

Systematic Analysis of Minority Inclusion and Discrimination in Texas Foster-Care

Final NCFA S-L Consultation Report

Max Bonnet, John Caouette, Natalia Flores, and Sophia Meynard

Department of Communications, Northeastern University

COMM4533: Consultation Skills

Prof. Elise Dallimore

April 22nd, 2021

### **Abstract**

The Texas foster-care system is riddled with systemic discrimination as a result of improper training, a lack of resources, and ineffective legislative decisions. The foster-care system's primary goal should be to place children in safe homes. However, numerous forces are preventing them from achieving these goals. The system's training process is long and uncondusive to foster placement. Foster children are mistreated and even dying from abuse while their calls for help are left unanswered due to resource scarcity and a general lack of urgency. Moreover, foster children who identify with the LGBTQ+ community experience additional neglect due to their identity. This discrimination can be largely attributed to large Christian-centered stakeholders. There are limited resources for Spanish-speaking individuals which reduces accessibility for prospective parents and children in care. Religious groups are influential in the design and operational processes of parental training, foster-care, and adoption which further impacts the treatment of prospective parents and children in care. This dynamic is highly intrusive to the adoption process because religious affiliation does not correlate to fostering competency. The primary issues plaguing the Texas foster-care system stem from a lack of resources, limited inclusion, and biased religious dynamics.

## **Introduction**

The Texas foster-care system differs from the systems of other states in regards to training methods, LGBTQ+ stakeholder rights, and cultural discrepancies. Simple and inexpensive software that allows individuals to toggle between languages on the Texas DFPS website are not present and put Spanish-speaking adults that are looking to foster a child at a disadvantage from English-speaking natives. Furthermore, recent bills that have been passed through state legislature such as Bill 3859 actively discriminate against LGBTQ+ stakeholders. The Nyquist and Wulff model is a structure utilized to facilitate research-based change in the context of a system. This model will be applied to the Texas foster-care system to dissect the issues in which both Spanish speakers and LGBTQ+ stakeholders are being discriminated against in which they would otherwise be steadfast candidates.

## **Data Collection - Key Findings and Quantitative analysis**

The first step towards the improvement of the foster-care system's efficacy is proper data collection. With the addition of an ethnomethodological approach, data collection will be systematically conducted through the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data to appropriately triangulate the resulting input.

## **Children in the Foster Care System**

An increasing number of children are being placed within the Texas foster-care system. On a state level, the number of removals in 2018 was equivalent to 2.58 per 1000 children. By comparison, the national removal rate was at 6 per 1000 children in 2016 (Murphy, 2019). While Texas's rates of removal are low relative to the national level, research also indicates that the number of child protection service cases are increasing. Between 2014 and 2019, the number of

child protection service cases in Texas had increased by 29%. Data from DFPS suggests that, between 2016 and 2019, the number of children exiting the foster-care system was higher than those entering it (see Appendix A) (Larned, 2020). This however does not compensate for the increasing number of children placed in foster-care.

### **Texas Recruitment, Training, and Licensing Process**

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) administers affairs in regards to the foster-care system. Each state manages organizations to create, train and recruit potential foster parents. A 2015 court ruling by a federal judge in Corpus Christi demanded change in the foster-care system, due to an investigation disclosing that children who enter the foster care system in the state, “leave state custody more damaged than when they entered” (Walters, 2015). In 2018, President Donald Trump signed the Bipartisan Budget Act into law directing the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to “identify reputable model licensing standards concerning the licensing of foster family homes (as defined in section 472(c)(1) of the Social Security Act” (Administration for Children and Families, HHS, 2018). States require potential foster parents to undergo training, conduct multiple interviews, allow agents to go into their homes, and complete an assessment of their finances and criminal records (see Appendix B for additional requirements). This drawn-out process is conducted to evaluate whether they are fit to care for children who come from broken homes. To become foster or adoptive parents, adults must go through a lengthy process that can take between 2-3 months and must meet basic requirements to get licensed (see Appendix B).

Pre-service training requirements vary from state to state. For Texas, potential foster-care parents and adoptive parents need to complete the Parent Resources for Information, Development, and Education (PRIDE) model of practice before service. Texas requires 30 hours

of training for single parents and 50 hours for couples wishing to become foster parents or adopt (Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, 2020). By comparison, some states such as California will opt for the same PRIDE program, but will only require 12 hours of training regardless if it is a single parent or a couple. For instance, Massachusetts has the MAPP (Massachusetts Approaches to Partnerships in Parenting), a standard 30-hour pre-service training for all foster parents equally.

Child Protective Services (CPS), is a division within DFPS administering the PRIDE program and ensuring potential parents are receiving necessary resources. DFPS also consults outside stakeholders to receive help for both recruitment and required pre-service training, or “Aftercare Case Management Service Providers”. Some of these stakeholders include agencies who specialize in aiding children to transition out of foster care and into self-sufficiency such as High Sky Children's Ranch, City Square’s TRACE program, and Buckner, a “Christ-centered” organization that uses faith and christ-centered values to help the most vulnerable (DFPS, 2021). Buckner not only aids foster-care families in establishing a more familiar life, it also defines itself as “a private agency licensed by DFPS, [who works] to train and license foster families, in conjunction with Texas caseworkers, so that these families can provide basic and therapeutic foster-care services” (Day, 2021). Because PRIDE trainings are offered by a Christian-focused organization, it has become apparent that the training lacks the inclusion of all children within the foster-care system and does not train nor teach foster parents about LGBTQ+ children.

The state is also in charge of recruiting foster parents for potential services. The Texas Adoption Resource Exchange (TARE) is a website that matches children awaiting adoption with adoptive parents (DFPS, 2021). It makes it easier for pre-approved adoptive parents to inquire about children or sibling groups available for adoption. A 2019 study conducted by Dr. Laura

Baams, Dr. Bianca Wilson, and Dr. Stephen Russell, found that 30.4 percent of youth in the foster-care system identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community (Baams, 2019). It is important to mention that this data point is heavily estimated as it is infinitely challenging to report an exact number of children in the foster-care system that identify as LGBTQ+. As of 2019, there are about 424,000 children in the foster-care system and 29,927 (7.1%) of those are located in the state of Texas (Baams, 2019). This means the Texas foster-care system is accommodating approximately 9,000 children who identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community. Thus, potential foster parents must receive proper training in aiding LGBTQ+ children and understand the importance of receiving the necessary support from their foster homes.

### **Resources for minority groups**

The Texas house bill 3859 passed on June 15th, 2018 ensuring that foster-care agencies are prohibited from discriminating based on sexual orientation or religion. Furthermore, if an agency is caught discriminating they will not receive government support. Under this law “Texas state institutions cannot withhold funding, licensing, or contracts from any of the agencies that place children in foster or adoption homes if the agencies refuse to provide services or make referrals that conflict with their serious held religious beliefs.” This bill is heavily criticized by LGBTQ+ stakeholders, as it allows discrimination against prospective parents and endangers children who would otherwise benefit from a stable home. Bill 3859 protects foster-care agencies that deny LGBTQ+ couples that believe marriage should be between a man and a woman. This law will also protect state funding in Texas for agencies that specialize in educational or counseling services according to the specific agency’s religious beliefs. Many LGBTQ+ advocates believe that this could lead to conversion therapy for LGBTQ+ children. A UCLA School of Law study found that non-transgender lesbian, gay, or bisexual (LGB) individuals who

go through conversion therapy were almost twice as likely to attempt or commit suicide compared to those who haven't gone through conversion therapy (Dowd, 2020). The same study found that 7% of the LGB individuals have gone through conversion therapy, and four out of five received it from religious leaders (Dowd, 2020).

Most states are not outspoken when it comes to LGBTQ+ stakeholders. In the majority of states, this silence most commonly results in a complete ban of LGBTQ+ foster parents. This leaves eligible families out to dry which, in turn, makes them vulnerable to individual agencies, family court systems, and child welfare professionals. Only eight states have specific laws that distinctly prohibit sexual-orientation-based discrimination against individuals who would otherwise be qualified candidates. CA, NJ, RI, and DC also prohibit discrimination based on an individual's gender identity. Under Massachusetts law, it is illegal to discriminate against LGBTQ+ stakeholders (Mass. Gen. Laws Ann. Ch 10 & 1;110 CMR 1.09.).

### **Foster Care Resources**

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) provides statewide resources for children, protective parents, and current foster parents. Children in foster care have protective rights that are specified on their website, including the right to safety and care, discipline free of cruelty, medical attention, report for complaints, and lead a normal life. In addition, DFPS has created a hotline number through which callers can report incidents of children being abused and neglected. The caller's identity is kept confidential and is immune from any civil or criminal liability, assuming that they call in good faith. This guaranteed anonymity is likely designed to encourage victims of abuse or abuse witnesses to act and report to the state. Additionally, HHS, another state-run agency, provides resources that guarantee the safety and well-being of Texans, and that includes child care operations and those involved in

family violence. Both DFPS and HHS have separate databases for tracking investigations and histories of maltreatment (Larned, 2020).

## **Data Analysis - Discussion of Data and Trends in the information**

### **Changes to Training and Licensing Process**

Data regarding training for LGBTQ+ stakeholders is non-existent, which is consistent with the continued lack of access and information provided from Texas foster-care agencies (see Appendix C for agencies consulted). The Texas Foster-care system is affected in large by the nature of its training and the length that is required from potential foster parents. A study conducted by Buckner and the National Council for Adoption (NCFA) explored the limitations and strengths in today's Texas Foster-care training process. The report also collected data relevant to current and former foster parents and their experience going through the system. Reasons for adults to become foster parents primarily came from individual motivations, such as those influenced by religious incentives or the desire to become a parent (see Appendix D) (Day et al., 2021). Simultaneously, the study asked the same groups their experiences in the system and what was lacking. Foster parent's barriers included concerns or inexperience parenting, balancing personal needs, lack of resources or support offered, and overall systemic issues in DFPS (see Appendix E) (Day et al., 2021). Some of the trends that appeared both in this study and our research highlighted the clear cultural or language differences from children, the lack of support network to help both children and parents, and the extensive training and paperwork required to not only be a foster parent but an effective one as well (see Appendix E) (Day et al., 2021). This study remains consistent with previous findings dealing with training inefficiencies and lack of resources for both children and foster parents.



### **Inefficiency of DFPS Resources**

Research indicates that the state does not provide resources to those experiencing distress within the foster system. One source highlighted that, as of April 2020, “DFPS had a backlog of 500 cases that were at least 45 days old” (Ramsey, 2020), while another stated that 18% of calls are ignored, with “32% of high priority cases going untouched” (Larned, 2020). US district judge Janis Jack also stated that 47% of initial allegations of mistreatment of foster kids were perceived as unworthy of pursuit (Garrett, 2020). Most notably, the *Stukenberg v. Abbott* report suggests that eleven children have died in state care. In addition, certain harmful incidents have occurred as a result of delayed reporting, casework overload, or children being unaware of foster resources (Platoff, 2020). A total of thirty-one reviews on the website Indeed display the average review in terms of work-life balance, management, and culture three stars out of five. Reviews from the state of Texas have also mentioned stressful environments, long hours for little pay, and general dissatisfaction with management across the board.

It is important to keep in mind that this study was conducted in the context of COVID-19 because it was conducted in the first half of 2021. COVID-19 has implications on the foster-care system as well. There are concerning trends regarding the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on foster children. A testimonial provided in a federal lawsuit suggested that 20% of Texan children had contracted COVID-19 as of September 2020, nearly double the amount compared to 12% of the Texan population infected with the disease (Garrett, 2020). There seems to be an absence of data that explains the imbalance in the number of foster children affected by the pandemic disease. When asked about the disproportionate number of COVID-19 cases among foster children, the current commissioner of the protective services department Jaime Masters stated she “couldn’t say why.” Meanwhile, the state agencies’ judge Janis Jack has blamed the DFPS

and the Residential Child Care Regulation for producing “unacceptably slow” results in protecting children from the harmful impact of the pandemic.

### **Language and Cultural Barriers**

Language barriers pose numerous concerns surrounding the foster-care system, including but not limited to a lack of access to resources for non-English speaking stakeholders. If a Spanish-speaking adult chooses to be a foster parent and goes on the DFPS website for more information they will immediately hit a roadblock. For example, they will not be able to research some of their resources, including “Steps to Become a Foster Parent,” “Requirements to Become a Foster Parent,” and/or “Kinship Training.” The only link provided gives access to a form to report child neglect and abuse. Furthermore, if Spanish-speaking foster parents find a way to translate the resources and translate them into training, there is no training provided in Spanish. When comparing this to MASS.GOV’s foster parent resources this is not the case. The website has Spanish translations as well as quick links that provide information regarding the above-mentioned information like Kinship training in Spanish. With the addition of a language barrier, access to these resources become almost infeasible.

Religion plays a significant role when it comes to the success one has at becoming a foster parent and the ability to sustain life as a foster parent. The current structure of the foster care system, which is run by non-profit agencies, enables them to be self-funded by Christian stakeholders. This allows the agencies to set standards based on their religious beliefs and not on the ability of a potential candidate. According to reviews found on Google related to experiences with Buckner care, criticism was directed toward the agency prioritizing a “thick checkbook and a baptist membership” over consideration of mentally stable or caring adults, and intolerance for non-religious families, with one comment stating “if you do not claim a religion you will not be

treated equally.” While samples from online reviews may be unrepresentative of the general experience with all faith-based agencies, the pattern of references to feeling left out or rejected on the basis of religion merits further investigation.

## **Findings Discussion**

### **Texas Foster-Care training and licensing**

As outlined in previous research, each area of concern considers issues of inclusion, time management, and lack of resources for both parents and children. In terms of training and licensing the causal issues stem from an unnecessary religious affiliation. In eradicating these underlying religious innuendos, the system will in turn receive more diverse and qualified foster parents. It is imperative for these systems for training and licensing to be extremely efficient and timely to maintain high retention rates and give foster parents a streamlined way of adopting children. While potential foster parents embark on the process of training and licensing resources need to be readily available. These factors contribute to a lack of foster children placements due to an unnecessarily long and sophisticated process. Currently, it can take between two to three months to become an eligible foster or adoptive parent (Texas Foster Care and Adoption Services, 2021). This foreshadows the complaints echoed by foster parents and the lengthy and exhaustive training and recruitment process (see Appendix E). These norms, however, are put in place to rule out prospective foster and adoptive parents from taking on a responsibility that they might not be able to prioritize. This means a clear middle ground must be reached between effective and purposeful training, and better assessment of potential families.

### **Lack of LGBTQ+ resources and effect on foster children**

With religion being as prevalent as it is within the foster-care system in Texas the LGBTQ+ community specifically LGBTQ+ stakeholders are at a major disadvantage when trying to become a foster parent. Christian foster-care agencies are openly stating that “the wait and ability to adopt can depend on religious values within the organization” (Nightlight, 2020). A key aspect to understand is that all foster-care agencies in Texas are 501 (c) (3) non-profit and are fully funded through Christian stakeholders. This is vital to understand because this allocation of funds has misaligned incentives. This is arguably the central cause of LGBTQ+ stakeholder mistreatment due to the fact faith-based stakeholders oppose the views of LGBTQ+ stakeholders.

### **Tracking Inefficiency of the Child Protective Services**

The DFPS’s numerous hotline inefficiencies for foster children experiencing abuse and neglect have the potential to severely endanger the vulnerable population it is supposed to serve. Some of the resource’s shortcomings, such as 40% of calls being dropped during peak Wednesday afternoon hours and the downgrade of 47% of calls related to allegations of mistreatment (Garrett, 2020), could have severe consequences on the safety of children. It means that some of the children are left in unsafe conditions and are not being heard as a result of their distress calls being abandoned or sidelined. Moreover, the disconnect between the DFPS and HHSC’s databases makes tracking foster children with a history of abuse and maltreatment, as well as those who potentially contracted COVID-19, much more difficult (Larned, 2020). These issues are likely exacerbated by reports of caseworkers being overloaded and high turnover rates in the Child Protective Service (CPS) agency (Evans, 2016), likely due to understaffing and a lack of tight managerial norms established within CPS that protects employees from unreasonable workloads. Finally, research suggests foster children are not being informed about

their rights for reporting mistreatment allegations (Platoff, 2020), thus making them unaware of vital resources. Overall, the largest stakeholders in the entire foster-care system don't have a voice in the matter. Children are reaching out in an attempt to save their own lives and the system drowns out their cries through rules, regulations, and a general lack of urgency.

### **Recommendations & Interpretations**

After careful consideration and research, it has become clear that the central concern with the Texas foster care system surrounds a lack of transparency from stakeholders and the lack of accountability from DFPS, CPS, and adjacent agencies. By privatizing the Texas foster-care system, there seems to be a lack of focus on rehabilitating a broken system. Implementation of inclusive training, sufficient resources for CPS officers to do their job effectively, and lack of access to Spanish-speaking participants are all glaring flaws in the Texas foster-care system. However, the most imperative issue at hand is that the system lacks resources to protect LGBTQ+ youth and non-English speaking children. By having a lack of caseworkers to specialize in specific cases, insufficient feedback systems set up by DFPS, and a lack of counseling services for both parents and children, the Texas foster-care system needs systemic reorganization and complacency from its agents. DFPS needs private agencies such as Buckner to aid them in developing a fair and protective system, which is why finding all agencies equally accountable is essential for success.

The Texas foster-care system's recruiting, licensing and training requires the agency to rethink how it is conducting training and providing resources to foster parents. Because of the experiences foster parents have had in the Texas Foster Care system (see Appendix E), overworked CPS agents, and the extreme need for foster parents as more foster children enter the

system, it is essential to rethink the training and licensing process so that it is easier and more motivating for potential parents. California's PRIDE pre-training requires 12 hours from foster parents. A smaller required number of hours would likely work better for parents with more inflexible schedules. Similarly, the option to take the PRIDE training online as a result of the pandemic should continue to exist to accommodate potential foster parents who cannot necessarily travel, thus improving training accessibility. Training should also consider children who identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community to make sure parents take the necessary precautions to make them feel accepted and safe in their new home. Once again the issue of transparency continues to come up, and by asking for transparency for all, the system will improve.

Improving CPS resources by providing better job conditions and reducing the number of abandoned, delayed, or downgraded cases would represent major steps for better serving the needs of foster children. An increase in state funding for better pay and inspections that verify the quality of CPS management, such as guaranteeing that caseworkers are not subjected to case overload or given unmanageable work hours, could increase foster employee retention rates. Ultimately though, it would also ensure that each worker can spend more time on their designated cases to better assist each foster child in need of support. Surveys that measure caseworker satisfaction and data that shows a decrease in the number of backlogged or abandoned calls will help illustrate whether these inspection efforts have a positive impact on the overall quality of CPS resources.

Additionally, increased coordination of data among agencies would allow for better tracking of patterns of mistreatment among children in the foster system and an investigation history of foster care facilities that are supposed to serve them. For example, DFPS could

consolidate its internal database with HHSC to enable better tracking support and ensure foster children, including those in the LGBTQ+ community, are not being subjected to mental anguish and abuse. Meanwhile, further investigation should be directed toward surveying and analyzing foster children's health, specifically why they are being affected by a high number of COVID-19 cases when compared with the average Texan population. By working together and sharing information regarding COVID-19 exposure, departments will have a better understanding of the risk of harm to which foster children are disproportionately subjected. Moreover, the implementation of better preventive measures will guarantee that each child receives the necessary health safety.

The Texas model for fostering children is not only problematic in the design, it is unapologetically discriminatory to LGBTQ+ stakeholders within the foster-care system. Bill 3859 is a perfect example of how Texas is actively suppressing the rights of LGBTQ+ stakeholders and pleasing the 501 (c)(3) non-profit stakeholders. In a state like Massachusetts, a Bill like 3859 would not be passed through due to their anti-discriminatory model. The model Massachusetts follows is not more expensive and does not require more resources than the Texas model. It would be wise for Texas to shift its model to mirror one such as Massachusetts. At the end of the day, it needs to be about the children looking for a foster home. If changing the model through repealing the discriminatory laws gets more children into stable and loving homes, anything otherwise would be uneducated and appalling. Texas has the resources to allow Spanish speakers the same access as English speakers. When it comes to the DFPS website these simple changes must be made so Spanish speakers can pursue becoming foster parents. Furthermore, we urge the Texas foster-care system to recruit more Spanish speakers to enable Spanish foster children an inclusive lifestyle and less stressful environment.

## **Conclusion**

The Texas foster-care system suffers from an inadequate functioning of resources, a lack of inclusion, and biased religious dynamics. The issues in training and licensing stem from the unnecessary involvement of faith-based organizations as stakeholders. This actively works against the goal of foster-care agencies by neglecting qualified foster parents based on religious concerns rather than their objective efficacy. It also causes severe discrimination against foster children who identify as LGBTQ+. This issue continues to percolate through to the training process due to inadequate training for potential foster parents in regards to LGBTQ+ children. This isn't the only community that lacks inclusion in the foster-care system. Language barriers prevent yet another group of potentially qualified foster parents from participating in the adoption process as there is no supplemental aid for the large Spanish-speaking community. This lack of resources also results in an abundance of neglected child abuse reports. All of these themes trace back to the involvement of Christian stakeholders pushing forth non-inclusive ideology throughout a system of diverse individuals. Legislative attempts have been made to initiate inclusive change, but foster-care agencies do not need to accept funding from the state because they receive funding from religious organizations. Due to the religious affiliation of Texas as a whole, these impactful issues rooted in religion are not widely recognized. Reducing religious affiliations in the foster care system will create a more efficient and effective system for all parties involved.



## References

- Administration for Children and Families, HHS. (2018, October). Notice for Proposed Model Family Foster Home Licensing Standards. Retrieved April 14th, 2020, from <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2018/08/01/2018-16380/notice-for-proposed-model-family-foster-home-licensing-standards>
- Asa, R. (2019, May 14). Dating in an age of multiple divorces. Retrieved March 18, 2021, from <https://www.chicagotribune.com/lifestyles/ct-xpm-2013-01-16-sc-fam-0115-dating-divorced-20130115-story.html>
- Associated Press. (2019, August). USA Today: Migrant kids split at border were harmed in foster care, claims say. Retrieved March 17, 2021 from <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2019/08/16/immigrant-children-separated-border-abused-foster-care-claims/2027970001/>
- Court Appointed Special Advocate For Children. (2015, June). Hispanic Children Make up 33% of the Foster Care Population in Texas. Retrieved March 17, 2021. <https://casaspeaks4kids.com/hispanic-children-make-33-foster-care-population-texas/>
- Day, A., Hanlon, R., Vanderwill, L., Garcia-Rosales, K., Wollen, S., Kim, JR., Dallimore, E. (2021) Foster Parent Recruitment & Retention. Buckner; National Council for Adoption.
- Dowd, R. (2020, June). LGB people who have undergone conversion therapy almost twice as likely to attempt suicide. UCLA Williams Institute School of Law. Retrieved April 21, 2021 from <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/press/lgb-suicide-ct-press-release/>
- Dickerson, C. (2019, June) The New York Times: What it Looks Like to Care for Separated Migrant Children. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/18/reader-center/separated-migrant-children.html>

- Garrett, R. (2020, September 05). Federal judge 'concerned' over high rate of COVID-19 among Texas foster children. Retrieved April 16, 2021, from <https://www.dallasnews.com/news/politics/2020/09/04/federal-judge-concerned-over-high-rate-of-covid-19-among-texas-foster-children/>
- FAQ. (2020, July 20). Retrieved March 18, 2021, from <https://www.arrow.org/faq/>
- Foster Care Initiative: St. Joseph Ministry. (2018) Bilingual Parish Resource Guide and Toolkit. Retrieved March 17, 2021 from <https://txcatholic.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/St-Joseph-Ministry-bilingual-resources.pdf>
- Frequently asked adoption questions - faqs. (2020, April 10). Retrieved March 17, 2021, from <https://nightlight.org/adoption-faq/>
- Garcia, L. (2016, July). Progress Report: Foster Care Redesign in Texas Region 3B. Retrieved March 18, 2021, from <https://achservices.org/am-site/media/foster-care-redesign-progress-report-2016.pdf>
- Larned, T. (2020, July 09). Analysis: Children's advocacy group gives insight into current state of Texas foster care. Retrieved April 16, 2021, from <https://www.kvue.com/article/news/local/texas/texas-foster-care-report-issues/269-43df058f-bde1-45a2-a7b5-ac43f8776bf6>
- Massachusetts Department of Children & Families. (2021). Foster Care. Retrieved March 17, 2021. <https://www.mass.gov/foster-care>
- Murphy, K. (2019, September 03). Last chance for Texas to prepare for foster care changes under new Federal family first act. Retrieved April 16, 2021, from

<https://txchildren.org/posts/2019/9/3/last-chance-for-texas-to-prepare-for-foster-care-changes-under-new-federal-family-first-act>

Platoff, E. (2020, June 16). Years after a judge ordered fixes, Texas' child welfare system continues to expose children to harm, federal monitors say. Retrieved April 16, 2021, from

<https://www.texastribune.org/2020/06/16/texas-child-welfare-harm-federal-monitors/>

Ramsey, R. (2020, June 17). Analysis: For foster children in Texas, a state of despair. Retrieved April 16, 2021, from

<https://www.texastribune.org/2020/06/17/foster-children-texas-despair/>

St. Joseph Ministry. (2021). Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops. Retrieved March 17, 2021 from <https://txcatholic.org/stjosephministry/>

Texas. (2021, February 01). Retrieved March 17, 2021, from <https://cafo.org/nfci/texas/>

Texas HB 3859: 2017-2018: 85th Legislature. (2018). Retrieved April 16, 2021, from <https://legiscan.com/TX/text/HB3859/2017>

Texas Adoption Resource Exchange (TARE). (2021, March). Retrieved March 18, 2021, from [https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/adoption\\_and\\_foster\\_care/get\\_started/requirements.asp](https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/adoption_and_foster_care/get_started/requirements.asp)

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. (2021). El Departamento de Servicios para la Familia y de Protección (DFPS) de Texas. Retrieved March 17, 2021 from <https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Espanol/default.asp>

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. (2021). Aftercare Case Management Service Providers. Retrieved April 16, 2021 from [dfps.state.tx.us/Child\\_Protection/Youth\\_and\\_Young\\_Adults/Preparation\\_For\\_Adult\\_Living/aftercare.asp](https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Protection/Youth_and_Young_Adults/Preparation_For_Adult_Living/aftercare.asp)

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. (2020). Texas adoption resource Exchange (TARE). Retrieved April 16, 2021, from

[https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Adoption\\_and\\_Foster\\_Care/About\\_TARE/default.asp](https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Adoption_and_Foster_Care/About_TARE/default.asp)

Texas foster care and adoption: Buckner International · Buckner international. (1970, January 01). Retrieved March 17, 2021, from <https://www.buckner.org/foster-care-adoption/>

Texas Foster Care and Adoption Services. (2021). Frequently Asked Questions. Retrieved April 21st, 2021, from <http://www.texasfostercare.org/faq/>

Walters, Edgar. (2015, Dec) The Texas Tribune: Federal Judge: Texas Foster Care System

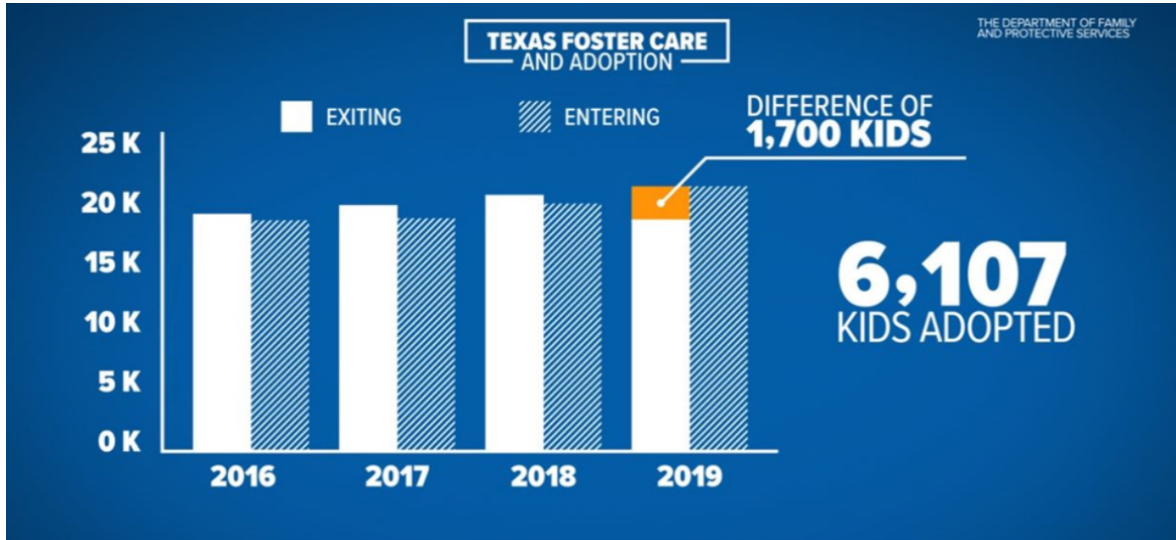
Violates Children's Rights. Retrieved April 17, 2021 from

<https://www.texastribune.org/2015/12/17/judge-foster-care-system-violates-childrens-rights/>

Yi, D. (2000, Nov) Los Angeles Time: Kids Lost in the Translation. Retrieved March 17, 2021 from <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-2000-nov-25-me-57157-story.html>

## APPENDIX

### Appendix A: Foster Care Adoption Rate (Larned, 2020)



**Appendix B: Basic Requirements for prospective foster/adoptive children (Texas Adoption Resource Exchange, 2021)**

1. Be at least 21 years of age
2. Financially stable
3. Responsible Mature Adults
4. Complete an application (private agencies can help complete)
5. Share information regarding background and lifestyle
6. Provide relative and non-relative references
7. Show proof of marriage or divorce (if applicable)
8. Agree to home study including visits with all household members
9. Complete criminal history background check and abuse/neglect check on all adults in the household
10. Attend free pre-service trainings to learn about abuse and neglect of foster Children
11. Additional Requirements foster parents must:
  - a. Have adequate sleeping space
  - b. Have no more than 6 children, including their own
  - c. Agree to non-physical discipline policy
  - d. Have inspection of home completed (fire, health and safety)
  - e. If pets, vaccinated
  - f. Obtain and maintain CPR or First Aid certification
  - g. Attend at least 20 hours of training each year

## Appendix C: List of Contacts

Lisann Gonzalez (region 1) was the sole respondent. She was not able to provide information dealing with LGBTQ+ training and resources.

List of contacts:

- State office: (512) 438-4800
- Region 1:
  - Lisann Gonzalez, Saint Francis Ministries: (785) 914-8089 (did not have answers but provided Kelsey Clay as contact)
- Cps worker kelsey clay adoption caseworker → 806-570-7247
- Rachel: Amarillo TX → 806- 358-6211
  - Provided by Kelsey's voicemail
- Region 2
  - Travis Cutbirth at (940) 557-5511
- Region 3
  - Contact: La Queena Warren, Child Protective Services Foster and Adoption Recruiter, for any questions at (817) 304-1272
- Region 4
  - Contact: Katie Campbell at (903) 263-3742
  - Contact: Brittney Rountree at (903) 655-6211
- Region 5
  - Ashley Goodwin at (936) 553-1234
  - Melissa LaFleur at (409) 960-8209
- Region 6

- Harryl Hale at (713) 553-6989
- Region 7
  - Christina Garza at (512) 751-7946
- Region 8
  - Diana F Menchaca LMSW at (210) 508-2320
  - Brenda Evans at (210) 328-7586
- Region 9
  - Jamie Williams at (915) 777-0134



**Appendix D: Table 1.- Motivation for attending foster-care training (Day et al., 2021)**

Individual motivation (57 respondents)	Right time (29 respondents)	Humanitarian (26 respondents)	Build skills/abilities (5 respondents)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Religious motivation</li> <li>● Desire to be a parent</li> <li>● Desire to adopt</li> <li>● Needed to care for kinship child</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Kinship/relative child came into care</li> <li>● Older children have moved out</li> <li>● Had space in the house</li> <li>● Had enough money</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Desire to make a positive impact in their community</li> <li>● Desire to meet a need and help a child and/or family in need</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Learn how to care for children</li> <li>● Be ready for placement</li> </ul>

**Appendix E: Table 2.- Barrier Descriptions (Day et al., 2021)**

Parenting concerns or inexperience	Balancing personal needs	Lack of resources or support	Systems Issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Child's emotional wellbeing/attachment</li> <li>● Managing behaviors</li> <li>● Other children in the home</li> <li>● Others' reaction to child</li> <li>● Cultural or language differences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Managing emotions, stress</li> <li>● Employment</li> <li>● Age and health</li> <li>● Time management, lack of time</li> <li>● Traveling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Daycare, childcare, respite</li> <li>● Lack of finances</li> <li>● Small house</li> <li>● No partner, single</li> <li>● Lack of support network to help</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Government/CPS policies and requirements</li> <li>● Agency policies and practices</li> <li>● Paperwork</li> <li>● Training</li> <li>● Court</li> </ul>