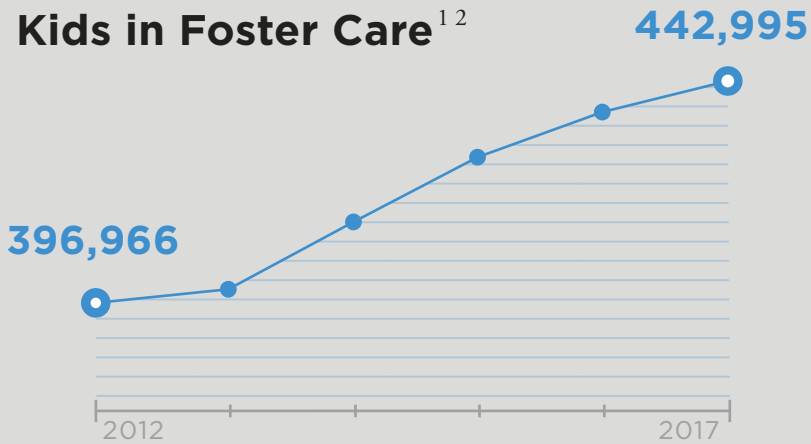


The Truth about Today's Foster Care Crisis and the Role of Faith-Based Agencies

THE FOSTER CARE CRISIS

Kids in Foster Care^{1,2}



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.



30-50%⁶

OF FOSTER PARENTS LEAVE THE SYSTEM EACH YEAR.

MASSACHUSETTS

(where faith-based agencies have been removed)

HAS LOST **2,000** FAMILIES IN THAT TIME FRAME.

Each year, around **20,000** kids age out of foster care³ without an adoptive home. | 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:

¹ *The AFCARS Report #24*, U.S. Dep't of Health and Human Services, Children's Bureau, <https://perma.cc/55K7-WV8W>.

² *The AFCARS Report #25*, U.S. Dep't of Health and Human Services, Children's Bureau, <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/afcarsreport25.pdf>.

³ *The AFCARS Report*, U.S. Dep't of Health & Human Services, Children's Bureau, <https://perma.cc/EJ5K-CBVY> at 3.

⁴ Wayne Winston Sharp, *The Human, Social, And Economic Cost of Aging Out of Foster Care*, Adoption Advocate, May 2015, at 4, <https://perma.cc/KHP5-5YUZ>.

⁵ John A. Kelly, *Who Cares: A National Count of Foster Homes and Families*, Chronicle of Social Change, October 15, 2018, <https://perma.cc/TRR2-Z5LE>.

⁶ Haskins, Kohomban, Rodriguez, "Keeping up with the caseload: How to recruit and retain foster parents," Brookings Institute, April 24, 2019, <https://perma.cc/Z4G7-65XA>.

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

82%

of families in one study pointed to **FAITH OR CHURCH SUPPORT** as a factor that facilitates successful fostering.¹¹

Families recruited through church or religious organizations

FOSTER

2.6

YEARS LONGER

than other foster parents.¹⁰

Christians are roughly

3X

MORE LIKELY to have seriously considered **FOSTERING**⁹

Christians are

2X

MORE LIKELY TO ADOPT⁸



**FOR OVER
200
YEARS**

RELIGIOUS GROUPS

have cared for children and helped them find loving homes—often well before governments got involved.⁷



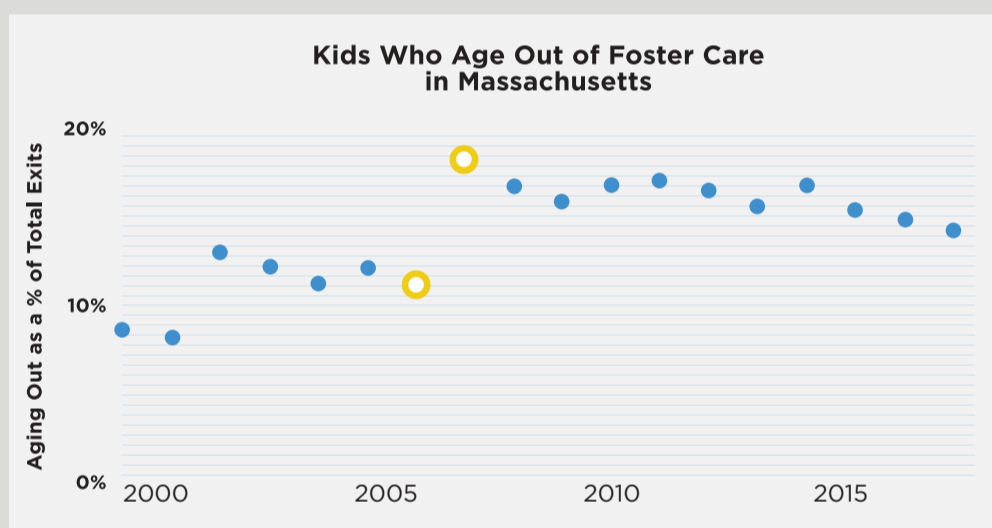
36%

of the families recruited by one Christian organization said they **would not have become foster or adoptive parents** were it not for that organization's efforts.¹²

Faith-based agencies perform vital work.

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.¹³



BETWEEN 2012 AND 2017,

ILLINOIS LOST 1,547 FOSTER HOMES - ¹⁴

the most significant decrease in any state that reported this data.

Footnotes:

⁷ Homer Folks, *The Care of Destitute, Neglected, and Delinquent Children* 9-11 (Herbert S. Brown ed., 1902) (citing examples from New Orleans, Bethesda, New York City, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Boston).

⁸ Jedd Medefind, "New Barna Research Highlights Christian Adoption and Foster Care Among Three Most Notable Vocational Trends," Christian Alliance for Orphans, February 12, 2014, <https://cafo.org/2014/02/12/new-barna-research-highlights-christian-adoption-foster-care-among-3-most-notable-vocational-trends/>. Institute, April 24, 2019, <https://perma.cc/Z4G7-65XA>.

⁹ *5 Things You Need to Know About Adoption*, Barna: Frames (Nov. 4, 2013), <https://perma.cc/J26E-P629>.

¹⁰ People who hear about fostering through a church or religious organization fostered for 2.6 years longer than other foster parents. Mary Ellen Cox, Cheryl Buehler, & John G. Orme, *Recruitment and Foster Family Service*, 29 J. Soc. & Soc. Welfare, no. 3, 2002, at 166-68, <https://perma.cc/P4SV-MTP4>.

¹¹ Cheryl Buehler, Mary Ellen Cox, & Gary Cuddeback, *Foster Parents' Perceptions of Factors That Promote or Inhibit Successful Fostering*, 2 Qualitative Social Work, no. 1, 2003, at 61-83, <https://perma.cc/F3KE-BU3F>. Many studies have demonstrated that faith is often a strong motivating factor in the decision to become a foster parent. See, e.g., Michael Howell-Moroney, *The Empirical Ties Between Religious Motivation and Altruism in Foster Parents: Implications for Faith-Based Initiatives in Foster Care and Adoption*, 5 Religions, no. 3, 2014, at 720-737; Jason D. Brown, Natalie George, David St. Arnault, & Jennifer Sintzel, *Cultural Worldviews of Foster Parents*, 14 Journal of Family Social Work, no. 1, 2011, at 21-42; Susan Rodgers, Anne Cummings, & Alan W. Leschied, *Who is Caring for Our Most Vulnerable Children?: The Motivation to Foster in Child Welfare*, 30 Child Abuse & Neglect, no. 10, 2006, at 1129-1142; Angela C. Baum, Sedahlia Jasper Crase, & Kirsten Lee Crase, *Influences on the Decision to Become or Not Become a Foster Parent*, 82 Families in Society, no. 2, 2001, at 202-213; Ramona Denby & Nolan Rindfleisch, *African Americans' Foster Parenting Experiences: Research Findings and Implications for Policy and Practice*, 18 Children and Youth Services Review, no. 6, 1996, at 523-551.

¹² Michael Howell-Moroney, *On the Effectiveness of Faith-Based Partnerships in Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Parents*, Journal of Public Management & Social Policy, No.19, Vol. 2, (2013), pp. 176-177.

¹³ See generally, *Adoption & Foster Care Statistics*, U.S. Dep't of Health & Human Services, Children's Bureau, <https://perma.cc/H7TV-A7QM>.

¹⁴ *Foster Care Housing Crisis*, The Chronicle of Social Change, Appendix A at 13-14, <https://perma.cc/9SK8-WFXA>.