

iFoster Releases the “2023 Lived Experience Guide to Fixing Foster Care”

A compilation of the experiences and recommendations of over 6,000 Youth, Caregivers and Frontline Workers with lived experience in foster care.

TRUCKEE, CA, UNITED STATES, May 23, 2023

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iFoster (www.ifoster.org) today released the [2023 Lived Experience Guide to Fixing Foster Care](#). This guide raises the voices of over 6,000 Youth, Caregivers and Frontline Workers, all with lived experience from across all 50 states, who have actionable recommendations to improve the foster care system.

“This guide honors the lived experiences and raises the voices of over 6,000 people living and working in the foster care system today. They are sharing their knowledge and recommendations to improve the foster care system in which over 600,000 of our children and youth are raised each year” said Serita Cox, CEO of iFoster. “We believe these are the largest national surveys of those with lived experience ever

conducted and provide crucial insights from those on the ground into what needs to be done to greatly improve the lives of our most vulnerable children and youth.”



iFoster logo

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Serita Cox, Co-Founder & CEO

The guide covers:

- Prevention,
- Removal and entry into care,
- Time in care [foster care placements, supportive services, supportive workers and caregivers],
- Exit to permanency, and
- Exit to self-sufficiency.

Seven major themes emerged, with recommendations for each:

- The Child Welfare System needs to be child-centric,
- Prevention must focus on poverty alleviation,
- Auto-enrolment in services, both during and after foster care,
- Caregiving should be treated as a profession,
- Invest more in frontline workers,
- Child welfare doesn't end at exit, and
- Self-sufficiency exits are a choice, preferred by youth over reunification and adoption.

The 2023 Lived Experience Guide to Fixing Foster Care can be found at www.voiceoffostercare.org, along with both Year 1 (2022), and Year 2 (2023) of the Voice of the Foster Care Community reports, the raw data, videos from youth with lived experience discussing the findings, and thousands of lived experience stories, feedback and recommendations available for review.

The Voice of the Foster Care Community research is conducted by C.A.R.E. Consulting Group, funded by the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation.

A release event is being held on May 23, 2023 at 2:00pm ET / 11:00am PT, and is open to the public in listen only at

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88367694216>

If you are interested in the source data, please visit www.voiceoffostercare.org or contact Serita Cox at serita@ifoster.org.

About iFoster

iFoster is a national 501c3 non-profit with the largest and most inclusive online community of



ANNUAL UPDATE 2023

VOICE OF THE FOSTER CARE COMMUNITY

Youth in Foster Care, Caregivers and Frontline Child Welfare Workers Speak Out

iFoster **CARE** CONSULTING GROUP

This study was made possible with the funding from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation

CONRAD N. HILTON FOUNDATION

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LIVED EXPERIENCE GUIDE TO FIXING FOSTER CARE

2023

A collection of over 6,000 voices from all 50 states.

Providing solutions to **Improving Foster Care** from the perspectives of those who grew up in, care for others, and work on the frontlines of America's Child Welfare System

youth, caregivers, and organizations in foster care; with over 70,000 members in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and Guam. iFoster's mission is to ensure that every child growing up outside their biological home has the resources and opportunities they need to become successful. Through its members, iFoster supports over 150,000 children and youth in foster care and aging out every year, connecting them to over \$195 Million in resources and supportive services.

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