The Truth about Today’s Foster Care Crisis and the Role of Faith-Based Agencies

THE FOSTER CARE CRISIS

Kids in Foster Care\(^1\)\(^2\) 442,995
396,966
\(2012\) \(2017\)

A PROBLEM GETTING WORSE

14 STATES AND D.C. experienced a decline in the number of beds or homes from 2012 to 2017.\(^5\)

Some states experienced up to a 20% decrease.

MASSACHUSETTS (where faith-based agencies have been removed) has lost families 2,000 in that time frame.

30-50% \(^6\) OF FOSTER PARENTS LEAVE THE SYSTEM EACH YEAR.

Each year, around 20,000 kids age out of foster care without an adoptive home.\(^3\) The odds they face aren’t good.

20% WILL BE HOMELESS AT AGE 18.

50% WILL BE UNEMPLOYED AT AGE 24.

97% WILL NEVER GRADUATE FROM COLLEGE.\(^4\)

Footnotes:

Faith-based agencies are crucial to finding homes and helping children. They serve children without regard to race, gender, or sexual orientation. Faith-based agencies work alongside secular and government agencies to recruit a diverse array of foster and adoptive parents.

### The Unique Role of Faith-Based Organizations

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<th>Religioin Groups</th>
<th>FOR OVER 200 YEARS</th>
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<td>Foster CARE</td>
<td>2.6 YEARS LONGER</td>
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<td>than other foster parents.</td>
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**Religious Groups**

- Foster Care has cared for children and helped them find loving homes—often well before governments got involved.

**Families recruited through church or religious organizations**

- Foster Care performs vital work.
- Christians are roughly 3X more likely to have seriously considered fostering.
- Christians are 2X more likely to adopt.

**The Harm to Children if Faith-Based Agencies Close Is Real.**

Boston stopped partnering with faith-based providers in 2006. One year later, the percentage of children who aged out of the Massachusetts foster care system rose by over 50% and has not returned to pre-2006 levels.

### Faith-Based Agencies Perform Vital Work.

**Kids Who Age Out of Foster Care in Massachusetts**

- Between 2012 and 2017, Illinois lost 1,547 foster homes - the most significant decrease in any state that reported this data.

### Footnotes:


5 See generally, Adoption & Foster Care Statistics, U.S. Dep’t of Health & Human Services, Children’s Bureau, https://perma.cc/H7TV-A7QM.


9 82% of families in one study pointed to faith or church support as a factor that facilitates successful fostering.


11 36% of families recruited by one Christian organization said they would not have become foster or adoptive parents if it were not for that organization’s efforts.