



A Campaign to Ensure Bright
Futures for Kids in Foster Care

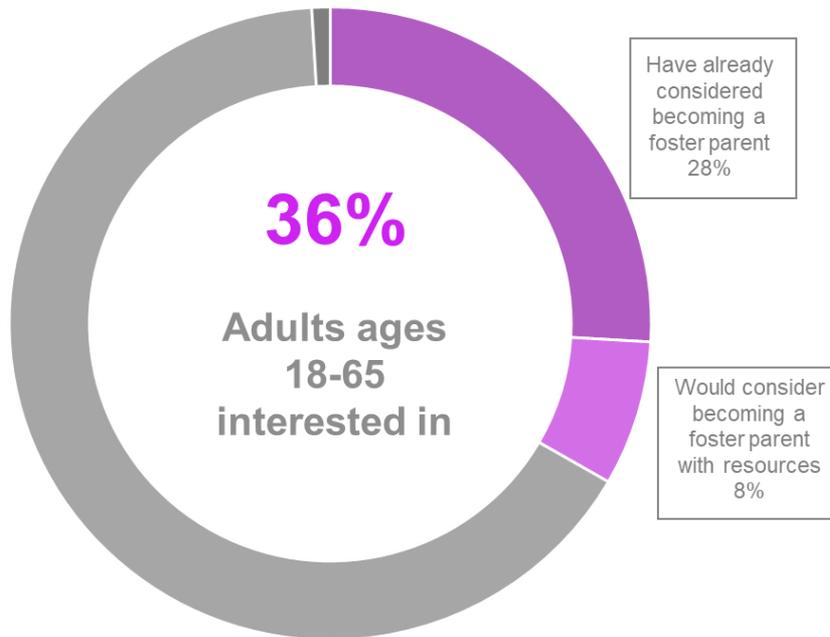
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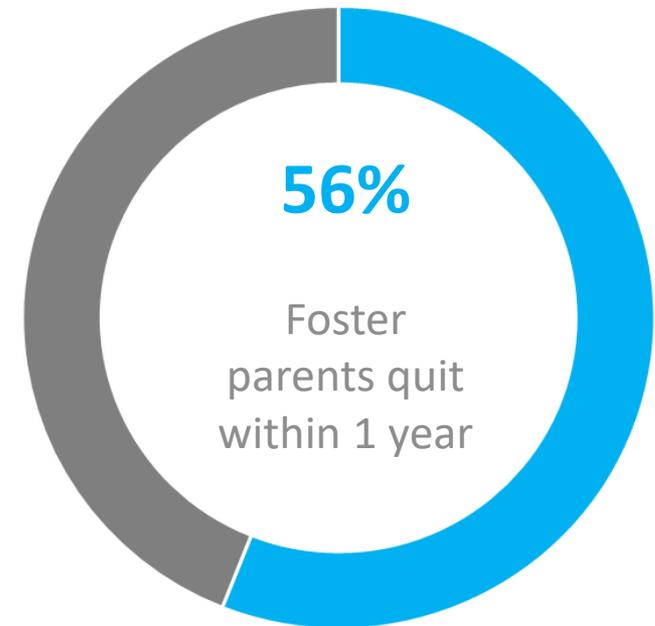
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- We are facing a severe shortage of foster parents – we simply do not have enough foster parents to place all children for whom a family placement is appropriate
 - It is getting harder to recruit foster parents
 - Too many foster parents feel ill prepared or supported to effectively care for the children needing families
 - We currently place children in shelters and non-therapeutic group settings simply because we lack better alternatives
 - We severely lack accurate and accessible data on current, former and perspective foster parents
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Do We Have a Foster Parent Recruitment or a Retention Problem?

Foster Parent Consideration



Foster Parent Retention



Source: 2017 Harris Poll

<https://dciw4f53l7k9i.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/2017-US-Foster-Care-Attitudes.pdf>

Source: US Dept. Health & Human Services

<https://aspe.hhs.gov/report/understanding-foster-parenting-using-administrative-data-explore-retention>

Why Do Foster Parents Quit?

- Most foster parents quit because agencies (not the children) are too hard to deal with
 - Foster parents feel unprepared, unsupported and disrespected/unappreciated
 - Foster parents feel excluded from discussions about how best to care for the children in their homes
 - Foster parents want to do more for the children in their care but feel like their hands are tied
- Factors that hurt foster parent retention create unstable foster care placements
 - When foster parents “give up” on a child, they are really giving up on themselves
 - Constant turnover of foster parents leads to having very few experienced foster parents, few willing/able to care for children with more challenges behaviors and medical conditions



The Impact of High Quality Foster Parenting on Child Outcomes

- Safety
 - Prevent unsafe parent-child conflicts
 - Prevent children from harming themselves
- Permanency
 - High quality parenting increases stability
 - Children with stable placements while in foster care are much more likely to achieve permanency and achieve permanency more quickly
- Well being
 - Placement instability is associated with attachment disorders, increased stress-related responses that alter brain chemistry
 - Instability often exacerbates child behavioral problems and other mental health problems, increases use of residential care
 - Instability associated with poorer school achievement and increased delinquency

- Reducing foster care instability saves money
 - Shorter lengths of stay in care
 - Fewer high cost residential placements
 - Better child outcomes lead to reduced use of mental health services, dependency on public services and increased future tax revenue from high earnings potential
 - Less administrative costs associated with finding new placements
- Retention of foster parents saves money
 - Lower costs for foster parent recruitment and training
 - More seasoned foster parents are willing and able to care for children with greater challenges
- Opportunities to promote foster parent retention are inexpensive
 - Many policy options to better support foster parents have no or low-costs
 - Effective foster parent training and support programs have high ROI, especially if targeted to particular foster parents (e.g. parents within their first year of fostering)



Federal and State Foster Parent Policies

- Federal

- Foster home licensing
- Reasonable and prudent parenting
- Participation in court
- Child and Family Services Reviews
- Outcomes monitoring (placement stability)

- State

- Foster home licensing
- Foster Parent Bill of Rights
- Responding to allegations of abuse and neglect
- Supports available to foster parents (liability insurance, respite care, tax benefits .etc)



About CHAMPS

CHAMPS is a national **policy and communications** campaign to ensure bright futures for kids in foster care by promoting the highest quality parenting.

Campaign **goals**:

- Policy reforms in 20-25 states to support high quality foster parenting
- Federal policy changes that incentivize states to enhance supports to foster parents
- Strengthen public will by changing narrative about foster parents

CHAMPS is **NOT** a foster parent recruitment campaign





A New Partnership

CHAMPS is a call to action for a new partnership between foster parents and the state and local agencies responsible for foster care programs.

Public agencies must acknowledge foster parents as the most important intervention in a child's life and make them a priority.

They must ensure that foster parent have the tools, training, and support they need to be the amazing parents children deserve.

Children are resilient and with a caring family and the right support, they will be able to heal, grow and flourish.



National Campaign Partners

Lead Coalition Partners

North American Council on Adoptable Children, Foster Club, Children's Village, Youth Law Center, Christian Alliance for Orphans, American Academy of Pediatrics, Children's Defense Fund

Research Partner

The Brookings Institution, Center on Children and Families

Funding Partners

Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, The Duke Endowment, Georgia Department of Human Services, Lumos, Annie E. Casey Foundation, Redlich Horwitz Foundation, Conrad N. Hilton Foundation

State Lead Partners – In development

Parents as partners in decision maker

Foster parent advisory boards

Foster parent participation in court proceedings

Improved access to information, such as education and health

Quality caregiving

Kinship care: expedited / provisional licensing,

Peer support

Effective Training

Dedicated support workers for foster parents

Quality assurance

Census of foster parent capacity of active, diverse, licensed, trained families

Specialized plans to recruit, train and support foster parents caring for special needs populations

Modernize foster parent licensing

Foster parent feedback

Quality foster parenting = Improved outcomes for children and families



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