



An Overview of TIES Research: Papers, Presentations, Posters



Research Report, 2022



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Overview

TIES for Families is an interdisciplinary, university-based program established in 1995 to promote the successful adoption, growth, and development of children with special needs, especially those with prenatal substance exposure who are in foster care. Our research explores the effectiveness of our services, expands our understanding of foster and adopted youth and their families, and identifies/explores protective and risk factors that impact the development of these youth.



PAPERS

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COVID-19 and
Resource Families: An
Examination of
Ongoing Impact and
Disparities

<u>Objective:</u> The current study examined the impact of COVID-19 on resource parents by comparing two time points, the beginning of "Saferat-Home" and over a year later, and health disparities between groups. This study is a follow-up of Langley et al. (2021).

<u>Sample:</u> Participants included 527 current or prospective resource parents in Los Angeles County.

<u>Methodology:</u> Resource parents were surveyed about concerns related to COVID-19, its impact across several domains, helpfulness of resources, and adaptations made due to the pandemic, such as the transition to telehealth.

Key Findings: The findings reveal increased infection rates, maintained or increased reports of adverse impact and coping challenges, decreased reports of positive impact, and increased access to resources across time points. Approximately 45% of resource parents reported that having virtual services available allowed them to access resources they otherwise would not have had in the past. Compared to White resource parents, Black and Latinx resource parents reported both more adverse and more positive impact and less access to resources. Further, single caregiver households reported more financial worries, and foster parents and kinship caregivers reported more coping challenges than foster-adoptive parents.

<u>Citation:</u> Ruderman, M., Whitman, L. K., Perez, V., Waterman, J., & Langley K. A. (2022). *COVID-19 and resource families: An examination of ongoing impact and disparities*. Manuscript submitted for publication. 6

Mental Health
Engagement Among
Foster and Adopted
Youth: The Transition
From In-Person to
Telemental Health
Services

<u>Objective:</u> This paper aimed to compare in-person mental health service utilization to telemental health (TMH) service utilization to investigate whether client engagement in mental health services changed among foster and adopted youth during the COVID-19 pandemic.

<u>Sample:</u> Participants included 55 foster and adopted youth being served at UCLA TIES for Families between March 13, 2019, and March 16, 2021.

<u>Methodology:</u> Total Number of Sessions, Accumulated Session Time, and Average Minutes per Session were used to evaluate overall levels of client engagement in services. Data was collected from client's electronic health record.

<u>Key Findings:</u> Clients, on average, attended significantly more TMH sessions than in-person sessions. Clients spent considerably more accumulated time in therapy during TMH than in-person session. Clients on average had significantly briefer therapy sessions (i.e., fewer minutes per session) during TMH than in-person services.

<u>Citation:</u> Perez, V., Ruderman, M., Kussman, M., Waterman, J., Langley, A. (2022). *Mental health engagement among foster and adopted youth: The transition from in-person to telemental health services*. Manuscript resubmitted for publication.

Impact of COVID-19 on Resource Families: Unique Challenges & Strengths <u>Objective:</u> The study aimed to understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and "Safer-at-Home" orders on resource parents and their families in Los Angeles County.

<u>Sample:</u> Participants included 648 resource parents, 18 to 80 years, in Los Angeles County. Participants were predominantly female and BIPOC.

<u>Methodology:</u> Resource parents were invited to participate in an online survey through Qualtrics.

Key Findings: Nearly half of resource parents reported anxiety about issues such as infection, uncertainty about future, and financial hardship. Resource parents expressed concerns about children falling behind in school, mental health and developmental services, and birth parent visits. Resource parents also reported perceived benefits, such as increased family closeness. Lastly, younger parental age, fewer foster children in the home, and the less negative impact from COVID-19 a resource parent reported having were associated with an increased likelihood of resource parents welcoming a child into their home.

<u>Citation:</u> Langley, A. K., Ruderman, M. A., Waterman, J., & Franke, T. (2021). Impact of COVID-19 on resource families: Unique challenges and strengths. Developmental Child Welfare, 3(3), 185–202. https://doi.org/10.1177/25161032211020756

Cumulative Risk and
Substance Use in
Adoptees: Moderation
by Adoptive Parent
Stress

<u>Objective</u>: This study examined whether parental stress and preadoptive risk factors was associated with later substance use among a group of adoptees.

<u>Sample:</u> Consisted of 82 adoptees and 134 adoptive parents. Children were between the ages of 4 months to 8.4 years. Most of the children were Latinx, African American, or Multiracial. About half of the children experienced some type of documented maltreatment.

<u>Methodology:</u> This was a longitudinal study in which adoptive parents participated in three-hour preplacement training sessions. After two months postplacement, children and parents completed measures annually. Once, youth reached adolescence, a survey was distributed to assess youth's functioning.

<u>Key Findings:</u> Parental stress, but not children's pre-adoptive risk, predicted later substance use. Higher risk children were more positively and negatively affected by variations in parent stress.

<u>Citation:</u> Blake, A.J., Waterman, J.M., Kiff, C.J., Guzman, J. and Langley, A.K. (2021), Cumulative Risk and Substance Use in Adoptees: Moderation by Adoptive Parent Stress. Fam Relat, 70: 653-669. https://doi.org/10.1111/fare.12522

Developmental outcomes of infants adopted from foster care: Predictive associations from prenatal and preplacement risk factors

<u>Objective:</u> Current study examined the associations between per-natal risk factors and developmental outcomes to assess effectiveness of adoption as an early intervention for children placed in foster care.

<u>Sample:</u> 87 infants were recruited from UCLA TIES for Families. 35.7% were mixed or other, 28.6% were Latino/a or Hispanic, 17.9% were African-American and 17.9% were Caucasian. The mean age removed from birth home was 1.16 months and the mean age at adoptive placement was 4.48 months.

<u>Methodology:</u> Data was derived from court and medical records. Bayley Scales of Infant and Toddler Development (3rd Edition) outcomes at T1 (baseline assessment) and T2 (follow-up 1 year after initial adoption placement) were also used.

Key Findings: Children adopted from foster care between 0-19 months had cognitive functioning that was comparable to the normative population at 1 year after placement. Language and motor functioning were lower, but age-adjusted language scores exhibited improvement at 1 year consistent with a developmental 'catch-up' effect.

<u>Citation:</u> Tung, I., Christian-Brandt, A. S., Langley, A. K., & Waterman, J. M. (2020). Developmental Outcomes of Infants Adopted from Foster Care: Predictive Associations from Perinatal and Preplacement Risk Factors. Infancy: the official journal of the International Society on Infant Studies, 25(1), 84–109. https://doi.org/10.1111/infa.12319

Substance Use in
Youth Adopted from
Foster Care:
Developmental
Mechanisms of Risk

<u>Objective:</u> Examined whether the association between cumulative preadoptive risk (e.g., maltreatment, age at placement) and adolescent/young-adult substance use is mediated by childhood internalizing and externalizing problems in youth adopted from foster care.

<u>Sample:</u> 82 adolescents and young adults adopted from foster care as infants through the Division of the Los Angeles County Department of Child Family Services. Approximately half suffered some form of physical or sexual abuse or neglect. Majority of the youth had prenatal exposure.

Methodology: Longitudinal study; two months after adoption, parents and children were asked to complete the Child's Behavioral Checklist (CBCL) and other measures. Information from Department of Children and Family Services records and court records were analyzed in tandem to assess preadoptive risk. When child reached adolescence, an online survey was administered to examine parents' and child's perception of youth's functioning.

<u>Key Findings:</u> There is an indirect effect of cumulative risk on substance use through childhood internalizing problems, but not externalizing problems. Mitigating early risk for children in the child welfare system and targeting childhood emotion dysregulation might reduce the likelihood of substance abuse among previously high-risk adoptees.

<u>Citation:</u> Blake, A. J., Tung, I., Langley, A. K., & Waterman, J. M. (2018). Substance use in youth adopted from foster care: developmental mechanisms of risk. Children and Youth Services Review, 85(1), 264-272.

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Temperamental
Sensitivity to Early
Maltreatment and Later
Family Cohesion for
Externalizing Behaviors
in Youth Adopted from
Foster Care

<u>Objective:</u> The objective of this study was to examine factors that might predict externalizing behaviors (EB) among a group of adopted individuals.

<u>Sample:</u> 82 children, aged 4 months to 8 years at baseline, adopted from foster care in Los Angeles County from 1996 and 2001.

<u>Methodology:</u> Longitudinal study. Data was derived from adoption records and assessment, including the Cameron-Rice Temperament Scales (at baseline), Family Environment Scales (at one year follow-up time point), and the Child's Behavior Checklist (at baseline and each of the five follow-up time points in childhood).

Key Findings: Youth with early reactive temperament did not exhibit heightened sensitivity to maltreatment nor to later adoptive family cohesion. Sexual abuse history predicted escalating childhood EB postadoption, whereas exposure to family violence inversely predicted EB over time. By late adolescence/young adulthood 11–15 years postadoption, rates of arrest and substance use were relatively comparable to normative populations of youth. However, older age of adoption predicted more substance use in late adolescence/young adulthood.

<u>Citation:</u> Tung, I., Noroña, A. N., Lee, S. S., Langley, A. K., & Waterman, J. M. (2018). Temperamental sensitivity to early maltreatment and later family cohesion for externalizing behaviors in youth adopted from foster care. Child abuse & neglect, 76, 149-

159 https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2017.10.018

Predicting Emotion Regulation among Children Adopted out of Foster Care: Contributions of Temperament, Pre-Placement Risk, and **Adoptive Family Environment**

<u>Objective:</u> Examined the independent and interactive effects of child temperament and environmental factors on emotion regulation.

<u>Sample:</u> 82 children, between 4 months to 8 years at baseline, adopted from foster care in Los Angeles County from 1996 and 2001.

Methodology: Longitudinal study (families receiving services at TIES during 1996-2001). After two months postplacement, adoptive parents and children filled out measures, including the Cameron-Rice Temperament Scales, Family Environment Scale, and Emotion Regulation Checklist, annually for five years. Data regarding pre-placement risk factors was also obtained from children's court and medical records.

Key Findings: Reactive temperament (negative emotionality) was the greatest predictor of children's emotion regulation when they were initially adopted. However, when predicting change in temperament across 5 years post-adoption, adoptive family environment gained importance. Children with reactive temperament developed the best emotion regulation in families characterized by low expressiveness and high control; conversely, children with high easy temperament developed the best emotion regulation skills in families with high expressiveness.

<u>Citation:</u> Noroña, A. N., Tung, I., Baker, Langley, A. K., & Waterman, J. M. (2017). Predicting emotion regulation among children adopted out of foster care: Contributions of temperament, pre-placement risk, and adoptive family environment.

https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1063426615621050

Preparing and
Partnering with
Families to Support the
Adoption of Children
from Foster Care

Objective: The study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of a preplacement education and preparation curriculum (PREP) for prospective and foster/adoptive parents in improving attitudes toward children with prenatal substance exposure and their substance-using birth parent and increasing willingness to adopt these children. PREP is a 9-hour curriculum (split into 3, three-hour weekly sessions.

<u>Sample:</u> 1,836 prospective parents seeking adoption through Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) who participated in PREP training between 1996 and 2013

<u>Methodology:</u> Prospective adoptive parents took a pre- and post-survey after each session, which their attitudes, knowledge and willingness to adopt youth with prenatal substance exposure.

Key Findings: Positive changes in prospective parents' attitudes toward children with prenatal substance exposure (PSE), people who have substance abuse problems, and substance-using pregnant women. Although no causal direction can be inferred from this study, it is possible that prospective parents' reported increase in knowledge represents an assimilation of the information presented that is necessary to foster attitude change.

<u>Citation:</u> Edelstein, S. B., Gonzalez, A., Langley, A. K., Waterman, J., Paasivirta, M., & Paczkowski, E.(2017). Preparing and Partnering with Families to Support the Adoption of Children from Foster Care. Adoption Quarterly, 20(1), 119-133.

Long-term Effects of Pre-Placement Risk Factors on Children's **Psychological Symptoms** and Parenting Stress among Families **Adopting from Foster** Care

<u>Objective:</u> Explored how pre-placement risk factors affected children's psychological symptoms and parenting stress among families adopting from foster care.

<u>Sample:</u> 82 children, between 4 months to 8 years at baseline, adopted from foster care in Los Angeles County from 1996 and 2001.

<u>Methodology:</u> Longitudinal study. Child internalizing and externalizing problems and parenting stress were assessed in families at 2 months post-placement, 12 months post-placement, and then yearly until 5 years post-placement.

Key Findings: Children who were maltreated before adoption exhibited greater emotional and behavioral problems than adopted children who were not maltreated. Behavior problems were initially greater among older-adopted children, but by 5 years postadoption, no differences remained. Parenting stress reduced across 5 years among parents who adopted older children; in parents of younger children, stress plateaued after 1-year post- placement and then began to increase.

<u>Citation:</u> Nadeem, E., Waterman, J., Foster, J., Paczkowski, E., Belin, T. R., & Miranda, J. (2017). Long-Term Effects of Pre-Placement Risk Factors on Children's Psychological Symptoms and Parenting Stress Among Families Adopting Children From Foster Care. Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders, 25(2), 67-81.

Parent Adjustment
Over Time in Gay,
Lesbian, and
Heterosexual Families
Adopting from Foster
Care

<u>Objective:</u> Examined experiences of gay or lesbian and heterosexual adoptive parents over time, to understand their unique experiences.

<u>Sample:</u> 82 parents (60 heterosexual, 15 gay, 7 lesbian) who have adopted children (post-placement) from foster care in Los Angeles County between 1996 and 2001.

<u>Methodology:</u> Adoptive parents completed measures assessing adoption satisfaction, depressive symptoms, parenting stress, and social support at 2 months, 12 months, and 24 months postplacement.

Key Findings: Both heterosexual and gay/lesbian adoptive parents increased in satisfaction with adoption over time and maintained low levels of parenting stress and depressive symptoms. In both groups, greater parenting stress was related to higher depressive symptoms and reduced adoption satisfaction.

<u>Citation:</u> Lavner, J. A., Waterman, J. and Peplau, L. A. (2014). Parent adjustment over time in gay, lesbian, and heterosexual parent families adopting from foster care. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, Vol 84(1), 46-53.

Pre-Placement Risk and Longitudinal Cognitive Development for Children Adopted from Foster Care

<u>Objective:</u> This study examined the trajectory of cognitive development among children adopted from foster care at five time points over the first five years of adoptive placement. Examined the ways in which potential risk factors such as older age at placement, abuse history, and pre-term birth may relate to cognitive development postplacement.

<u>Sample:</u> The sample was derived from families of 82 children receiving services from UCLA TIES between 1996 and 2001.

Methodology: Approximately two months after placement, parents filled out questionnaires and for in-person interviews and testing. They returned approximately 12 months after adoptive placement and each year after for a total of five years. At 2, 12 and 24 months, children completed age-appropriate cognitive assessments. At 36 and 60 months post-placement, children completed standardized tests of academic achievement.

Key Findings: The environmental risk factors were generally positively correlated with each other, while the biological risk factors tended to cluster together. Biological risk factors were significantly negatively related to several of the environmental risk factors. Premature birth and low birth weight were found to be significantly negatively associated with cognitive outcomes, whereas a history of abuse and neglect was found to be significantly positively associated with cognitive outcomes.

<u>Citation:</u> Waterman, J. M., Nadeem, E., Paczkowski, E., Foster, J. C., Lavner, J. A., Belin, T., & Miranda, J. (2013). Pre-placement risk and longitudinal cognitive development for children adopted from foster care. Child welfare, 92(4), 9–30.

Can Gay and Lesbian
Parents Promote
Healthy Development
in High-Risk Children
Adopted from Foster
Care?

<u>Objective</u>: Examined cognitive development and behavioral outcomes in children adopted by gay and lesbian couples.

<u>Sample:</u> 82 parents (60 heterosexual, 15 gay, 7 lesbian) who adopted children from foster care in Los Angeles County.

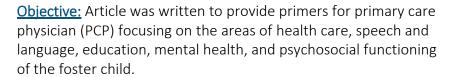
<u>Methodology:</u> Children received age-appropriate cognitive assessments, and the primary parent completed questionnaires regarding the child's behavior problems at 2 months, 12 months, and 24 months postplacement. Background risk was assessed at 2 months post placement.

<u>Key Findings:</u> Children adopted by gay and lesbian parents show the same outcomes as children adopted by heterosexual parents. Over time, children in in both groups showed gains in IQ and stable, nonclinical levels of emotional and behavioral problems.

<u>Citation:</u> Lavner, J.A., Waterman, J., Peplau, L.A. (2012). Can Gay and Lesbian Parents Promote Healthy Development in High-Risk Children Adopted from Foster Care? American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 82(4), 465-472.



Care of the Foster Child: A Primer for the Pediatrician



<u>Sample:</u> The article utilized existing literature such as the American Academy of Pediatrics, Child Welfare League of America and peer reviewed articles.

<u>Methodology:</u> The article utilized existing literature such as the American Academy of Pediatrics to provide evidence for the reasoning behind primers.

Key Findings: Primary Care Physicians (PCPs) can be an important protective factor for foster children and can provide a safety net of evaluations, services, follow-up, and referrals for specialized interventions. PCPs must take part in enrolling foster children within their busy practices, attend to the children's needs and advocate for services. PCPs can encourage foster parents to become active participants. A supportive health care provider can be a positive influence on a foster child's resiliency and future.

<u>Citation:</u> Wang, C., Edelstein, S. B., Waldinger, L., Lee, C. M., & Bath, E. (2011). Care of the foster child: a primer for the pediatrician. Advances in pediatrics, 58(1), 87–111. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.yapd.2011.03.009



Older Children in Pre-Adoptive Homes: Issues Before Termination of Parental Rights <u>Objective</u>: Examined the emotional and psychological difficulties often encountered by children and their prospective adoptive parents when birthparent visitation takes place and legal uncertainties exist. Offered clinical and policy recommendations to help both the children and families in these situations as well as the professionals who work with them.

<u>Sample:</u> The author conducted a literature review and then created vignettes (composites of many cases, with disguised details). The author based the vignettes off of the clinical experience of various staff members at UCLA TIES.

<u>Methodology:</u> The article is based on the clinical experience of the staff at UCLA TIES for Adoption, the UCLA Psychology Department, the Los Angeles County Children and Family Services, and private foundations.

<u>Key Findings:</u> Older children in pre-adoptive homes face shock and anger, helplessness and depression, attachment issues, issues related to court dates, tensions between birth and adoptive parents, and loyalty conflicts.

<u>Citation:</u> Edelstein, S.B., Burge, D., and Waterman, J. (2002). Older children in pre-adoptive homes: issues before termination of parental rights. Child Welfare,81,101-121.

Helping Foster Parents Cope with Separation, Loss and Grief

Objective: Examined the many ways foster parents encounter loss and grief on a continuous basis. Examined the factors that affect the intensity of the loss and the healthy expression and resolution of grief. Examined the problems that can result when the grief of foster parents is not adequately addressed. Examined the ways in which professionals can be helpful to those caregivers around loss and grief.

<u>Sample:</u> Various existing literature such as articles from The Journal of Social Psychology, Child Welfare and their own professional experience.

<u>Methodology:</u> Compiled information to support their findings from various existing literature and their own professional experience.

Key Findings: The ways in which foster parents encounter loss and grief may look different depending on the kind of grief. The factors that influence the foster parents grief include the foster parent-child relationship, the foster parent's motivation, the circumstances of the child's transition etc. Unresolved or unexpressed grief can result in a myriad of consequences like emotional unavailability. Educational programs assist foster parents with loss and validation of grief.

<u>Citation:</u> Edelstein, S. B., Burge, D., & Waterman, J. (2001). Helping Foster Parents Cope with Separation, Loss, and Grief. Child Welfare, 80(1), 5–25. http://www.jstor.org/stable/45400251

Experiences, Concerns and Service Needs of Families Adopting Children with Prenatal Substance Exposure: A Summary and Recommendations

<u>Objective:</u> Examined the challenges and needs of adoptive parents with a child exposed prenatally to substances.

<u>Sample:</u> The 12 families participating in the research protocol were all part of the TIES for Adoption project. The 12 families included 20 parents and 16 children.

Methodology: Psychologists, graduate students, or advanced undergraduate students conducted semi-structured, individual interviews with the parents at approximately three to five months postplacement and again at 13 to 15 months postplacement. The interviews included open-ended questions and five-point Likert-type ratings about adoption, parenting, and pre-natal substance exposure. One month prior to the interviews, parents received, by mail, the Parenting Stress Index (PSI) along with other measures-- which was collected at the time of the interview.

<u>Key Findings:</u> The adoption of children with prenatal substance exposure progresses relatively smoothly in the first year following placement when families receive services and supports. However, the period following the child's transition from out-of-home care to an adoptive placement can be a particularly vulnerable time for families, and both parent and child may experience stress.

<u>Citation:</u> McCarty, C., Waterman, J., Burge, D., and Edelstein, S.B. (1999). Experiences, concerns and service needs of families adopting children with prenatal substance exposure: a summary and recommendations. Child Welfare, 561-577.

Symposiums

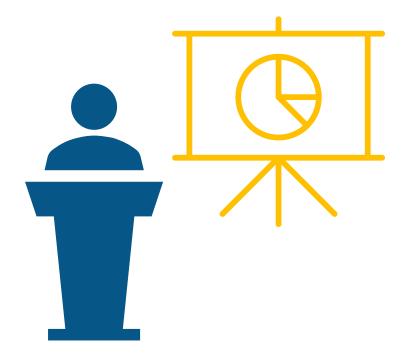


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Symposium Presented at APA, 2022

Chairperson: Jill Waterman, Ph.D.
Nekolas Milton, Ph.D., Vanessa Perez, B.A., Christine
Moody, Ph.D., Matthew Ruderman, Ph.D.,

Factors Related
to the Recruitment
and Retention
of Prospective
Foster and Adoptive
Parents

<u>Objective:</u> Analyzed the factors affecting retention and engagement of prospective foster/adoptive parents, in order to meet the growing needs of youth requiring permanency.

Sample: 25 resource families were surveyed, with the mean age being 46. 80% of those surveyed were female and 80% identified as heterosexual/straight. 32% of those surveyed were Hispanic/Latinx and 32% of those surveyed were White. 28% were Black/African American and 4% were Asian, with 4% identifying as a race/ethnicity not listed/other.

<u>Methodology:</u> Surveyed approved resource families (N=25) in Los Angeles County

Key Findings: Participants noted having high support from friends, family, and significant others. 1 in 3 reported child mental health or behavioral challenges and challenges with DCFS as a barrier. 1 in 4 reported stress as a barrier. Only 17% endorsed resource parent related stress at this time point.

<u>Citation:</u> Nekolas Milton (2022). Factors Related to the Recruitment and Retention of Prospective Foster and Adoptive Parents. Presented at APA Convention 2022.



An Examination of Pre-Adoptive Risk Factors and Engagement in Mental Health Services <u>Objective:</u> Examined the risk factors in pre adoptive youth and their relationship to engagement in mental health services.

<u>Sample:</u> The electronic health records of 247 pre adoptive youth were utilized in this study.

<u>Methodology:</u> Quantitative (minutes in therapy). Electronic health records data collected from 2012 to 2022.

<u>Key Findings:</u> Risk factors are prominent in youth with foster care experience. Risk factors trended towards predicting an increase in mental health service engagement. Educational and Psychiatry services better explained the variance

<u>Citation:</u> Vanessa Perez (2022). An Examination of Pre-Adoptive Risk Factors and Engagement in Mental Health Services Presented at APA Convention 2022.



Giving Parents their
Own Space: Collateral
Therapy Models for
Resource and
Adoptive Families.

<u>Objective</u>: Looked into the differences in collateral therapy models and traditional therapy models.

<u>Sample:</u> The electronic health records of 31 youth at TIES were collected. The mean age of youth at intake was 9.2 years old. 45.2% of the sample was male and 54.8% of the sample was female. 35.5% of the youth were African American, 29% were Hispanic/Latinx, 19.4% were of Mixed Race, and 16.1% were White.

Methodology: Outcome measures collected at Intake and approximately 12 months (CBCL) after intake. Electronic health records used to collect data on traditional or collateral therapist model, service minutes in therapy categories and postnatal risk factors.

Key Findings: No Significant differences on CBCL from intake to 1yr. However, total minutes in collateral therapy predicted greater symptom reductions (separate collateral therapy allowed for engagement in therapy to increase). No significant differences emerged in outcomes by collateral therapy model.

<u>Citation:</u> Christine Moody (2022). Giving Parents their Own Space: Collateral Therapy Models for Resource and Adoptive Families. Presented at APA Convention 2022.



Who Stays in Therapy
Longer or Comes Back
Later? An Examination
of Electronic Health
Records for Youth in or
Adopted from Foster
Care.

<u>Objective</u>: Examined the length of treatment (and re-entry into treatment) across child race/ethnicity, age, utilization of ancillary services, single or multi caregiver household and distance.

<u>Sample:</u> The electronic health records of 817 youth at TIES were collected.

<u>Methodology:</u> Accessed information from Exym, an electronic health record system, for all clients from UCLA TIEs for Families between the years of 2011 and 2022. Data linkage and organization via Excel. Descriptive and inferential analyses (I.e. regressions) via SPSS.

Key Findings: Across all treatment episodes, the median length of stay in treatment is approximately 18 months. Access to treatment appears equitable across child race/ethnicity. Length of stay in treatment primarily predicted by utilization of ancillary services. Older children spent less time in treatment at first but were more likely to return later. Female clients spent more total months in treatment. Some families from further away spent less time in treatment. Approximately 1 in 5 clients returns to treatment*. Clients of single caregivers were less likely to return to treatment later

<u>Citation:</u> Matthew Ruderman (2022). Who Stays in Therapy Longer or Comes Back Later? An Examination of Electronic Health Records for Youth in or Adopted from Foster Care. Presented at APA Convention 2022.



Youth In or Adopted From Foster Care and Their Families: How Do We Support Engagement?

Symposium Presented at APA, 2022

Chairperson: Audra Langley, Ph.D.

Vanessa Perez, B.A., Lucia Casandras, Ph.D., Jill Waterman, Ph.D., Matthew Ruderman, Ph.D.

The Impact of
Telehealth on
Psychotherapy: Client
Engagement

Objective: Reviewed client's records to explore if there are changes in engagement pre-TH (telehealth) and post-TH. Explored if client's diagnosis type influenced engagement. Examined if demographic variables (e.g., age, ethnicity, and gender) influence engagement.

<u>Sample:</u> Participants receiving mental health services at UCLA Ties for Families. 6 months Pre-TH and 6 months Post-TH (n=82). 12 Months Pre-TH and 12 Months Post-TH (n=66).

<u>Methodology:</u> Operationalized engagement using number of sessions, total billed minutes and average minutes per session. Performed analysis utilizing Paired Sample T-Test, One-Way ANOVA and Regression.

Key Findings: For Collateral Therapy, the number of sessions was higher for those 6 months Post-TH and the number of total billed minutes was higher for 6 months. For Individual therapy, the number of sessions was higher for those 6 months and 12 months Post-TH, the number of total billed minutes was higher for 6 months and 12 months, and there were less minutes per session for both 6 months and 12 months Post-TH.

<u>Citation:</u> Vanessa Perez (2021). The Impact of Telehealth on Psychotherapy: Client Engagement. Presented at APA Convention 2021.

Exploration of the Impacts of Events of Racial Injustice and COVID-19 on Foster and Adoptive Youth and their Caregivers

<u>Objective:</u> Described the impact of COVID-19 and racial injustice events on youth adopted from foster care and their caregivers. Described youth and caregiver perceptions of support qualitatively. Informed future research to help with clinical intervention for foster and adoptive families.

Sample: Youth (n=14). Caregivers (n=58).

<u>Methodology:</u> Conducted a COVID-19 survey on UCLA TIES families. Analyzed via content analysis of descriptive language.

<u>Key Findings:</u> Caregivers played an important role in youths' support systems. Over 70% of youth felt comfortable discussing events of racial injustice with their parents.

<u>Citation:</u> Lucia Cardenas (2021). Exploration of the Impacts of Events of Racial Injustice and COVID-19 on Foster and Adoptive Youth and their Caregivers. Presented at APA Convention 2021.



Examining Impact of COVID-19 and Transition to Telehealth on Foster/Adoptive Youth, Their Families, and the Clinicians Who **Support Them**

<u>Objective:</u> This study aimed to better understand the various impacts of COVID-19 and resulting life adaptations for youth adopted from foster care, their caregivers, and staff at UCLA Ties. Examined impact of transition from in-person to telehealth services on these groups. Reported lessons learned & give recommendations.

<u>Sample:</u> Direct Service Providers (N=18, mean age= 40.50). Caregivers (N=58, mean age= 50.22). Youth (N=10, mean age = 12.20).

Methodology: Online surveys sent to caregivers of foster/adoptive youth, administrative and direct service staff, and youth aged 10-17 with finalized adoptions (caregivers consent required). Surveys sent August 2020. Factor analysis utilized to yield 3 composite factors of COVID 19 impact: Negative impact, Positive impact, and Fear of infection.

<u>Key Findings:</u> All groups endorsed positive impacts/silver linings of COVID-19 pandemic. About 50% of both youth and caregivers preferred a combination model for future treatment. Service providers had mixed feelings about telehealth for clients, and experienced vulnerability, stress and exhaustion in implementing telehealth.

<u>Citation:</u> Jill Waterman (2021). Examining Impact of COVID-19 and Transition to Telehealth on Foster/Adoptive Youth, Their Families, and the Clinicians Who Support Them. Presented at APA Convention 2021.

Impact of COVID-19 on Resource Parents:
Unique Challenges
and Strengths.

Objective: Examined the effects of COVID-19 on youth and families.

<u>Sample:</u> Over 600 current or prospective resource parents in LA County were surveyed at the beginning of the pandemic in 2020.

Methodology: An online survey was sent to resource parents.

Key Findings: 5 in 10 resource parents reported anxiety related to a loved one getting sick or infected. 53% of resource parents are concerned about not seeing loved ones. 82% of parents reported having a greater appreciation for family and friends. 65% of parents reported video visitation with social worker being the most helpful. 44% of resource parents reported having in-person birth parent visits during Safer-at-Home or plan to. 54% of resource parents reported being open to welcoming a new child into their home during COVID-19.

<u>Citation:</u> Matthew Ruderman (2021). Impact of COVID-19 on Resource Parents: Unique Challenges and Strengths. Presented at APA Convention 2021.



Posters



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The Relationship Between Infant Temperament, Parenting Stress, and Dysfunctional Parent-Child Interactions Among Child Welfare System Involved Families

UCLA TIES for Families, University of California, Los Angeles

Meghan Kussman, M.A., Matthew Ruderman, Ph.D., Jill Waterman, Ph.D., & Audra Langley, Ph.D.



INTRODUCTION

- Resource parents experience more overall stress than biological parents (Bergsund, et al., 2019)
- Higher levels of parenting stress often results in harsher discipline and less nurturing caregiving behaviors (Havik et al., 2016), which in turn is associated with an increase in future difficult temperament and dysfunctional parent-child interactions (Necce, 2014).
- Identifying strategies to alleviate caregiving stress in resource parents may improve difficult temperament by establishing a better match between the child's characteristics and the demands of the environment (i.e., goodness-offit, Mackler et al., 2015).

METHODS

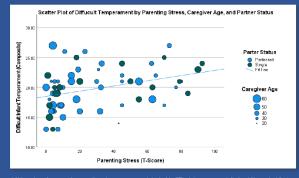
- Data collected from Infant Mental Health clients at treatment baseline (N = 103).
- Measures: Parenting Stress Index and The Preventive Ounce Infant Temperament Scale.
- A Difficult Temperament composite was created comprised of infant sensitivity, reactivity, adaptability, regularity, frustration tolerance, movement, and soothability.
- Linear regression was used to examine the relationship between parenting stress/parentchild dysfunctional interactions and infant temperament, controlling for relevant demographic variables.





Single Parlnered • 20-25 years • 36-44 years • 45-60 years

Difficult infant temperament significantly predicted an increase in parenting stress and parent-child dysfunctional interactions for foster and adoptive parents.



*Although an increase in parenting stress was associated with difficult temperament, it should be noted that parenting stress in this sample was subclinical.

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RESULTS

Linear Regression for Parenting Stress

	В	t	ρ	df	F	R^2
Model	-	-	.002	3, 60	5.578	.218
Difficult Temperament	2.659	2.847	.006			-
Caregiver Age	-1.000	2.104	.040	-	-	-
Partner Status (Single)	14.998	2.064	.042	-	-	-

Linear Regression for Parent-Child Dysfunctional Interactions

	В	ŧ	р	df	F	R2
Model	-	-	.002	3, 60	5.343	.211
Difficult Temperament	2.623	2.954	.004	-	-	-
Caregiver Age	-0.987	-2.184	.033	-	-	-
Partner Status (Single)	11.121	1.609	.113			

DISCUSSION

- Difficult infant temperament, younger caregiver age, and being a single caregiver significantly predicted an increase in parenting stress.
- Difficult infant temperament and younger caregiver age significantly predicted an increase in parent-child dysfunctional interactions.

IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- Temperament screening should be a routine part of the adoption and foster care process to identify and provide early intervention to at-risk caregivers.
- Resource parents who identify as single caregivers should receive services to cope with added parenting and life stressors.
- Parenting instruction should be modified to suit the child's unique temperament and decrease caregiving stress.
- Future analyses should explore the impact of race/ethnicity, caregiver employment status, income level, and other pertinent variables.

American Psychological Association, 2022

Difficult infant
temperament, younger
caregiver age, and being a
single caregiver
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increase in parenting
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Difficult infant temperament and younger caregiver age significantly predicated an increase in parent-child dysfunctional interaction

American Psychological Association, 2022

Caregivers from transracial families adverse impacts of COVID-19 than caregivers from non-transracial families.

Caregivers from transracial families reported significantly higher positive impacts related to COVID-19 than transracial families.



Positive and Adverse Effects of COVID-19 on Transracial Foster/Adoptive Families

Melissa Miranda, B.A., Sophia Jenny, Vanessa Perez, B.A., Matthew Ruderman, Ph.D., Sarah Finch, Kavya Juwadi, B.S., Jill Waterman, Ph.D., & Audra Langley, Ph.D.

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Introduction

· The Impact of COVID

- Many caregivers had mixed experiences with COVID-19, including increased parental stress and negative emotions (Conger et al., 2010) and more quality time with children (Gayatri & Irawathy, 2021).
- BIPOC families experienced significantly more losses during the pandemic (Clawson et al., 2021).

Transracial Families

- o Transracial family: Family in which at least one family member is a different race/ethnicity
- Over 40% of youth in foster care are part of transracial families (Department of Health and Human Services).
- Youth in transracial households can have a hard time developing a sense of pride and belonging to their race or culture (Malott & Schmidt, 2012).

Current Study

Aim: Examine the perceived impact of COVID-19 on transracial foster/adoptive families.

Hypothesis: Transracial foster/adoptive families will experience more positive and adverse impacts from the pandemic than non-transracial families

Methods

Data Collection

- · Participants included families in Los Angeles County with at least one
- Careaivers filled out an online survey about the impact of COVID-19 on their
- Data was collected mid-2021 as a follow-up study to Langley et al., 2020

Participants

- 376 Caregivers
- Age range from 28 and 78 (M) 44.01 years, SD = 10.79)
- Female: 89%; Male: 10%; Other 1%
- Sinale: 43%; Married or lived inpartner: 57%
- White: 30%: Black or African American: 25%; Latinx: 36%; Mixed/Other: 9%

Transracial Families

Analysis

· Linear regression was used to explore if being in a transracial family predicts outcomes related to COVID-19 (i.e., positive & adverse impact).

Results

Table 1. Descriptive Impact of COVID-19 on Resource Parents by Factors

Factor/Item	% Resource Parents Endorsing Iter
Positive Impact	
Shelter-in-place has helped our family grow closer.	64%
I have greater appreciation for my family and close friends.	78%
I have a deeper appreciation for life.	79%
I have been more grateful for each day.	77%
I have been more accepting of things I cannot change.	75%
I have found new ways of connecting with family and friends.	76%
My past experiences with uncertainty and loss as a resource parent have given me skills to help deal with COVID-19.	52%
Adverse Impact	
I feel anxious about being infected by or dying from COVID-19.	38%
I am concerned about a family member or close friend being infected by or dying from COVID-19.	51%
I feel I have no control over how COVID-19 will impact my life.	33%
I am worried about the return to "pre-pandemic life" and everything opening up again.	50%
COVID-19 presents a lot of uncertainty about the futures. How stressful have you found this uncertainty to be?**	60%

^{*}All items endorsed are above "Neither agree nor disagree"

Table 2. Linear Regression For Positive Impact of COVID-19

	В	1	P	df	F	R^2
Model	-	-	<.001	324	9.710	.217
Transracial Family*	1.543	2.489	.013	-	-	
Two Caregivers	-0.353	-0.585	.559			
Age*	-0.056	-2.196	.029			
African American*	4.739	5.681	<.001	-	-	-
Latinx*	4.388	5.958	<.001			
Mixed*	2.729	2.751	.006	-		
Coping Challenges	-0.177	-1.215	.225			
Access to Resources*	0.648	5.053	<.001	-		
Adverse Impact of COVID-19*	0.152	2.475	.014			

Table 3. Linear Regression For Adverse Impact of COVID-19

	В	t	p	df	F	R^2
Model	-		<.001	324	14.390	.29
Transracial Family*	-1.452	-2.576	.010	-	-	-
Two Caregivers	0.064	0.117	.907			
Age	0.003	0.128	.898			
African American*	1.723	2.179	.030			
Latinx	1.090	1.548	.123			-
Mixed	1.534	1.688	.092			
Coping Challenges*	1.152	9.918	<.001			
Access to Resources	0.037	0.308	.758			
Positive Impact of COVID-19*	0.126	2.475	.014			_

Discussion

When adjusting for demographic variables and other COVID-19 related

- · Caregivers from transracial families reported significantly less adverse impacts of COVID-19 than caregivers from non-transracial families.
- · Caregivers from transracial families reported significantly higher positive impacts related to COVID-19 than caregivers from nontransracial families

Implications:

- · Caregivers in transracial families reported having better experiences associated with the pandemic (i.e., less negative and more positive impacts) than caregivers from non-transracial families.
- · Results may be attributed to the ability of foster and adoptive parents to manage highly stressful situations given their unique experiences.
- · Results may suggest that caregivers had a greater positive outlook on life in general and/or had the ability to focus on their positive experiences more.

Limitations · Further define "transracial family" by taking into account the racial

- composition of the family (e.g., a family with at least one Black member versus a family with at least one Latinx member). Responses were collected from families in LA County, limiting the generalizability of this
- The direct impact of COVID-19 could be convoluted by other experiences (e.g., social justice movements in 2020, political climate).
- This study did not include a control group of non-foster and adoptive
- parents, which limited our ability to compare results to the general population.

Future Directions

- · Explore other variables that may be associated with the impact of COVID-19 in transracial families (e.g., the impact of the social justice movement in 2020).
- · Follow up with families to assess any long-term effects or changes in experiences related to COVID-19.
- · Identify what additional support adopted and foster parents might
- . Survey youth to explore how they perceived the impact of COVID-19.

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The Relationship Between Number of Caregivers at Home and Engagement in Telemental Health Services

Kavya Juwadi, B.S., Vanessa Perez, B.A., Matthew Ruderman, Ph.D., Jill Waterman, Ph.D., & Audra Langley, Ph.D UCLA TIES for Families, University of California, Los Angeles



Introduction

- 80% of children in the foster care system have significant mental health problems (Polihronakis, 2008).
- 50% of children receiving mental health services drop out prematurely from psychotherapy services (Nock & Ferriter, 2005).
- Telemental health (TMH) has emerged as an alternative treatment modality to replace or complement in-person services.
- Prior research suggests that numerous family-level factors (e.g., parental stress, family type) impact the utilization of mental health services (Gopalan et al., 2010).
- Children from single caregiver households are more likely to experience mental health challenges (Hannig Hofer et al., 2017).

Aims

- Use electronic health records to explore client engagement in mental health services by treatment modality before and after the transition to TMH services for single and multiple caregiver households.
- Compare single caregiver households to multiple caregiver households on engagement in mental health services during TMH.

Methods

Data Collection

- · Electronic Health Records
- In-Person Services: March 13, 2019 to March 13, 2020
- TMH Services: March 16, 2020 to March 16, 2021

Participants

 55 foster/adoptive families receiving service from UCLA TIES for Families

Number of Caregivers at Home

One

38%

**Displaying significant results only

- Age range: 1 17 (M = 9.67, SD = 4.16)
- Gender: male (53%) and female (47%)
- Race: African American (47%), Latinx (29%), White (22%), or Asian (2%)

• Variables

- Number of Caregivers:
 One: Two
- One; Iwo
 Engagement:
- Mental Health Services Only
- Number of Sessions; Accumulated Time Spent In Therapy; Average Min Per Session

Two

- Treatment Modality
- General; Individual Therapy; Collateral Therapy; Family Therapy

Analysis

- Series of paired sample t-tests
- Independent sample t-tests

Results

Table 1. Comparing In-Person and Telehealth Engagement

Category	In-F	In-Person		TMH		e t	df	P
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD				
umber of Sessions								
Single Caregiver								
Overall*	49.38	23.88	60.00	23.70	10.26	-2.88	20	.009
Collateral Therapy*	20.24	17.08	26.24	15.33	6.00	-3.23	20	.004
Two Caregivers								
Overall*	43.85	20.45	53.74	34.02	5.39	-2.77	33	.009
Individual Therapy*	20.09	10.18	30.35	16.98	10.26	-3.80	22	.001
ccumulated Minutes								
Single Caregiver								
Collateral Therapy*	915.19	671.02	1160.90	628.58	245.71	-2.58	20	.018
Two Caregivers								
Individual Therapy*	1091.26	589.15	1561.35	957.70	470.09	-3.15	22	.005
verage Minutes Per Session								
Single Caregiver								
Overall*	54.26	11.97	45.40	7.91	-8.86	5.22	20	<.00
Individual Therapy*	50.08	13.78	40.92	11.04	-9.16	3.05	14	.009
Two Caregivers								
Overall*	49.59	8.59	44.65	10.05	-4.94	3.47	33	.001
Family Therapy*	45.45	13.98	37.77	12.41	-7.75	2.61	30	.014

Table 2. Comparing Telehealth Engagement Between Single and Two Caregiver Households

Category		Single Caregiver $(n = 21)$		Two Caregivers $(n = 34)$		t	p
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
Number of Sessions	59.95	23.69	53.73	34.02	6.22	.469	.641
Accumulated Time	2,671.57	946.64	2,479.88	1,715.35	191.69	.734	.466
Average Minutes Per Session	45.40	7.91	44.65	10.05	.075	.288	.775

Discussion

Overall

- Clients with a single caregiver attended a greater number of sessions but spent less time in services during TMH compared to in-person services.
- Clients with two caregivers attended more sessions and had shorter sessions during TMH compared to in-person services.

Individual Therapy

- Clients with a single caregiver spent less time per session during TMH compared to in-person services.
- Clients with two caregivers attended more sessions and spent more time in therapy during TMH compared to in-person services.

Collateral Therapy

 Clients with a single caregiver attended a greater number of sessions and spent more time in services during TMH compared to in-person services.

Family Therapy

 Clients with two caregivers had shorter family sessions during TMH compared to in-person services.

Group Comparisons

 In general, there was no significant group differences when comparing TMH engagement between single and two caregiver households.

Implications, Limitations, Future Directions

Implication

- Client engagement for both single and two caregiver households increased after the transition to TMH.
- Clients in both single and two caregiver households engaged in TMH therapy equally.

Limitations

- The small sample size limits the power of the results.
- The sample lived in Los Angeles County which limits the generalizability of the results to other geographical greas.
- Since the use of TMH coincided with COVID-19, the results may be confounded by increased mental health challenges and stress associated with the pandemic.

Future Directions

- Future research could explore how other demographic variables such as race and gender impact TMH engagement
- Explore how a hybrid model (i.e., a combination of in-person and TMH) of mental health treatment might impact client engagement.

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American Psychological Association, 2022

Clients' engagement for both single and two caregiver household increased after the transition to telemental health

Clients in both single and two caregiver household engaged in telemental therapy equally

American Psychological Association, 2021

Responses indicate that more than half of caregivers felt that COVID 19 had a negative impact on their lives.

Data indicates that caregivers and youth reported a high sense of resiliency during this time, such as areater overall appreciation of life, friends and family.



Comparing the Perceptions of Youth Adopted from Foster Care and Their Caregivers on the Impact of COVID

Skyla Nava, Sarah Finch, Annie Jeong, Amy Lee, Nicole Yee, Vanessa Perez, B.A., Matthew Ruderman, Ph.D., Audra Garcia-Langley, Ph.D., Princess Addison, B.A., Jill Waterman, Ph.D. UCLA TIES for Families, University of California, Los Angeles



Introduction

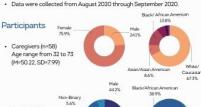
- The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent closures have been associated with increased anxiety and loneliness among parents and children (Fegert et.
- Stress levels among foster parents have increased since the start of COVID-19 (Miller, Cooley, & Mihalec-Adkins, 2020).
- The present study explores the impact of COVID-19 and pandemic-related changes to daily life on caregivers and children among the foster/adoptive population.

Current Study

- · Explore the perceived impact of COVID-19 on youth adopted from foster care and their resource parents.
- · Compare caregiver and youth perceptions, experiences, and response patterns to COVID-19 and Safer-at-Home orders.

Method

- · Participants were receiving services at UCLA TIES for Families.
- · Participants were surveyed on the impact that COVID-19 had on their



 Youth (n=10) Age range from 10 to 16 (M=12.20, SD=2.04)

16.7% Mixed Race

Analysis

Descriptive analysis was ran using IBM SPSS 27.

Results

Caregiv	ers	Youth
	Overall Impact of COVID-19	
53%	Feel that COVID-19 outbreak has extremely affected their life in a negative way	10%
20%	Feel that the COVID-19 outbreak has had a very positive affect on their daily life	40%

Anxiety Over COVID-19

68%	Feel anxious about being infected or dying of COVID-19	Feel anxious about getting sick from COVID-19	60%
73%	Feel concerned about a family member or close friend being infected or dying from COVID-19	Feel worried about a family member or close friend being sick or dying from COVID-19	60%
	Feel that they have had difficulty	Concerned about not seeing friends in person	80%
58%	taking care of their children's needs and/or balancing their needs with other responsibilities due to COVID-19	Concerned about friends getting sick	90%
770/	Anxiety Ov	er the Future	10%

29%	Feel worried about going back to real life once this is all over	10%
	Resiliency during COVID-19	
62%	Feel that shelter-in-place helped their family grow closer	80%
84%	Feel that they have found new ways of connecting with family and friends	80%
67%	Feel that they have a deeper appreciation of life	70%
73%	Feel they been more accepting of things they cannot change	30%
53%	Feel like they have adequate supports and resources to get through this	67%

Feel they have no control over how COVID-19 will impact their life

Feel that their experiences with Feel their experiences with uncertainty and loss as a

Eeel that they have a preater appreciation for their family and

them skills to help deal with

foster care and/or adoption has given them perspective and strategies for dealing with uncertain situations like

Feel that their caregivers are 100% there for them during this time

Discussion

Overall Impact of COVID

V-----

- Responses indicate that more than half of caregivers feel that COVID-19 had a negative impact on their lives.
- · Youth were more likely to report that the COVID-19 outbreak had a positive impact on their daily lives.

Anxiety Over COVID-19

- . Data revealed that both caregivers and youth expressed a level of concern for their families and close friends getting infected.
- · Youth's primary concern was of their friends getting sick from COVID-
- · Caregiver's primary concern was of a family member getting sick from
- · Results indicate that caregivers are less confident about their capacity to fulfill their children's needs during COVID-19.
- · Responses indicated that youth felt that their caregivers were there for them during this time.

Resilience During COVID-19

. Data indicates that caregivers and youth reported a high sense of resiliency during this time, such as greater overall appreciation of life, friends and family.

Limitations

- · The sample number was small limiting the generalizability of the findings.
- · There could be a difference between individuals who decided to fill out the survey and those who did not.
- Various events happened during 2020 (e.g., BLM protests and a heightened political climate), so it is hard to distinguish if responses were due solely to COVID-19's impact.

Future Directions

- · Send a follow-up survey to investigate changes in experiences and
- · Address some of our limitations by having a larger sample size and randomly selecting individuals to answer our survey.
- · Future studies could explore factors contributing to resilience throughout the pandemic in youth.
- · With a larger sample size, future studies can tie youth and caregiver's responses together



ADOPTIVE PARENT DEPRESSION AND ADOPTIVE CHILDREN'S EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

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INTRODUCTION

- As many as 10% to 32% of adoptive parents experience depression/significant depressive symptoms post-adoption (Foli et al., 2016)
- Parental depression has been linked to poorer parenting quality, depressive symptoms in children (Liskola et al., 2018; Cioffi, 2020)
- Children in foster care are vulnerable to higher rates of mental health conditions and poor educational outcomes (Oswald, Heil, & Goldbeck, 2010)
- In the normative population, parental postnatal depressive symptoms predict lower academic performance in adolescence (Psychogiou, Russell & Owens, 2019).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How does parental depression influence foster/adopted children's educational achievement in childhood and adolescence?
- Through what pathways might parental depression affect educational achievement in foster/adopted children from childhood to adolescence?

METHOD

Participants:

5-year study (1996-2001)

N = 82, 46% female and 83% BIPOC, M = 3.7 years, SD = 3.4 years

Follow-up study (2014-2015)

N = 35, M = 19.2 years

Repeated measures were taken at 6 timepoints throughout the 5-year study.

METHOD, CONTD.

Measures:

= 0.48

Parental Depression

• T1~T6 using the Beck Depression Inventory (Beck, 1996)

Parenting Stress

• T1~T6 using child domain of the Parenting Stress Index (Abidin, 1997).

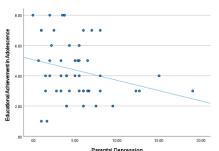
Educational Achievement in Childhood

 T4, T6, using Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT) Total Achievement Score (Johnson, 2011).

Educational Achievement in Adolescence

 Composite of parent reported grades, parent perceptions of child academic performance, inclusion on the honor roll, and other academic honors collected in the follow-up study.

RESULTS



Parental depression (averaged T1~T6) and participants' educational achievement in adolescence were found to be moderately negatively correlated, r(50) = -.28, p

- The relationship was slightly stronger among children who were prenatally exposed to substances, r(41) = -.33, p = .034
- No significant relationships found between parental depression and educational achievement in childhood overall and when analyzed by ethnicity

DISCUSSION

- Parental depressive symptoms reported throughout the childhood are related to lower educational achievement in adolescence for children adopted from foster care, especially among children prenatally exposed to substances
- However, the magnitude of the influence of parental depression on academic achievement is unclear; we cannot conclude that this relationship is impactful in the context of the various risk factors affecting the academic achievement of children adopted from foster care
- No significant relationships were observed between parental depression and parenting stress nor parental depression and educational achievement in childhood

LIMITATIONS

- Educational achievement was retrospectively reported by parents and some reported items (i.e. honors) may not objectively capture educational achievement
- Potential temporal trends in parental depression are unclear

IMPLICATIONS

- Future research may involve equivalence testing to determine whether parental depression influences adoptive children's academic achievement in childhood
- Findings support the importance of bolstering adoptive parent mental health

American Psychological Association, 2021

Parental depressive
symptoms reported
throughout childhood are
realted to lower
educational achievement
in adolescence for children
adopted from foster care,
especially among children
prenatally exposed to
substances

Findings support the importance of bolstering adoptive parent mental health

Western **Psychological** Association, 2017

Contrary to hypotheses, neglected youth (not showed greater externalizing symptoms youth across childhood

Both neglected and are more likely to be diagnosed with depression



The Effects of Pre-Adoptive Child Maltreatment: **Does Subtype Matter?**



Introduction

Background:

- Maltreatment often the cause of removal from the biological home for youth who enter foster care.10
- Adoption meant to mitigate the effects of pre-adoptive risk (e.g., maltreatment) to improve children's outcomes.
- However, unknown whether children's post-adoption trajectories of mental health outcomes differ based on the type of maltreatment they experienced prior to adoption
- Research on non-adopted children indicates:
- · Physically abused children more likely to exhibit aggression.
- Perceive neutral cues as hostile⁸
- · Neglected children more likely to display internalizing problems.
- Inconsistent/insufficient caregiving leads child to view self as unlovable and world as untrustworthy9

Hypotheses:

- Neglected youth will consistently exhibit greater internalizing scores across childhood
- Physically abused youth will show greater externalizing problems
- Unknown: By adolescence/young adulthood, how will these groups compare on prevalence of psychiatric disorders & symptoms?

Methods and Materials

- Original study (childhood): 77 children, 64 primary adoptive parents Follow-up study (adolescence/young adulthood): 35 children, 44 primary
- adoptive parents
- Childhood (baseline): M=4.2. Range = 4 months-8.4 years
- Adolescence: M=19.2, Range = 14-24
- 56% Male, 44% Female
- 30% Latino/a, 27% African America, 20% Caucasian, 23% Other/multiracial/
- 53% non-maltreated, 23% neglected, 13% physically abused, 8% several types of maltreatment, 3% unknown

Procedure:

- Ss recruited from 1996-2001 through TIES for Adoption seminars for prospective adoptive parents
- Parents who had child <9 y.o. placed with them could participate in study
- Families returned yearly for 5 years to complete measures and tasks
- Once children had reached adolescence/young adulthood, parents & youth invited to participate in online follow-up survey

- Maltreatment: Information gathered from DCFS court reports/records
- Child behavior problems: Child Behavior Checklist 2-31 & 4-182
- Adolescent/adult outcomes: BASE 7 (anxiety, depression, irritability 1-7 Likert scale) & psychiatric diagnoses (yes/no)

Results

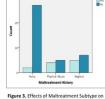
Childhood:

 Neglected children exhibited greater internalizing problems (B=8.7. t(5627)=3.00 p=.003) and externalizing problems (B=10.11, t(3013)=3.16, p=.002) than children with no maltreatment across time

Adolescence:

- Neglected youth (M=5.28, SD=1.41) experienced greater anxiety symptoms than physically abused youth (M=4.06, SD=1.14) and nonmaltreated youth (M=3.09, SD=1.72), but physically abused and nonmaltreated youth did not differ
- . Both neglected and physically abused youth more likely to be diagnosed with depression than non-maltreated youth, p=.009
- · Neglected youth received diagnosis in childhood, while physically abused youth were diagnosed in adolescence

Neglect





Depression Diagnosis in Adolescence

Anxiety Symptoms in Adolescence

Discussion

- Neglected youth display consistently heightened internalizing symptoms across childhood and into youth adulthood, as predicted
 - · Absence of consistent caregiving may create pattern of blunted cortisol that can elevate internalizing symptoms2
- Contrary to hypotheses, neglected youth (not physically abused youth) showed greater externalizing symptoms than non-maltreated youth across
- · Chronic absence of adequate caregiving may have more deleterious effects than periodic abuse
- · Little research examining effects of neglect on externalizing behaviors; however, latent constructs of neglect such as low perceived early affection and maternal support have been shown to elevate later externalizing problems5
- · Possible mediators of association between neglect and externalizing: impairment of impulse control,7 interpersonal skills,4 or attachment capacity⁶ 11

Figure 1. Effects of Neglect on Externalizing Problems Across Childhood.

Timepoint

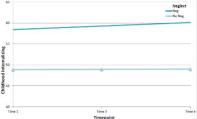


Figure 2. Effects of Neglect on Internalizing Problems Across Childhood.

Conclusions

- . Findings negate the pervasive assumption that "active" forms of abuse take a greater toll on children then "passive" forms
- Because neglectful caregivers fail to provide necessary support for fostering meaningful attachment and healthy child development, their children display high rates of psychological difficulties later on
- Although externalizing problems were highest in neglected youth in childhood, appeared to be no remaining differences in adolescence/young adulthood
- Stable, nurturing adoptive parenting and mental health services may at least buffer the effects of neglect on externalizing problems
- Additional supports may be needed to negate the effects of neglect on internalizing problems among adoptees



Role of Demographic Variables in Willingness to Adopt Children with Behavior and Learning Problems



Tali Moore; Austin J. Blake, B.A.; Audra K. Langley, Ph.D.; Jill M. Waterman, Ph.D. University of California, Los Angeles

Introduction

Background

- UCLA TIES for Families, an interdisciplinary program that promotes successful adoption and development of foster youth, developed a preplacement education and preparation curriculum (PREP) designed to prepare prospective parents considering adopting foster children.
- Three 3-hour sessions that focus on developing empathy for substance-abusing parents, effects of prenatal substance exposure, substance abuse prevention, developmental problems as a result of traumas associated with removal from home/subsequent placements, and open adoption
- PREP shown to increase willingness to adopt children with learning and behavioral problems by alleviating stigma associated with adopting children with these difficulties.³
 - Unknown whether willingness to adopt varies according to parents' background characteristics
 - Single vs Married Parents
 - Some research shows greater willingness to adopt special-needs children among single parents,⁷ but other research says it may depend on type of special need⁵
 - However, married parents have more resources⁵ which is linked to greater willingness to adopt children with special needs¹
 - · Presence of Children Already in Home
 - Parents with experience with foster care/adoption have more favorable attitudes towards it²

 also more open to children with greater difficulties?

Hypotheses

- Increase in willingness from pre- to post-training in willingness to adopt children with ADHD, learning problems (LPs), and behavior problems (BP) for all groups across time.
- Parents with foster/adopted children in the home will have higher willingness to adopt than those with no children in home.
- Married couples will have higher willingness than single parents.

Methods and Materials

<u>Participants</u>

- 1,395 prospective adoptive parents
- 45% male, 55% female
- Attended three 3-hour PREP courses
- Completed pre- and post-session questionnaires

Measures

- Prospective adoptive parent willingness survey
- Questions about willingness to adopt children with ADHD, LPs, and BPs
- Likert scale: 1 ("Not at all willing") to 7 ("Definitely willing")
- · Demographic form
 - Investigated demographic characteristics including marital status, presence of children in the home, and three covariates: age, gender, and education level (predictor of SES)

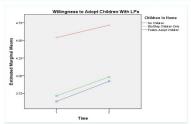
Results

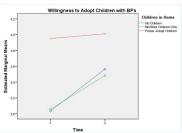
Children in home:

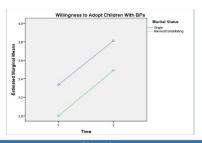
- For all outcomes, main effect of "children in home;" parents with foster/adopted youth in home showed higher willingness to adopt children with ADHD (F (2,1) = 7.58, p = .001, η² = .019), LPs (F (2,1) = 3.93, p = .02, η² = .01), and BPs (F (2,1) = 3.06, p = 0.048, η² = .008)
- No main effects of time or interactions between children in home and
 time.

Marital status:

- For all outcomes, main effect of marital status; single parents showed higher willingness to adopt children with ADHD (F (2,1) = 9.46, p = 0.002, η^2 = .012), LPs (F (2,1) = 15.104, p < 0.001, η^2 = .018), BPs (F (2,1) = 7.45, p = 0.006, η^4 = .009)
- Main effect of time on willingness to adopt children with BPs; parents increased in willingness to adopt over time (F (2, 1) = 119.319, p < 0.001, n² = .128)







Discussion

- Results revealed that single parents and parents who already had foster/adopted youth in the home were more willing to adopt children with ADHD, BPs, and LPs both before and after the PREP session.
 - Married parents sometimes given higher priority in adoption process.
 - Prior literature shows that single parents may be especially equipped to handle difficulties common to higher-risk adoptees²
 - Prior contact with child welfare system may increase willingness to adopt children with LPs/BPs.
 - More than 9 out of every 10 people said they would "definitely" make the same decision to adopt again.⁸
- Regardless of marital status, willingness to adopt children with BPs increased across time.
 - PREP sessions may especially help parents understand why children "act out" due to prior traumas

Conclusions

- PREP sessions should aim to minimize gaps in adoption willingness between parents of different backgrounds.
- PREP sessions effectively alleviate stigma associated with behavioral problems in foster youth.
- In order to address stigma associated with learning problems (including ADHD) in foster youth, PREP could add a module geared towards learning problems and the integral relationship between foster parents and teachers/school staff.
- In future research, it would be helpful to investigate the number of prospective adoptive parents who end up adopting children with known behavioral and learning problems.

Psychology Undergraduate Research Conference (PURC), 2017

PREP sessions effectively alleviate stigma associated with behavioral problems in foster youth

Results revealed that single parents and parents who already had foster/adopted youth in the home were more willing to adopt children with ADHD, BPs and LPs both before and after the PREP session

Contact

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American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP)

Female adoptees may receive more intensive mental health services in adolescence to treat longstanding internalizing problems

Marginally significant interaction between gender and externalizing nrohlems

Gender Differences in Intensive Service Utilization Among Youth Adopted From Foster Care

Austin Blake, B.A., Audra Langley, Ph.D., & Jill Waterman, Ph.D.
University of California, Los Angeles

*p \le .05, **p \le .01



Introduction

- Foster/adopted youth receive more mental health services than normative population⁴
- Among non-foster youth, females typically utilize services more¹²
- Among foster youth, contrasting results:
- Some research suggests more male⁵ service use, some reveals more female⁷ use, some shows no effect¹⁰
- Male foster youth display more externalizing problems than girls¹³ but females experience more impairment due to gender-atypical nature of externalizing⁶
- Males and females experience similar levels in internalizing problems in childhood, but females begin to display more in adolescence?
- Do female foster youth utilize more intensive mental health services than male foster youth in adolescence despite similar levels of symptoms in childhood?
- Must identify potential gender gap to ensure that all foster youth (high-need population) receive treatment they need

Methods

. Sample:

- Original study (childhood): 82 children, 64 primary adoptive parents
- Age: M = 4.2. Range = .33 8.4 years
- Follow-up study (adolescence): 35 children,
 44 primary adoptive parents
 - Age: M = 19.2, Range = 14–24
- 56% Male, 44% Female
- 82% children of color

Procedure:

- Ss recruited from 1996-2001 through seminars for prospective adoptive parents; parents who had child <9 y.o. placed with them could participate
- Families returned yearly for 5 years to complete measures and tasks
- Once children had reached adolescence/young adulthood, parents & youth invited to participate in online follow-up survey.

Methods (Ctd.)

Measures

- Child Behavior Checklist 2-3¹ & 4-18²
- Internalizing and Externalizing subscales (mean across childhood)

· Treatment utilization

- Dichotomous variable (1/0); ever:
- Attended substance abuse treatment,
 Attended residential treatment, or
- Been psychiatrically hospitalized

Covariates

- · Socioeconomic status
- Hollingshead scale:9
- Accounts for parents' education level and occupation
- Lower score = higher SES
- Cumulative risk
 - Information gathered from DCFS court reports/records
 - Maltreatment, number of placements, age at adoption, lived with bio parent

Data Analytic Plan:

Table 1

- Utilized PROC MI in SAS to account for missing data
- Analyzed data across 50 imputed datasets using PROC MIANALYZE

Results

Variable	Risk	SES	CBCL-Int	CBCL-Ext	Gender	Services
Risk	-					
SES	201	-				
CBCL-Int	.407"	106				
CBCL-Ext	.330"	110	.709"	-		
Gender	.069	.306"	.140	.087		
Services	.077	381"	.295	.350"	322	-

Results (Ctd.)

Table 2 Service Utilization Predicted from Internalizing Problems and Gender Predictor β ρ 95% CI Cumulative Risk -.035 .623 -216 .104 SES -.077 .275 -215 .061 CBCL-Int** .259 .003 .088 .043 Gender* -.315 .008 .547 .083 Gender x CBCL-Int* -.224 .049 -.448 .001

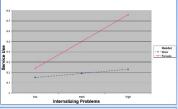


Figure 1. Internalizing problems and service utilization by gender.

Predictor	β	p	95% CI	
Cumulative Risk	024	.798	161,	.112
SES	072	.310	210,	.067
CBCL-Ext**	.230	.006	.065,	.396
Gender*	303	.011	535,	.071
Gender x CBCL-Ext	141	.084	361,	.080

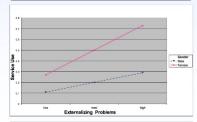


Figure 2. Externalizing problems and service utilization by gender.

Conclusion

Conclusions:

- While level of childhood behavior problems is greatest predictor of later intensive mental health treatment among foster-adoptees, gender differences may exist in extent to which childhood psychopathology predicts treatment use in adolescence
- Female adoptees may receive more intensive mental health services in adolescence to treat longstanding internalizing problems
- · Possible reasons for gender gap:
 - Girls more willing to use mental health services³
 - Differential consequences and trajectories of psychopathology
 - Posttraumatic stress symptoms associated with later problematic substance use in girls but not boys¹⁰
 - In adolescence, girls begin to exhibit more depressive symptoms than boys despite similar levels in childhood⁷
- Marginally significant interaction between gender and externalizing problems
 - Slight evidence that female foster youth may receive more intensive services than males to treat externalizing behaviors due to gender-atypical nature of externalizing

imitations

- Time lag between childhood and adolescent time-points may result in failure to capture gender differences in psychopathology that emerge later in youth
- Some youth did not participate in follow-up study due to staying in rehab facility or residential treatment → possible attrition bias

Implications:

- Further research should tease apart possible explanations for findings; underlying reason informs intervention implications
 - If due to higher rates of psychopathology among females, should target more early intervention efforts towards female foster
 - If due to lower referral threshold for females, should work to eliminate bias



The Effects of Family Environment on Academic Performance of Adopted Youth



Amanda E. Preston; Austin J. Blake, B.A.; Jill M. Waterman, Ph.D. & Audra K. Langley, Ph.D.

Introduction

- Foster and adopted youth are at higher risk for poor academic performance due to deleterious prenatal and postnatal environments^{1,5}
- Research on resilience indicates that foster/adopted youth can change their academic trajectories if the right protective factors are in place^{4,8}
- Previous studies have shown that family cohesion and parental control can improve academic performance in non-adopted youth^{2,3}

Research Question

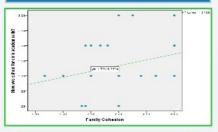
 Can family cohesion and control serve as protective factors against deleterious academic outcomes common within an adopted population?

Methods

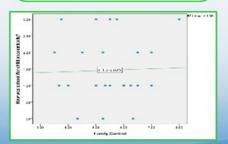
Participants

- Longitudinal Study:
 Sabilden 68 n
- o 82 children, 68 primary adoptive parents o Age: M = 4.3, Range = 4 months - 8.4 years
- Follow-up study:
- o 35 youth, 44 primary adoptive parents o Age: M = 19.2. Range = 14 - 24 years
- . 54% Male and 46% Female
- 33%Latino/a, 26%African American, 19% Caucasian, 22% Other/Multiracial/Unknown Measures
- Cohesion and Control subscales of the Family Environment Scale (FES)⁷ during the 5-year longitudinal study
- Questions on academic achievement from online follow-up to original study when children reached adolescence/young adulthood

Results



- Multiple regression analysis was implemented to test if family cohesion and control significantly predicted academic outcomes (measured as parent report of child academic performance)



Contact: Amanda Preston apreston576@g.ucla.edu

- Family cohesion marginally predicted academic outcomes (B = 0.384, p = 0.056)
- Control within the family environmentdid not predict academic outcomes (B = -0.017, p = 0.903)

Discussion

- Family cohesion may serve as a protective factor against poor academic outcomes in adopted youth
- This effect likely stems from being placed in a supportive environment that encourages achievement
- However, inconclusive because adoptive parents may have felt closer to children higher in academic achievement
- Contrary to past literature on non-adopted youth,² control within the family did not predict higher academic outcomes in this population
 - Although control and parental monitoring may be helpful for non-adopted youth, strict parenting may act as trigger for traumarelated behaviors in this population

Implications and Future Research

- Interventions targeting family support and unity may lessen achievement gap between adopted youth and their non-adopted peers
- Future research should examine the effects of high family cohesion on later measures of life achievement (e.g. college attendance, career path, etc.)
- Follow-up question: do control and cohesion interact to predict academic outcomes?
 - Possible that strict parenting only has beneficial effect when combined with warm, nurturing (i.e., authoritative) parenting

Psychology
Undergraduate
Research Conference
(PURC), 2017

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