

The CHAMPS Campaign's *Point of View* Video Project

What is CHAMPS?

CHAMPS is a national campaign to ensure bright futures for kids in foster care by promoting the highest quality parenting. CHAMPS builds on research that shows loving, supportive families – whether birth, kin, foster or adoptive – are critical to the healthy development of all children. Leveraging this research, CHAMPS aims to spur policy reforms in 20 to 25 states over five years to ensure that foster parents are equipped with the training and support they need to be the best they can.

What is *Point of View*?

The CHAMPS Point of View video project is designed to lift up the voices of young people, parents, child welfare leaders, community-based stakeholders, and other in support of the campaign's goals. The CHAMPS website is featuring short video segments by foster parents, young people and others who have a personal or professional point of view on foster care. The CHAMPS campaign will drive policy makers to the website and will show videos during presentations and meetings. Your voices and points of view will help CHAMPS raise national attention about the importance of quality foster parenting in the lives of children and youth.

Who can participate?

Anyone who has something to say about the importance of quality foster parenting can participate, especially youth and foster parents but we hope to hear from a wide range of interested stakeholders. This guidance is designed for youth and foster parents, and can be adapted for others. CHAMPS invites you to record a video and share your point of view!

I'd like to make a video. Where should I begin?

Keep in mind: short videos are best. We'd encourage you to keep your video under three minutes, ideally one or two minutes!

You should share only what you like, but we encourage you to start your video segment with your first name, hometown (or state you're from), and something brief about your connection to foster care. For example:

"My name is Joanne, and I live in Cleveland. I'm an adult now, but I lived in foster care from age __ to __."

"I'm Bill from Honolulu. My wife and I have been foster parents for 12 years. We've had 9 children in our home over the years, and now have two teen girls that we foster, in addition to our two biological kids."

TIP: Consider these videos as a way to make a few key points, not as a forum for sharing a full story.

How do you submit a video?

You can submit completed videos to video@fosteringchamps.org

What format should we use?

We plan to upload to YouTube, their format options are

here: <https://support.google.com/youtube/troubleshooter/2888402?hl=en> We recommend following the 1080 format, which makes the videos landscape at 1080px by 1920px. YouTube on desktop uses a 16:9 aspect ratio player.

Will my video be posted on the CHAMPS website?

The CHAMPS campaign has certain requirements that submissions need to meet in order to be approved for posting.

These include:

- Videos must be under 3 minutes in length. The optimal length is 2 minutes.
- Videos should have a positive tone—either highlight what worked or suggest ways that things can be made better. Please don't bash the foster care system or any particular worker or parent.
- Videos should be connected to CHAMPS, meaning that they should have a main message about how quality foster parenting is important to children and/or what is needed to promote better foster care experiences for both young people and parents. The video might feature an example or two, or might be a more general statement.
- Videos can be creative and individualized, but videos should not name others – definitely no bashing the foster care system or any particular worker or parent.
- Videos cannot feature youth age 18 or under, or youth who are currently in foster care.
- Videos should be mindful of language.

We hope to post all videos we receive. Be sure to include your contact information when you submit your video.

What should I say?

Only share what you like. It's not necessary to share personal or private information. We encourage you to focus on making a point that's important to you. Here are some sample questions to prompt ideas:

Question prompts for young people who have experienced foster care:

- What's one example of something a foster parent did that helped you heal from prior trauma or hardship?
- What's one example of something a foster parent did that helped you have a "normal" experience as a teenager – something that made you feel more like your friends who were not in foster care?
- What's one example of something a foster parent did that helped you to overcome a challenge? In other words, what's an example of an important lesson or value you got from a foster parent?
- What is something special about a foster parent you know? Would you like to thank a particular foster parent for something she or he did?
- What three words describe "a great foster parent?" For example, how might you complete this sentence: "My foster mom was great because she _____."
- Being in foster care has a lot of challenges. What is one thing a foster parent can do to help make it less difficult for young people in care?
- Do you think your foster parent got the right amount of support from the social worker? What's an example of something that your foster parent relied on your social worker to do in order to be a good foster parent?
- If you were in charge of foster care in your state, what would you do to help foster parents be the best parents they can be for children in foster care?
- Did you have a good foster parent who would have been even better with better training? What would you have liked that parent to know and how would it have helped you?
- What's a word of advice to foster parents?
- Do you have advice about how agencies and workers can best support or empower foster parents?

Question prompts for foster parents:

- What's one of the best things about being a foster parent?
- What's one type of support you rely on most from the agency or social worker that is critical to your being a great foster parent? How does that support help the children in your care do better?
- Describe how you have made a difference in a child's life. Was there training or support that made it easier for you to help that young person?
- What's the most challenging type of support to get? How or why is it challenging? How would having this support help the children you care for? (Try to keep the answer short but descriptive.)
- Are there times when you didn't have the ability to help a child in your care? What agency or worker changes would have made things better for this child and your family?
- What's an example of something important you learned at foster parent training? How have been able to use what you learned to help a particular child?
- What's the one special skill that a foster parent should have? How have you been able to use that skill to help children in your home?
- On a scale of 1 – 10 (with 10 being high), how important is it for foster parents to have a good partnership with the agency/ social worker? What's one reason the partnership so important for children in care?
- If you were in charge of foster care in your state, what barriers would you remove that would enable foster parents to be even better caregivers? Why would this make a difference for children?
- Have you recommended foster parenting to others? If so, what did you say was a reason to do it?

Message ideas for young people and parents

The CHAMPS campaign has created “key messages” that the campaign includes in its correspondence with policy makers and others. We share these messages as they also may help generate ideas, feelings, or thoughts that you may want to tie into your video segment. If one of these speaks to you, you may want to use your own words to make the same point.

Key messages:

- Quality foster parents are key to helping children recover from trauma, grow and flourish. They are the child welfare system's primary means for helping children in foster care thrive.
- Foster parents spend more time with the child than any other professional partner. These parents have valuable information needed to make decisions and identify services and supports to meet the child's needs.
- When public agencies and private providers prioritize foster parenting and train, support, and engage foster parents as valued partners, they enable excellent parenting and achieve better outcomes for children in foster care, including improved health, development, education and permanency.
- When it comes to policy reform efforts, policymakers often overlook the important role of foster parents. They tend to focus on foster parenting when there is a crisis and there is a shortage of amazing foster parents. During times like that, the focus is on recruiting “just enough” families rather than on providing the best training and supports so foster parents are equipped to help children recover from pain, hurt and trauma.
- The job of the CHAMPS campaign is to communicate what decision makers can and should do to support quality foster parenting, so that children benefit from excellent parenting.
- Children should not suffer further trauma in foster care. Foster parents need the support and training necessary for them to meet the unique needs of children.