Creating a Blueprint for Success Conference
First Year Experiences Contributing to Foster Youth Higher Education Attainment
Workshop Session D

- Welcome
- Workshop Learning Outcomes
- Introductions
  - Sean Hogan, PhD, MSW
  - Grace Johnson, EdD,
  - Tamika Jones, MSW candidate
  - Maria Pineda, MSW
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Research Overview

- Foster Youth in Higher Education Study (Hogan, 2012)
- Quantitative longitudinal panel study of former and current foster youth transitioning to adulthood through higher education (four-year university)
- Study participants were interviewed just prior to beginning a post-secondary educational experience and again at the end of their first academic year
Interviews were conducted face-to-face by the principal investigator and graduate student researchers.

- Interviews lasted approximately 60-90 minutes.
- Interviews were conducted on campuses, in study participants’ homes, and various community locations.
- Study participants were compensated $50 for each interview.

Of 123 study participants recruited at baseline, 114 study participants (92.7%) completed baseline and follow-up interviews.
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Multiple domains were assessed, including:

- Social networks
- Social capital
- Trust
- Campus support
- Mentorship
- Education
- Self-esteem
- Housing
- Physical health
- Mental health
- Substance use
- Social support
- Victimization
- Religion and spirituality
- Foster care experience
- Food insecurity
# Study Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Mean (SD)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td>Age (years)</td>
<td>19.53 (2.33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>30.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>69.3</td>
<td>Biological Siblings</td>
<td>3.78 (2.83)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
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<td>Foster Care Experience</td>
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<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>Age at initial placement</td>
<td>9.87 (5.44)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
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<td>Placements (lifetime)</td>
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<td>Caucasian</td>
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<td>Time in care (years)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>35.1</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>High Schools Attended</td>
<td>2.10 (1.41)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
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<td>Grade Point Average (0-4.0)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Failed at least one course first year</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td>High school</td>
<td>3.36 (0.44)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>College</td>
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► What is Social Capital?
  ► Social capital is a resource embedded in the social networks and relationships available to individuals and groups for the purpose of producing or maintaining individual or collective well-being
  ► One important characteristic of social capital is that the resources embedded in social relationships and connections must be accessible
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- Social Capital and Foster Youth in Higher Education
  - Foster youth require assistance adjusting and transitioning to life on campus at major institutions of higher education
  - Traditional students often have familial supports to assist with issues and problems experienced while away from home
  - Social relationships and connections made at a four-year university can be beneficial beyond college
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- Social Capital on College Campuses
  - Peer support
  - Mentors
  - Campus support programs
  - Campus groups and organizations
  - Institutional support
    - Professors
    - Advisors
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- Highlights of Primary Research Results
  - Over 90% of students in the FYHE study indicated having an adult in their life they considered a mentor
  - Approximately two-thirds of students in the FYHE study indicated having an on-campus mentor
    - About half came from campus support programs
    - About 25% were academic faculty
  - Social capital did not change significantly between starting school and the end of the first academic year
    - It appears many youth had a single person in their network they could rely on for a majority of their social capital
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- Secondary Research Overview
  - Foster Youth Higher Education Study (Hogan, 2012)
  - Social Connections and Relationship Development
  - Significance of Qualitative Method Used
  - Survey Participant Sample Demographics
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- RESEARCH STUDY PARTICIPANT ETHNICITY

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<tr>
<th>ETHNICITY</th>
<th>n</th>
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<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asian American</td>
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- TOTAL                  | 30 | 100|
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- Brigham Young University
- California State University, Fullerton
- California State Polytechnic University, Pomona
- Loyola Marymount University
- National University
- New York University
- San Francisco State University
- University of California, Berkeley
- University of California, Los Angeles
- University of California, Riverside
- University of California, Santa Barbara
- University of Southern California
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- Research Data
  - 77% of survey participants belonged to foster youth support programs.
  - 90% of survey participants felt a personal connection to at least one person on college campus.
  - 83% of interview participants persisted to year two.
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- Highlights of Secondary Research Results
  - Resiliency and Positive Social Communication
  - Significance of Mentor Relationships
    - Formal
    - Informal
  - Connection to Bio-Ecological Model of Human Development
Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Theory of Human Development

Santrock, J., (2013)
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Interview participant lived experience quotes about resiliency and positive social communication:

▶ “Just having a positive attitude, it could be both academically in your classes and also even socially in kind of making those connections with people.”

▶ “I’m really good at networking, I’m very social. I’m very confident I am able to adjust to a lot of situations because of being a foster kid.”

▶ “Just being independent and knowing that I’ve gone through worse stuff than mid-terms, and finals.”

▶ “I’m optimistic, resilient, you know, I come back when I fall.”

▶ “The ability to communicate well with others. It’s like an advantage. And asking for help when I need it.”

▶ “Definitely staying on top of stuff. Um, not slacking off. Procrastination is a no-no. Using TA hours and talking to your professors.”
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Interview participant lived experience quotes about campus support programs:

- “Guardian Scholars has expanded my social network. It has challenged me to be social around others, I am working on that.”
- “Renaissance Scholars program is very supportive both educationally, emotionally and socially. The networking Renaissance Scholars program offers is the most beneficial.”
- “I am a very shy person and its difficult meeting new people. The Guardian Scholars Program made it a little easier to get to know others.”
- “It’s easier to meet people when you know they have the same situation that I battle with, the same background.”
- “Renaissance Scholars is very helpful in branching me out to everything else.”
- “The only reason I had friends was because of Guardian Scholars. That gave me the confidence. Without the Guardian Scholars program I would have dropped out.”
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Tamika Jones
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Maria Pineda
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Participant Workshop Activity
Foster Youth Critical Microsystems On/Off University Campus

Community Mentor

Foster Youth & Biological Family

Off Campus Employment

Foster Youth Community Organizations

Foster Youth Student & FY Campus Support Staff

Financial Aid Advisor

Campus Clubs & Organizations

Academic Counselor

Faculty

Classroom Peers

On Campus Employment

Foster Youth Peers
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Social Connections + Relationship Development =
Social Capital
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Discussion