

iFoster Releases the Voice of the Foster Care Community Report 2024

Recommendations from 15,000 foster youth, caregivers and front-line workers for a new child-centric model that focuses on child and youth well-being.

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- [iFoster](https://ifoster.org) (ifoster.org) today released the Voice of the Foster Care Community Report 2024, raising the voices of over 15,000 members of the foster care community nationwide with lived experience. The report is the culmination of 3 years of national surveys, with the community's recommendations for a transformative child-centric model to improve the lives and outcomes of young people at risk of entering, in state care, and exiting the foster care system.

C.A.R.E. Consulting Group published the surveys and reports, funded by a generous grant from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation.

The overwhelming consensus of 15,000 diverse lived-experience voices over 3 years of study centered on critical yet achievable approaches the community believes would create the most dramatic well-being and life outcome improvements for the hundreds of thousands of children and youth who are raised in the foster care system each year.

The major themes that emerged as the anchors of the Child First model of foster care, across prevention, in care and exiting care, included:

- Child-Centered – putting the best interests of each unique child at the center of all decisions and services. Every decision, from placement type, to resources, to permanency would be based on each child's unique needs and wishes versus fitting a child into what the system believes is best or is currently available.



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- Well-Being – a model of foster care that targets child well-being above all other outcomes, placing the child’s interests at the forefront of all activities and guiding the interventions and services provided to children and families.
- Normalcy – allowing children to have meaningful experiences during childhood and adolescence like those experienced by peers who are not in foster care rather than restricting and limiting activities due to liability and resource scarcity concerns.
- Supportive Team – broadening the support every child receives by basing all judicial, case management, child safety, educational and health decisions on an interdisciplinary team approach. The child’s perspective is at the center of the decision making, and the team is empowered to ensure decisions are fulfilled.
- Accountability for Outcomes – youth would have access to services to promote their self-sufficiency and assist with their transition into adulthood, regardless of their permanency plan. Youth’s choice would factor into the decision to exit care, including when the transition occurs, and the services they need to achieve self-sufficiency before and after they exit.

The foster care community believes the greatest deficits in the current foster care system are the lack of a child-centered approach and a lack of focus / accountability for the well-being of every child, at every moment, and with every decision. While being raised in a system is recognized as an inadequate and challenging substitute for being raised in a loving biological environment, when this is necessary, the system should maximize the well-being of every child and be held accountable to meeting that standard.

The Voice of the Foster Care Community Report 2024 can be found at voiceoffostercare.org.

About C.A.R.E. Consulting Group

C.A.R.E. Consulting Group (CARECG) assists nonprofits, corporations and federal, state, tribal, county and local government agencies that want to create a better world. We collaborate with leaders in communities to create custom solutions, including training, technical assistance, research and evaluation services.

About iFoster

iFoster is a 501c3 national nonprofit with the largest and most inclusive online community of youth, caregivers, and organizations in foster care with over 85,000 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.

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