

The harsh reality of the foster care system

[Family](#), [Children](#)



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The Problems That Foster Youths Face

Have you ever heard anything dealing with the issues of the foster care system lately? Well, to begin with, the foster care system, is a government program where children are placed in if they ever become an orphan or are taken custody of by the child protective services. Each year thousands of children are placed in foster care and the majority of them enter the system due to neglect or abuse. All of these children need to deal with the rejection and separation of their parents and sometimes that causes other issues that make the child more vulnerable. Failure to find a satisfactory and suitable foster care arrangement can be as detrimental to a child as the environment from which he or she was removed. As a former foster youth, I have dealt with many challenges stemming from the foster care system that include psychological disorders and social issues in which don't allow me to live well on a day to day basis. However, I strive to overcome them by seeing my psychologist and guidance counselor that can help me with my depression

and anxiety. While there are those that may argue that the current foster care system is helping children with emotional and financial support that can help them succeed in life, that isn't all true, due to the fact that thousands of foster youths are facing extensive challenges when trying to start their own lives.

Lack of Support

The current foster care system today does not provide adequate support to foster children exiting the system that would allow them to have a successful future and become successful individuals. As a matter of fact, resources such as employment opportunities and low cost housing, can enable foster youth to find and build their own lives. However since there isn't enough funding and representation for the foster care system, it has only gotten worse year after year. According to Krebs, " Each year tens of thousands of teenagers are released from the foster care system in the United States without high school degrees or strong family relationships" (Krebs 26). Betsy Krebs and Paul Pitcoff from Rutgers University Press, address to society in their book, that every community should participate and advocate for disadvantaged youth who face obstacles on a daily basis. *Beyond The Foster Care System*, informs readers about foster youths who have become successful and let's us know how we can help more age out of the system on the right path to success. Personally, in my experience when I aged out of the foster care system I was met with the right people that helped me go to college and successfully start a new chapter in my life as an individual. It breaks my heart whenever I see a former foster youths living in poverty or not have a job, because they never aged out of the system in the right footing like I did.

Remember in life, we are not equipped or ready to go through this world alone, and we always need someone that can guide us towards becoming successful individuals.

Lack of Public Attention

In today's society many Americans have never worried about the state of the foster care system, in fact they worry about other problems that actually affect their lives, and this is the reason that it has many problems associated with it. As a matter of fact, I rarely see the current problems of the foster care system getting talked about in the media. No wonder the foster care system is in bad shape, and is extremely broken apart from its original plan. The authors, Christina Leber and Craig Winston Lecroy, did a study in order to find what's the public's perception of the foster care system. After doing their study, the results determined that society deemed the issues related to the foster care system as less significant compared to other societal problems. In the end, Leber and Lecroy want to bring awareness to society in order to resolve problems associated with the foster care system. “

Respondents indicated a larger body of knowledge regarding the foster care system than was initially expected. However, when comparing the foster care system to other national social issues, respondents consistently placed the foster care system as less important and less serious than other social issues”(Leber & Lecroy 2). The authors Martha Shirk and Gary Strangler, both from the Westview Press argue that society should help out foster youths and grant them opportunities that other young people take for granted. These include affordable housing, higher education, and medical care. Overall this book makes a call of duty, to society and to law and policy

makers, that's should care about every youth's future including foster youths. " For many youth raised in foster care, it means largely unhappy endings, including sudden homelessness, unemployment, dead-end jobs, loneliness and despair" (Shirk and Strangler 32). In addition, when it comes to dealing with the foster care system, it has nearly always been forgotten among society than other societal issues, not that there less important, but it should be addressed more often to society so there can be a change.

The Housing Problems

The foster care system today, doesn't provide foster youth who aged out of the system with the proper housing opportunities that they can take advantage of and have a steady life. The rate of homelessness for foster care youth is excessively high and many don't have the resources to strive for a higher education. The author Thorn Reilly, proposes to inform society, specifically the government in her study about how a large portion of the foster youth leaving the system, find it hard leaving and transitioning to make a life on their own. Richards implies that we need better programs and opportunities for these youths, so they can make a healthy transition into their own lives. " Although youth reported exposure to independent living training while in care, few reported concrete assistance" (Reilly 727).

Gabrielle Richards in her study, recounts two stories of Michael and Emily, who aged out of the foster care system. The article also examines the report from the housing development and compares it with the stories of two former foster youth who have encountered obstacles because they weren't given the right opportunities towards having their own homes. Both Michael and Emily couldn't afford to pay for housing even though their education was

covered for college. In the end, this article brings awareness to the public about the housing problems associated with the foster care system. “ Each year, about 30, 000 foster care youths age out of the foster care system. Many of them exit without finding a stable, affordable, permanent living arrangement” (Richards 19). In addition, the foster care system still isn’t providing its aging youths enough housing programs that enables them to have a proper home, because there isn’t sufficient funding and contribution from the government and society.

Conclusion

All in all, youths exiting foster care definitely need social, emotional and financial support as they navigate the transition to their own independent adulthood. While there may be individuals who believe that the foster care system today is helping youths succeed in life, that isn’t the case due to the fact that it lacks all the essentials of what it actually is meant to do, and that is to help disadvantaged foster children succeed in life after enduring the challenge of not having that strong parental support from their biological parents. The current foster system definitely needs more funding, so it can provide foster youths with the right opportunities and resources that they can take advantage of and become successful. These resources include educational, housing, and financial support. So now that I have explained what are the problems associated with the foster care system, and how we can resolve them now it is your chance to do something about this in your community. I understand that foster parenting is not for everybody, however anyone can do something to help out foster youth in need. From helping foster youth with tutoring to helping foster youth find housing programs,

each and everyone of us can make a difference in our communities. Don't forget that, " helping one person might not change the whole world, but it could change the world for one person" (Feldhusen).

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