



Are we doing right by our children in foster care?

Most children enjoy the safety, security, and stability of a family. But for the 496,000 children in foster care today, life can be much harder.

Childhoods Compared

The Child in Foster Care	The Typical Child in America
Is removed from his or her family following a report of neglect or physical/sexual abuse	Enjoys the stability and security of a family
Lives with two different families for every year in foster care	Lives with parents until he or she attends college or decides that he or she is ready to live independently
Will experience seven or more school changes from elementary through high school	Attends one primary school, one middle school, and one secondary school
Doesn't have a computer at home to do school work and typically cannot afford to participate in extra curricular activities	Has the opportunity to receive tutoring and participate in leadership development, sports, music, and cultural programs
Struggles to make friends due to numerous placements and school changes and won't experience something as simple as a birthday party	Makes lasting friendships in and out of school
Receives about \$100 annually to buy clothing	Spends up to \$100 a week as a teen
Uses GED programs to complete high school at four to six times the rate of the general population and has a 3 percent chance of completing a bachelor's degree	Graduates from high school and has a one in four chance of graduating from college with a bachelor's degree
Lives by decisions made by a committee of non-related adults, including caseworkers, judges and lawyers	Develops through the guidance of consistent parenting
At age 18, leaves a foster home or group home with little support from the state or county, is not prepared to live independently, will have difficulty finding a job, and is at risk of becoming homeless	At age 18, is still emotionally and financially supported by his or her family, lives at home, or spends the holidays at home

Close the Divide

We can close this great divide. A world of opportunities opens for children in foster care when communities, organizations and individuals get involved. By safely reducing the need for foster care and by improving support for education, employment and mental health, we can build a better bridge to their future.

Casey Family Programs is the nation's largest operating foundation entirely focused on foster care. Since 1966, we have worked to provide and improve foster care in the United States. Decades of front-line experience make us exceptionally qualified to identify various improvements in child welfare practices, and help states and counties implement them.

