

**From the Margins to the Center:
How Youth Envision the Future of the Child Welfare System**

INFORMATION SHEET

Project Overview

Our project investigates how current and former foster youth have experienced the child welfare system and their ideas for change. Using trauma-informed methods, we plan to interview 100 youth, ages 18–25, prioritizing immigrant, indigenous, LGBTQ+, Black, and parenting youth.

Why are we doing this research?

The voices of youth whose lives have been impacted by the child welfare system are seldom included in calls for reform. We want to give youth the power to use their voices to create a more equitable child welfare system that serves the needs of diverse families.

Why are you asked to participate?

You are being asked to participate in this research study because of your involvement in the child welfare system and because you are between the ages of 18 and 25. Your participation is voluntary.

What will you do and how long will it take?

You will be asked to take part in an interview or focus group.

Interview: Participate in a private interview over Zoom or in-person. Interviews will last 1-3 hours and will take place over 1-3 sessions. Each session will be approximately 1 hour. You can choose to participate in one or more sessions. You will be asked questions about how and why you entered foster care, your experiences while in foster care, and your thoughts about the child welfare system.

Focus group: Participate in a focus group with other individuals over Zoom or in-person. The focus group will meet one time for approximately one hour. You will be asked to reflect on current and future efforts to transform the child welfare system.

Sessions will be audio-recorded and kept confidential. Interpreters will be present to support non-English speaking participants.

What compensation will you receive for participating in the study?

For each interview or focus group session, you will receive a \$50 gift card for your participation.

How will your confidentiality and privacy be maintained?

All materials will be kept confidential and your name will not be used. We will not report information in a way that you can be easily identified. Your data will be stored securely on a

password-protected computer and only researchers will have access to these records for the study's duration.

What are the risks and benefits?

Risks may include feelings of sadness or discomfort, and the possibility of discussion triggering past trauma. You will be provided with a list of mental health resources, and you can stop the interview at any time or decline to answer any questions.

You might benefit from reflecting on your experiences and using your voice to positively impact individuals with similar experiences.

Who can you talk to about this study?

If you have any questions about this research study, please feel free to contact us at the email or phone numbers listed below.

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For additional information about your rights as a participant in this study, or to discuss problems, concerns, and questions, please feel free to contact the Institutional Review Board Office at (615) 322-2918 or toll free at (866) 224-8273.

Thank you for your interest in our study!