which in turn can lead to a healthier life. Yet, supports should not stop once a student has aged out of the foster care system. Solutions addressing educational inequities should continue to be in place for all who have experienced foster care, whether they are currently experiencing it or have aged out.

Chapter 4

Educational Barriers for Youth in Foster Care

Education is a powerful tool to ensure success. Education can be a source of stability for many children and young adults who do not experience stability in other aspects of their life. It can provide students with emotional support, knowledge, resources to decide what they want to do in life, meaningful relationships with peers, trusted adults, and services they may not receive in their home life. However, many children and young adults in the system do not have equitable access to these parts of the education system. Without safe access to the valuable aspects of education, children and young adults cannot receive the benefits. In fact, inequitable education can actually perpetuate risk factors such as homelessness, unexpected pregnancy, drug abuse, unemployment, and mental health issues.

When examining the foster care system, race and education *must* be intersected. With many children and young adults in foster care coming from communities of color, their access to education was inequitable before they were removed from their biological families. Additionally, socioeconomic status must also be considered, as white children and young adults in foster care also suffer from inequitable education- but never because of their race.

Children and young adults in foster care often move from one placement to another, which makes settling into the routine of a school extremely difficult. Due to the highly transient nature of the foster care system, children and young adults are often hesitant of becoming attached to peers and educators at their new schools, as they are accustomed to moving. Stability is an extremely important factor, as it requires both time and trust to connect with educators and peers. When studying the constant placements and moves of youth in the foster care system, it was found that they have to switch schools at least once or twice a year and that more than 1/3 of

young people who experience foster care will have had to switch schools at least 5 times (Lahey, 2014). According to the American Bar Association (2014), each move to a new school results in a loss of 4-6 months of academic progress. According to Amy Salazar, a professor at Washington State University and director of its Foster Care Research Lab, constant changing of schools makes it near impossible for students to stay on track (Johnson, 2019). Curriculum layouts, lessons, and coursework vary from school to school. Furthermore, it becomes very difficult for students to be involved in extracurricular activities that provide students with opportunities, connections, and friendships (Johnson, 2019). The shifting from home to home prevents children and young adults from being able to settle in, focus on their schoolwork, and form relationships with those around them. A study on adults who experienced foster care during their lifetime found that those who even had one less placement/school change per year were about twice as likely to graduate from high school as compared to other children in foster care (Lahey, 2014). This study demonstrates that constant moving is a large obstacle for children in foster care.

Furthermore, many children and young adults are focused on meeting basic survival needs, their family, and where they will be next. It can be strenuous to take time to focus on school, especially when supports are limited (Lahey, 2014). Some children who have experienced the foster care system spoke on the issue- stating that they could not truly focus on learning until they were in a stable and permanent place (Lahey, 2014). With the system being so overloaded with cases and so underfunded, there are often placements that are not beneficial to the child or young adult. The foster care system- with it being built with a multitude of inequities- does not provide aid to children in forming safe relationships with foster families, having economic stability, and even having basic necessities when moving homes. These factors

result in youth having to worry about basic needs, and thus not being able to focus on school. According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, one must focus on physiological and safety needs first. As many children and youth in foster care have few belongings and resources, they cannot rise to emotional or cognitive needs without basic survival needs such as safety, clothing, and food being met (Maslow, 1943).

A major barrier is the impact of abuse, neglect, separation from one's family, and untreated mental health issues. Many children in foster care experience traumatic and difficult experiences at young ages, which lead to multiple negative effects to their mental well-being. These translate into education, as without necessary therapies, treatments, and counseling, the impacts will continue to manifest. Some outcomes include absenteeism, behavioral issues, difficulty focusing, inability to make friends, and poor grades (Weinberg, 2004). These outcomes demonstrate how exposure to difficult and emotional situations without stability and emotional support can prevent students in foster care from being able to focus on education.

The School to Prison Pipeline for Students in Foster Care

The school-to-prison pipeline refers to the high rates at which the education system funnels BIPOC students into the prison system. Black youth are extremely affected by the school-to-prison pipeline, as they are subjected to much higher rates of discipline and behavioral issues than their white peers. With the presence of police in schools- specifically schools in communities of color- Black youth are disproportionately criminalized (JLC, 2018). Youth in foster care, especially Black and Brown youth in foster care, are at an even higher rate for disciplinary issues and criminalization. This results from multiple factors with the first factor

being racism in educational staff and police. Additional factors include lack of behavioral support, repressed mental health issues, and lack of stability. These factors often lead students to act in ways that differ from traditional accepted behavior, which educators often punish instead of providing help and support (JLC, 2018). With youth in foster care already being at risk for incarceration due to the lack of support they receive, harsh disciplinary policies in school can be extremely detrimental. Zero-tolerance policies, out of school suspensions, school-based arrests, and expulsion are all harsh policies that remove children from the learning environment for punishment. If education is supposed to be a tool for success, then removing children and youth from school does the opposite of helping them grow. Children in foster care are two and a half times more likely to be suspended, three times more likely to be held back, and four times more likely to be expelled (Foster Success, 2020) and are overall three times more likely to be disciplined in school than their peers (Kothari, Godlweski, McBeath, McGee, Waid, Lipscomb, & Bank, 2018). With youth in foster care being disciplined at much higher rates than their peers, they are pushed towards the prison system from the very institutions meant to help them. Not only does the education system funnel children in foster care to the prison system, but it prevents many from having a safe space. With constant movements, traumatic experiences, and (often) low quality living environments, school could be a place of peace and safety. However, with the presence of police, high rates of behavioral infractions, and severe punishments, children and young adults who experience foster care may have no place in which they feel safe. This can make educational success extremely difficult, as feeling safe in one's learning environment is important to educational success. Again, success refers to students receiving the resources and supports necessary to pursue paths that are health and desirable to them.

Moreover, those who identify as girls are at high risk for incarceration due to being targeted by sex traffickers. Many young girls who experience foster care are lured into sex work by adults; the criminalization of sex work then pushes them into incarceration (JLC, 2018). With schools being underfunded and inequitably resourced in the United States, many schools attended by young people in foster care do not provide them with necessary mentorship, supports, and counseling needed.

The increased disciplining in schools pushes students- particularly Black, Brown, and students of low SES into the prison system. With foster care children often coming from low-income areas and communities of color, they are at heightened risk to be profiled, not trusted, and punished.

High-School Graduation for Students in Foster Care

Another major issue for students who experience foster care is ability to graduate. Due to the above explored factors of lack of stability, difficulty prioritizing learning, and disproportionate disciplining, many students in foster care struggle to graduate. The graduation rates for youth in the foster care system are 20-30% less than their peers. Graduating from high school can be helpful in looking for jobs and becoming financially independent. While graduating often just relies on grades and test scores, it currently serves as a marker of success in young people in the United States.

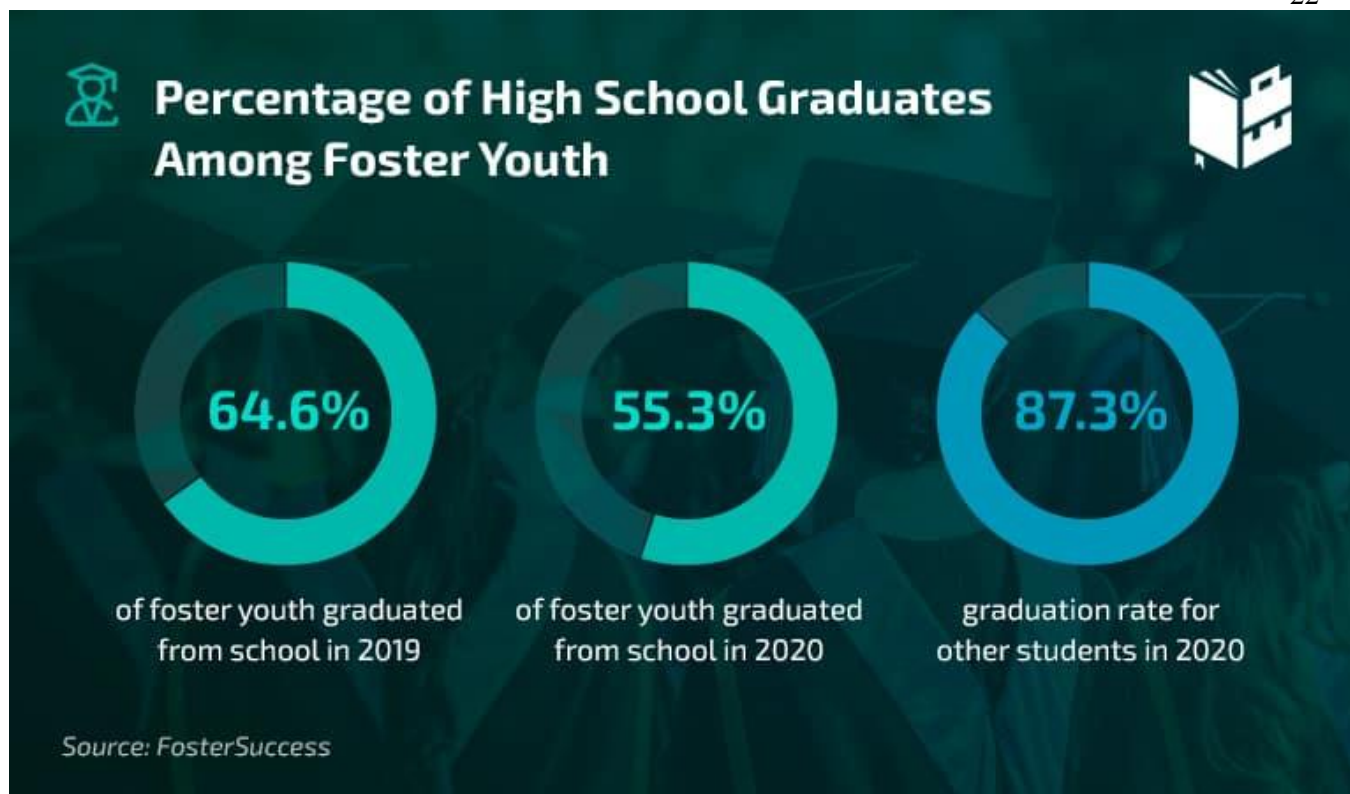


Figure 6: Graphs showing the percentage of youth and young adults in foster care who graduate high school in the United States (What To Become, 2021).

With little support to continue their education, many students who experience foster care leave high school before they graduate. The reasons are very diverse for why students ended up leaving high school before they graduate. The primary reason young adults in foster care stated for why they left before graduating for was that they needed to work and make money (Dept. of Ed, 2016). As many need to worry about basic survival needs, they have to prioritize making money over their education. Furthermore, many students in the foster care system would rather work so that they can leave their low-quality housing placements. Many other students do not have the benefit of not having to worry about food, shelter, safety, and additional basic resources. Thus, many students who experience foster care often perform at lower academic levels than their peers. It is important to note that the way the United States views academic

success is not equitable, as it prioritizes testing and grades over unique aspects in which students learn. Thus, students who are in foster care are not less intelligent, but simply do not have the same resources and supports as many of their peers. This often results in them not having the educational or attendance requirements to graduate. Not only do youth and young adults who experience foster care often have to leave due to financial reasons, but they often do not graduate due to not meeting the minimums set by the school. This is due to their increased risk for absences and poor grades as a result of lack of home support, lack of tutoring, lack of school supplies, and unaddressed mental health issues (Kothari, et al., 2018).

Chapter 5

Education as a Means to Uphold White Supremacy

When examining the importance of education for youth in the foster care system, the use of education to uphold ideals of white supremacy must be acknowledged. As explored in the history of the foster care system, schools have historically been used as a means to enforce Eurocentric culture and eradicate other cultures. Boarding schools for Indigenous children, often owned by Christian churches, prevented Native children from using their native languages, practicing their religion, wearing their own clothing, and living with their family (Little, 2018). School was used as tool to enforce whiteness as the culture of the United States, and education is continuously utilized to uphold racist ideals. Indigenous families were only granted the legal right to deny the US taking their children to boarding school in 1978; these boarding schools even continued to operate into the 1990s (Northern Plains Reservation Aid, n.d.). Additionally, education has been used to oppress Black Americans. In the 20th century, schools were segregated under the fake premise of “separate but equal.” This was not accurate, as schools for Black children received less funding, less resources, lower quality materials, and less support. Black children were unable to receive the same level of education as their white peers. Following this, when segregation itself was no longer legal, white people looked for new ways to ensure their schools stayed white. Racist housing practices prevented Black families from owning homes and redlining of predominantly BIPOC communities pushed Black families into underfunded areas of cities (Coates, 2014).

Schools in the United States function on state funding, and this funding is awarded to higher performing schools. White schools had access to resources and services that schools in communities of color did not have. Due to this, students in primarily white schools performed

better on tests and thus the schools received more funding. This creates a vicious cycle in which white and wealthy schools will continue to reap the benefits of education, while schools in communities of color struggle to support their students.

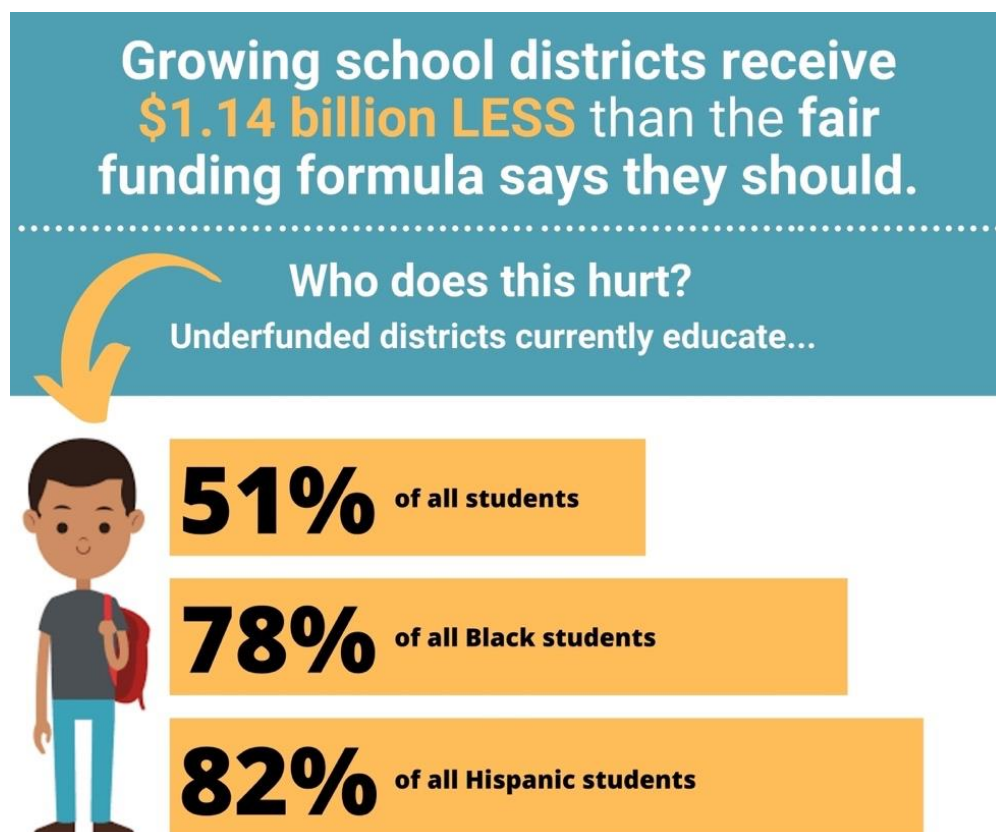


Figure 7: Breakdown of how children of color are more likely to experience underfunded schools (PAFairFunding, 2021).

Additionally, the core system of education was created with Euro-centric ideals. Subjects taught primarily focus on European and US history, English grammatical rules, math, and science. Attendance policies are extremely common. Actions such as fighting and skipping class are primarily met with punishment rather than help. These factors of the design of the United States system promote inequities, as there are limited attempts to provide help and support in place of disciplinary action. The very ideals that the school system puts students on the path of

earning money reveals built-in inequities. In a capitalist society, we are dependent upon workers providing labor for little money. School systems focus on memorization, competition, and obedience. The majority of schools are set up on a grading scale that rewards those who test well, rather than focusing on learning (Mengesha, 2020). High performance in high school often leads to college or post-secondary education, of which entrance is based on competition. The education system aims to create bosses and works, which in turn will perpetuate the unjust system.

Chapter 6

Benefits of Education

Education can provide students with not only knowledge but support systems that foster development and positive well-being. Spaces of education can promote collaboration, friendship, mentorship, curiosity, and growth. These aspects provide numerous benefits to students- as they allow them to develop their minds. When resources are provided for students, they are likely to achieve great academic success. This refers to not only earning high marks, but truly learning and growing as human beings. The education system in the United States is hyper-fixated on how to benefit the capitalist society we operate within. Thus, much of the educative process is based on memorization, authority, and “correctness.” This not only prevents students from developing unique aspects of their mind but continues to uphold white supremacist institutions. When students are centered in the learning environment, they have the space to grow.

When examining a population who suffers from emotional trauma, a lack of support, and a lack of resources, it is important to note that educational advocacy must occur. Children and young adults in the foster care system need increased educational advocacy to aid with absences, lost credits, instability, lack of access to supplies, and lack of access to special education (NCYL, 2021). Educational advocacy can take many forms, but it is vital to support students in foster care. Educational advocacy refers to addressing the unique needs of each student and providing them with the necessary tools to thrive in spaces of education.

For students with foster care, in order to make education equitable, it must address all of the barriers explored previously. For students in foster care, receiving counseling services from schools could be beneficial in addressing painful pasts and possible mental health issues. Education could provide students with a safe space to open up, as many of their housing

situations do not give them that space. In addition, an equitable education system can address unique learning styles and allow students to explore material at their own pace.

When examining overall benefits of education, a commonly cited one is graduation and degrees. It can be very beneficial in our society to graduate high school, as it helps in finding employment which allows one to money to live. Graduating high school aids in establishing one's self-sufficiency, as one can better seek out economic benefits.

Chapter 7

Promoting Educational Equity for Students in Foster Care

In order to create a more just education system, there must be cooperation between institutions. The foster care system and the education system must cooperatively advocate for the needs of the children and young adults within their system. For example, previous educational reforms have operated solely within the education system without an acknowledgement of the intersection of poverty and race (Warren, 2014). It is imperative to advocate for transformative change on various levels.

One important change is mandatory racial bias training for all case workers and educators. If educators and social workers were mandated to partake in training that reveals their racial biases, states could begin to examine the racism within their systems. Furthermore, diversity, equity, and inclusion training are important to promote the understanding of students' unique situations, diverse cultural backgrounds, specific abilities, and need for inclusion. These forms of training already exist- often through universities- and are beginning to be utilized in workplaces more often. Training should include microaggressions, attachment issues, the effects of trauma on students, grief training, and various disabilities and disorders. If this carried over to education, it could provide a basic step to undoing the racial biases and lack of inclusivity students in foster care often experience in schools.

An important aspect of creating equitable education systems for those in foster care is for schools to change the role in providing aid to their students in foster care. Schools have the ability to change curriculum requirements for teachers and encourage diverse teaching styles.

They can enroll children and young adults in necessary classes despite paperwork and documentation issues due to moving around. They can provide tutoring programs to students in foster care who may have missed decent amounts of coursework. Lastly, they can keep accurate school records; many students in foster care often face the educational barrier of not having updated documentation (Weinberg, 2004). This simple and minor adjustment could benefit students greatly.

Another key aspect of creating a nurturing educational environment is a complete reformation of the disciplinary system. The current disciplinary system, as discussed above, actively harms Black, Brown, and poor children who may have more behavioral issues as a result of difficult life experiences. Changing the way in which educators and officials in schools deal with problematic behavior is vital to ensuring the success of many students in foster care; behavioral issues should be met with attempts to address why issues are occurring. The majority of violence, fighting, skipping class, and other behavioral issues result from students' suffering and unaddressed emotional issues. If school policy changed and educators made a conscious effort to provide help and aid to students when they were acting differently than expected, students could be provided with the help they need to address behavioral issues. It is important to understand the reasons that discipline is carried out the way that it is in many schools in the United States. It often stems from the combination of intense racial biases along with burnout of educators due to low pay and high demands. These aspects should be addressed in order to promote changes within education system. The very ways in which schools carry out punishments create a power imbalance between school officials and teachers with students. This stems from educators being able to assign exclusionary punishments based on the principle that they have the power and their word is correct (Warnick & Scribner, 2020). Additionally, the

presence of officers and perpetuation of the school-to-prison pipeline further prioritize upholding the idea of “correct” behavior, rather than addressing why students are acting in such ways. This power imbalance not only leads to a dramatic number of disciplinary infractions, but it also leads to a lack of trust, respect, and community between students and educators. When dealing with behavioral issues, we must re-evaluate the use of authority in punishment. For example, we should eradicate the presence of police officers or any form of law enforcement within schools. While many believe that law enforcement is necessary in schools and communities that have high rates of violence or drug use, there are extremely more negative consequences. Police in schools often take the form of school resource officers (SROs) or campus resource officers (CROs) but they are commissioned by law enforcement and have the authority to arrest students (ACLU, 2021). They often utilize this authority to arrest students; especially students of color are especially affected due to racist beliefs held by many in law enforcement. A common argument in favor of SROs is that they address criminal behavior in schools, however, they often punish and arrest students for minor issues that do not require law enforcement at all. For example, officers often arrest students for things such as low-grade performance, tardiness, cursing and backtalk, minor pranks, making fun of officers, and even drug possession when students were not carrying drugs (ACLU, 2021). Children and young adults who experience the foster care system are three times more likely to be punished in school than their peers who do not experience foster care (Kothari, et al., 2018). The presence of these officers in school causes more harm than good to school environments, and the removal of police presence could have immense benefits. A key aspect of educational inequity is the removal of these officers in schools who fuel the school-to-prison pipeline. These enforcement officers have performed under the guise of preventing things like behavioral issues violence and school shootings, yet

they come at the cost of not hiring more teachers, counselors, or social workers (ACLU, 2021). If the billions of dollars from the federal government for policing in schools was redistributed to schools to invest in social workers, counselors, teacher, safe buildings, better food, and supplies for their students, behavioral issues would decrease. Additionally, students in foster care who often lack basic survival needs access to meals and increased resources provided by the schools they would be able to focus on their education rather than having to work to pay for their basic needs (Dept. of Ed, 2016). The reallocation of funding and resources could allow for more aid to those in foster care to address emotional issues, lack of finances, lack of basic necessities and supplies, and behavioral issues that result from their traumatic life experiences.

Additionally, research finds that students in foster care greatly benefit from having strong communities that they can find support in (Murray, 2013). This could take many forms such as awareness and outreach for students in foster care of extracurriculars and clubs that they are able to join. Rule 2 how often many students can foster care switch housing placements in schools they may lack an awareness of what community resources are available to them. It is important for educators and those in the school system to purposefully attempt to integrate students in foster care into the school community. This could take place through the clubs and extracurriculars but also through aiding students in foster care in becoming involved in student activities.

Another one of the major issues that students in foster care face is a lack of a supportive environment in their home life. Due to being removed from their families and often living in low quality housing placements, students who are in foster care often lack trusted adults and support networks to aid them in their education. A solution for this is mentorship programs established with students who are in foster care. Mentors could be any trusted adult from older students in

the school system, teachers, counselors, and community members. The execution of mentorship programs would depend on the individual needs of each student to allow for them to best be aided by their mentor. Mentors could provide supports that are not only emotional but also educational, for they could aid in tutoring and schoolwork in areas where the student in foster care has not received one-on-one help. Additionally, mentors would serve as a way to aid in communication between a student and foster care and other adults such as social workers and teachers, as power imbalances between students and adults can be daunting. Important because many students in foster care rely on schools and the education system for positive role models that students who are not in foster care may be able to receive at home and through family. Thus, educational mentors would take on the role of what parents are expected to be in the education system. This may look like attending teacher conferences, returning phone calls for the teacher, assessing enrollment, helping with grades, and checking in on the quality of the student's education (NCYL, 2021). When creating educational mentors, a network of mentors could be created in order to Communicate effectively with caseworkers and schools and two appeal to the specific needs of each student and foster care. There are a number of specialized mentors that can aid with other various topics such as law, local community resources, psychologists, and learning disabilities (NCYL, 2021). Mentors and advocates would be paired with students based on that student's needs and they would advocate directly for that student. This could have extremely positive outcomes with students having a support network to lean on, resources that they did not have access to before, and someone to help with the difficult and constant changes of life in the foster care system. More mentor programs could expand beyond the education system that currently exists and include things like financial literacy, sex education, and other life skills training. Education on these factors results in students in foster care being better

prepared to exist independently when they age out of foster care (SAMHSA, 2021). Programs like these are being carried out through various initiatives such as the Foster Youth Education Initiative and Silver Linings Mentoring who aim to match trained mentors with students in foster care. Implementation of these programs in each state, town, and school would require resources but yield significant results in fostering educational success for youth in the foster care system.

Furthermore, access to special education is important too many students in the foster care system. It is common for students who are in foster care to be placed into special education automatically upon entering a new school simply due to their experience in the foster care system and without an actual assessment on their educational needs. On the other hand, there are often students in foster care who would greatly benefit from special education but never received the needed support due to lack of awareness of their needs or lack of resources in the school. Child welfare agencies and social workers should consider the factors of a school and the needs of a student when placing children and young adults in new foster housing placements (NACAC, 2021). Schools should also make a much better attempt at understanding the needs of each student in order to avoid misplacing them. If students are able to receive need based on their specific way of learning, they are more likely to academically succeed.

On another note, one adjustment is the language used in schools. Language is important in preserving one's identity and treating individuals with respect, as language can carry a great deal of associations. An example of this is the way teachers use language to describe parents and families; teachers often use terms such as real instead of birth when referring to parents and often require assignments such as family trees and baby pictures in units in which they teach about families (NACAC, 2021). This could be not only exclusive to students in foster care but also emotionally harmful. Educational advocacy should aim to promote inclusive language and

inclusive assignments. Curriculum should not only be respectful of excluding certain students but should also purposely aim to include all students. Teachers and schools must make an effort to understand the cultures, backgrounds, and experiences that their students are willing to share with them in order to provide an inclusive and comprehensive education.

For students who are aging out of foster care, educational equity should include supports that go beyond their time in the school system. For example, providing students with funding grants for their post-graduation plans creates a more stable transition. Additionally, over half of US states allow young adults and adults to remain in foster care until they are 21 to allow for them to graduate high school and continue to get aid until they are ready to age out (Sciamanna, 2020). This should be policy in each state to ensure that those who experienced foster care have the necessary resources to become independent or pursue the path they desire. Additionally, resources for those aging out should be expanded to include educational mentorship programs.

While examining methods to promote educational equity, it is important to note the laws and policies currently in place regarding the topic. Laws such as No Child Left Behind of 2001 and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 both required schools to address the needs of students who were underperforming. The Uninterrupted Scholars Act of 2013 gave child welfare agencies access to education records they could not access before, which allows for easier communication between schools when students change placements. The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 required child welfare agencies to ensure emotional stability for the child and young adult while in the foster care system. While these acts were a big step towards closing the gaps of inequity, many of them fell short. For example, Fostering Connections allowed for students in foster care remain in their schools despite switching housing placements. However, this is not as easily carried out as it seems

because transportation to schools that are far away from one's current housing placement is not feasible. While it would be beneficial for students to remain in one school, driving multiple hours to school each day could end up being more harmful to the student (Lahey, 2014). Much of the current policy neglects to allot long-term funding for education systems, neglects feasibility, and does not address intersected issues of systemic poverty and institutionalized racism. Thus, it is important for educational equity to be advocated for at a policy level as well. For example, if policy could change to provide more money and resources to the foster care system, then more case workers and supplies could be provided to students in foster care.

Recommendations for policymakers include ensuring educational stability via the Fostering Connections Act of 2008. This would take the form of requiring child welfare agencies to factor educational needs into placements, keeping students in the same schools when possible, requiring communication between schools when a student has to switch placements, paying for transportation, and helping with a transition plan when the student reaches the age of aging out (NACAC, 2021). This would help ensure that schools are acting in accordance with educational needs of students in foster care. Furthermore, policy could fund tuition waivers to allow for students in foster care to have access to forms of higher education. Beyond high school, higher education is not possible for many in foster care due to academic performance and financial limitations. It could be beneficial to students to aid in the financial aspect of education.

This thesis proposes numerous ways in which the education system can be made more equitable for students in the foster care system. These function at community, local, state, and national levels and have various methods of implementation. It is imperative to society that students in foster care are advocated for, and education must be made a safe and inclusive space.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

From the beginning of the creation of child welfare in the United States, it has been an inequitable system. Through its history, it has functioned to punish and separate poor people, make a profit, segregate Black people, uphold white supremacy, and serve as a transient placement for children and youth. These factors result in the system being full of issues that harm the children and youth who operate with it. The inequities in the foster care system often led to a lack of inclusivity, lack of support networks, unsafe environments, perpetuation of risk factors, and unjust punishments. Educational environments could provide a safe and nurturing environment for students in foster care if equitable, and so there must be a push towards equitable education. Equitable education includes removing police from schools, establishing mentorship programs, extending supports beyond aging out, mandating racial bias and inclusivity trainings for educators, ensuring adequate communication between child welfare agencies and educators, increasing funding for educational resources, and collaborating with local communities to ensure support for students who experience the foster care system.

REFERENCES

- 19 intriguing Foster Care Education Statistics (2021)*. What To Become. (2021, March 18). Retrieved April 4, 2022, from <https://whattobecome.com/blog/foster-care-education-statistics/>
- Age and gender characteristics of U.S. Foster Care Population Remain Consistent*. Kids Count Data Center. (2020, April 13). Retrieved April 3, 2022, from <https://datacenter.kidscount.org/updates/show/263-age-and-gender-of-us-foster-care-population>
- Andrews, D. C. (2014, March 10). The Consciousness Gap in Education[Video]. TED. Youtube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iOrgf3wTUbo>
- Bates, R. J. (1980a) Bureaucracy, professionalism and knowledge: Structures of authority and structures of control. *Education Research and Perspectives*, 7, 66-76.
- Berman, E. (1985). The improbability of meaningful educational reform. *Issues in Education*, 3, 99-112.
- Blakemore, E. (2019, April 9). *'Orphan Trains' Brought Homeless NYC Children To Work On Farms Out West*. History. Retrieved April 3, 2022, from <https://www.history.com/news/orphan-trains-childrens-aid-society>
- Brown, J. (2021, January 26). *Disproportionality and Race Equity in Child Welfare*. NCSL. Retrieved April 3, 2022, from <https://www.ncsl.org/research/human-services/disproportionality-and-race-equity-in-child-welfare.aspx>
- Children's Bureau timeline*. Child Welfare Information Gateway. (n.d.). Retrieved March 2, 2022, from <https://www.childwelfare.gov/more-tools-resources/resources-from-childrens-bureau/timeline1/>
- Coates, T.-N. (2014, June). *The Case For Reparations*. The Atlantic. Retrieved April 3, 2022, from <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/06/the-case-for-reparations/361631/>
- Cox, A. A., & Lee, C. C. (2007). Challenging Educational Inequities: School Counselors as Agents of Social Justice. In C. C. Lee (Ed.), *Counseling for social justice* (pp. 3–14). American Counseling Association.
- Creamer, J. (2020, September 15). *Inequalities Persist Despite Decline in Poverty for all Major Race and Hispanic Origin Groups*. United States Census Bureau. Retrieved April 3, 2022, from <https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2020/09/poverty-rates-for-blacks-and-hispanics-reached-historic-lows-in-2019.html>

- Darling-Hammond, L. (1998, March 1). *Unequal opportunity: Race and education*. Brookings. Retrieved April 3, 2022, from <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/unequal-opportunity-race-and-education/>
- Educational Needs of Children in Foster Care and Adoption*. The North American Council on Adoptable Children. (2019, October 15). Retrieved April 3, 2022, from <https://nacac.org/advocate/nacacs-positions/educational-needs/>
- Educational Stability for Children and Youth in Foster Care in Pennsylvania*. Center for Schools and Communities. (2022). Retrieved April 3, 2022, from <https://www.pafostercare.org/educational-stability/>
- Fostering Success. (2020). *A special report on Education Outcomes: A voice and vision for Indiana's foster youth* (Report No. 2). Fostering Success. <https://fostersuccess.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/2020-education-outcomes-report-overview.pdf>
- History and Culture- Boarding Schools*. Northern Plains Reservation Aid. (n.d.). Retrieved March 10, 2022, from http://www.nativepartnership.org/site/PageServer?pagename=airc_hist_boardingschools
- Hogan, P. T., & Siu, S.-F. (1988). Minority Children and the child welfare system: An historical perspective. *Social Work*, 33(6), 493–498. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sw/33.6.493>
- Johnson, L. (2019, March 28). *As more schools aid foster students, data on results needed, researchers say*. Youth Today. Retrieved April 3, 2022, from <https://youthtoday.org/2019/03/as-more-colleges-states-aid-youth-in-foster-care-data-on-results-is-needed-researchers-say/#:~:text=She%20found%20that%20students%20who,because%20they%20needed%20to%20work>
- Kothari, B. H., Godlewski, B., McBeath, B., McGee, M., Waid, J., Lipscomb, S., & Bank, L. (2018). A longitudinal analysis of school discipline events among youth in Foster Care. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 93, 117–125. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chilyouth.2018.07.017>
- Lahey, J. (2014, February 28). *Every Time Foster Kids Move, They Lose Months of Academic Progress*. The Atlantic. Retrieved April 3, 2022, from <https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2014/02/every-time-foster-kids-move-they-lose-months-of-academic-progress/284134/>
- Lalas, Jose W, and Heidi L Strikwerda, editors. *Minding the Marginalized Students through Inclusion, Justice, and Hope*. EMERALD GROUP PUBL, 2021.

- Little, B. (2018, November 1). *How boarding schools tried to 'kill the Indian' through assimilation*. History. Retrieved April 3, 2022, from <https://www.history.com/news/how-boarding-schools-tried-to-kill-the-indian-through-assimilation>
- Lohmann, R. C. (2016, August 14). Understanding Student Needs. Psychology Today. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/teen-angst/201608/understanding-student-needs>
- Lopez, K. (n.d.). Black Foster Youth Lives Matter. NASPA. <https://www.naspa.org/blog/black-foster-youth-lives-matter>
- Love, D. A. (2021, August 10). *Perspective | residential schools were a key tool in America's long history of Native Genocide*. The Washington Post. Retrieved April 1, 2022, from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2021/08/10/residential-schools-were-key-tool-americas-long-history-native-genocide/>
- MenGesha, K. (2020, September 16). *How Capitalism Shaped Education*. Peace Innovation Institute. Retrieved April 3, 2022, from <https://www.peaceinnovation.com/blog/how-capitalism-shaped-education>
- Metz, M. H. (1988). Some missing elements in the educational reform movement. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 24, 446-460.
- Murray, D. (2003). *Resilient African American Male College Students: A Qualitative Study of Supports and Challenges for Those From Foster Care* (No. 3568183) [Doctoral Dissertation, California State University, Fresno]. Proquest Dissertations Publishing.
- Okpych, Nathanael J., and Mark E. Courtney. "Does Education Pay for Youth Formerly in Foster Care? Comparison of Employment Outcomes with a National Sample." *Children and Youth Services Review*, vol. 43, Aug. 2014, pp. 18–28., <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chilyouth.2014.04.013>.
- RHIhub. (n.d.). *Substance Use and Misuse in Rural Areas*. Rural Health Information Hub. Retrieved April 3, 2022, from <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/topics/substance-use>
- SAMHSA. (2013). *Substance Abuse Treatment: Addressing the Specific Needs of Women*. US Department of Health and Human Services.
- SAMHSA. (2021, November 9). *Mentoring prepares foster care youth for adulthood*. US Department of Health and Human Services. Retrieved April 3, 2022, from <https://www.samhsa.gov/homelessness-programs-resources/hpr-resources/mentoring-foster-care-youth>

- Scheurich, James Joseph, and Michael Imber. "Educational Reforms Can Reproduce Societal Inequities: A Case Study." *Educational Administration Quarterly*, vol. 27, no. 3, 1 Aug. 1991, pp. 297–320., <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161x91027003004>.
- Sciamanna, J. (2020). *Independent Living Options for youth in states with approval to extend care*. CWLA. Retrieved April 4, 2022, from <https://www.cwla.org/independent-living-options-for-youth-in-states-with-approval-to-extend-care/#:~:text=States%20with%20approved%20title%20IV,North%20Dakota%2C%20Ohio%2C%20Oregon%2C>
- Segermark, D. R. (2017). Students in Foster Care at Risk of School Failure: Addressing Multiple Needs (No. 52) [Masters Paper, St. Cloud State University]. theRepository.
- Simms, M. D. (1991). Foster children and the foster care system, part I: History and legal structure. *Current Problems in Pediatrics*, 21(7), 297–321. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0045-9380\(91\)90056-q](https://doi.org/10.1016/0045-9380(91)90056-q)
- Stott, T., & Gustavsson, N. (2010). Balancing permanency and stability For Youth in Foster Care. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 32(4), 619–625. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chilyouth.2009.12.009>
- Students in foster care*. US Department of Education. (2016, June 27). Retrieved April 3, 2022, from <https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/foster-care/index.html>
- Substance abuse and Child Maltreatment*. Child Welfare Information Gateway. (2003, December). Retrieved April 3, 2022, from https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/subabuse_childmal.pdf
- U.S. Department of Education. (2016, June 27). Students in Foster Care. U.S. Department of Education. <https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/foster-care/index.html>
- Voices For Children. (2020, May 26). *History of foster care*. Voices for Children | CASA Program. Retrieved April 1, 2022, from <https://www.speakupnow.org/history-of-foster-care/>
- Washington, K. (2021, May 24). *School Resource Officers: When the Cure is Worse than the Disease*. ACLU of Washington. Retrieved April 3, 2022, from <https://www.aclu-wa.org/story/school-resource-officers-when-cure-worse-disease>
- Wardrip, K. (2014). *Mapping our community: Foster care population in the United States*. Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia. Retrieved April 4, 2022, from <https://www.philadelphiafed.org/community-development/mapping-our-community-foster-care-population-in-the-united-states>

Warnick, B. R., & Scribner, C. F. (2020). Discipline, punishment, and the moral community of Schools. *Theory and Research in Education*, 18(1), 98–116.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1477878520904943>

Warren, M. R. (2014). Transforming Public Education: The Need for an Educational Justice Movement. *New England Journal of Public Policy*, 26(1), 1-16.
<https://scholarworks.umb.edu/nejpp/vol26/iss1/11/>

What is the foster care-to-prison pipeline? Juvenile Law Center. (2018, May 26). Retrieved April 3, 2022, from <https://jlc.org/news/what-foster-care-prison-pipeline>

ACADEMIC VITA of Madeline Brown

EDUCATION

Schreyer Honors College at The Pennsylvania State University

Bachelor of Science in Psychology- Life Sciences

Minor in Anthropology

Honors: Recipient of the Academic Excellence Scholarship, Dean's List (Spring 2019- Spring 2021),

University Park, PA

Graduation: May 2022

EXPERIENCE

DC Social Justice Fellowship

Fellow and Teacher of High School Students; Peer Mentor

Pennsylvania State University

January 2021-May 2022

- Developed and implemented student-centered curriculum on social justice topics for DC high school students
- Created a Civic Action Plan to assist a local community with specific focus on foster care
- Collaborated with other fellows and corresponding teachers in collaboration with Georgetown Law School
- Mentored and educated 16 fellows through the fellowship following completion in it

Executive Board

THON Chair- Delta Phi Epsilon

Pennsylvania State University

Spring 2019-Spring 2022

- Planned and executed sorority fundraising efforts benefitting THON philanthropy for pediatric cancer
- Communicated with alumni, corporations, and local communities to raise awareness and fundraising for THON

New Member Educator- Delta Phi Epsilon

- Educated and mentored 43 new members on the history and values of the sorority
- Educated and mentored 25 new members in a 7-week initiation program
- Facilitated numerous events between brothers and initiates to nurture relationships

East Whiteland Township

Summer Camp Counselor

Malvern, PA

Summer 2018-Current

- Lead and cared for 20-30 elementary school aged children
- Created engaging activities for campers each day and adapted to problem situations
- Trained new counselors to ensure a healthy and positive environment for campers

RESEARCH

Research Assistant

Vescio Social Psychology Research Laboratory

Pennsylvania State University

Fall 2019-Fall 2021

- Analyzed literature and carries out comparative analysis on existing social psychology research
- Conducts statistical analysis on research data utilizing IBM SPSS Statistics program
- Contributes to research on masculinity threat and various attitudes (ex. race, fatphobia, sexuality)

Psi Chi Research Conference

Spring 2021

- Presented "Attitudes Towards Use of Police Force" to conference attendees and judges
 - Worked as first author on research through Psychology Honors Research Methods course

EXTRACURRICULARS / VOLUNTEERING

- Active member in *Psi Chi Psychology Honor Society*
- Volunteer translator at the Boston Public Library
- Certified writing tutor

SKILLS

Hard Skills

- Proficiency in IBM SPSS data analysis
- Applied knowledge of Microsoft Programs
- Experience marketing and social media outreach

Soft Skills

- Leadership and cooperation with others
- Critical thinking and adaptability
- Interpersonal skills