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How to foster care system determinate if the child is safe or not

**Foster Care**

People nowadays are busy with their jobs, activities and they have time demanding schedules, which do not allow people particularly parents to take care of their children when they need the most of care. There have been some developmental initiatives, which have taken place to ease the difficulties of parents and these developmental initiatives include caregiving homes, foster care, daycare centers, and community residential care centers.

Minors are admitted to care centers, caregiving homes, and treatment centers, the state is responsible to allow and approve the foster care for minors with the help of a foster parent or parents. This whole legal system is known as foster care. Social agencies and government are the sources through which children are placed to foster care. The foster parents or a single foster parent gets compensation for the total expenses during the period of care. Child protection agencies and family courts are the pathways through which a state may consider foster care. With the help of the state, legal decisions are made in favor of foster care and for minor’s day-to-day care a foster parent and he/she is responsible for the upbringing of the minor. In the United States, formal kinship care is common, while kinship care is carried without the approval of the state or involvement of any court in some areas. A quarter of children were taken to foster care with the relatives of parents rather than admitting them in any formal system (E. 15). It is not necessary that the informal foster parents are providing quality care and they help minors in grooming and their nurture. Child maltreatment is an issue due to which 1,750 children death causalities were recorded in 2016 and this was the highest record since 1992 (*Child Maltreatment*). However, parents who work, and have to follow a job schedule have to admit their children at foster care homes and centers so that their children do not suffer a lot.

**History of the Foster care system in Philadelphia**

The trend in foster care was increasing and it was getting unmanageable, although the government was looking for possible solutions to manage. For child welfare policy, the Adoption and Safe Families Act was signed as a law in 1997, which was a new benchmark. Incentives were given to foster care by the new law and this was authorized by the state. New processes were designed to monitor the effectiveness and efficiency of welfare systems, which worked for children. These systems were directly monitored by the state to ensure the quality and effectiveness of foster care services. Foster care was emerging in different regions including Philadelphia.

Philadelphia is also known as Philly, which is located in the United States and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The foster care concept emerged in the early 19th century when Home Missionary and Children’s Aids societies were initiated. Two of foster care agencies tried to control the urban youth by banishing them from their own country. Native-born children worked as servants for the foster parents and they worked as farm laborers. These children were not being treated appropriately, while they can be named as victims and slaves as well. Although, charities were functional which were working as a valuable institution at that time and they were serving their societies in a valuable way. Parents who were not able to take care of children because of their unemployment and illness were allowed to admit their children to foster care homes (Clement). These foster care homes were providing them security and filling their basic needs, which were not provided by their parents themselves. With the time the trends in foster care have changed, the state now itself monitors the foster care homes and they have the authority to permit to become foster care parents. The state may disqualify foster care parents, organizations, and systems anytime upon not meeting the safety and effectiveness as it was expected from them because it threatens the security of the life of children.

**Positive aspects of foster care**

Positives outcomes of foster care can be identified by thorough observations of child development and behavioral changes. When compared to instructional care, foster care is beneficial for the development of children. Children in foster care are more oriented towards practical work but their performances are at a lower percentage (Zetlin et al.). Behaviors of children are different, as they are in learning phases that is why they are oriented towards exploring new things and they develop their interest in observations rather limiting themselves to only books. For positive outcomes of foster care, the education system can be improved, while family support, peer influence, and religious backgrounds play a vital role in the development of a child. Making children future-oriented during foster care is important and letting them work practically will enhance their skills (Bell and Romano). A child under foster care is exposed to new places and taken to other places, which helps them to make and create relations with other people and children with the same age group. The socialization process occurs with the time and place to which they are taken by their foster parents. Restricting children to only one particular field may not encourage their grooming and their skill development, while skill development is the basic requirement of learning and development. Foster care may benefit those children who are abused and they suffer from trauma, need more care because they are not supported with their parental care. Foster care can help children to recover from trauma and they will be able to get care form their foster parents who are more experienced and trained. However, there are some negative aspects of foster care, which affects the mental and physical health of children because of the varying patterns.

**Problems with foster care**

Foster care is to provide care to children whose parents are unable to manage time and to those children who belong to adverse environmental conditions, which hinders their development at earlier stages of life (Lawrence et al. 62). Early stages of life are important in the development of a child, it the time when a child adopts and learns the most and observes the environment. However, if these learning patterns are disturbed a child becomes unable to learn, feels discouraged, and does not step forward for the next time because of a lack of motivation and confidence. Unfortunately, studies show that foster children suffer from psychological disorders including changes in behavior patterns, socialization, and emotional problems (Bîrneanu). Under these circumstances, a child is not able to acquire new skills and the environmental factors change into a negative factor, which promotes resilience in children. Children become aggressive and they keep challenging the rules they break the rules, their behaviors turn negative. The health status of children also changes because sometimes their diet plans are not followed by the foster parents. Children become sick because of inappropriate food patterns and they become ill, this does not only affects their physical health but also their mental health leading to emotional and behavioral changes (Barbell and Freundlich 6). Health issues in children include poor digestion, dental problems, malnutrition, and weak bones, which leads to severe health issues (Szilagyi et al. 1148).

**Foster care system, child safety: A case of Philadelphia**

Child safety means to protect children from social evils of abuse, teach them abuse management, provide support to those children who are at higher risks and abuse and teaching them to respond to unexpected incidents and events, which challenges their present state of mind. Child safety is important because they are not able to understand the threats and risks, so it the responsibility of those who have an idea about the dangers and risks, which can harm a child. Child safety to ensure the safety of a child, provide safe environments so that they learn to observe things for grooming.

Foster care systems are approved by the state so that they provide safe services to children and help them to grow up in a healthy environment with care and under the supervision of their foster parents. Foster care provides safe and nurturing platforms to children whether they are removed from their homes, abused or their parents cannot manage to take care of them and provide quality nurturing services (Lockwood et al.). Philadelphia is providing foster and kinship care platforms and services to those children who need care and shelter because either they are removed from their families, they are victims of abuse or they are not provided with care so that they develop and learn.

*Participation of people*

People running foster care organizations, systems, and care homes in Philadelphia are participating in group gatherings to ensure quality care to minors. Their motives are to treat them with care, love, respect their ethnic background, enhance their knowledge, and help them to acquire new skills and to help them in development. People are working in partnerships to ensure and enhance their quality services so that children will grow and learn in healthy environments. The quality services will enhance the care-efficiency and positive outcomes, which one can expect from a child. Philadelphia is having a diversity of people having different ethnicities, cultures, and communities, while these people can live with peace and harmony. Systems and organizations are working to ensure the safety of children in foster care and homes whether they are with their parents or foster parents (Jones). People who are willing to become a resource parent then they have to contact their Community Umbrella Agency which will help the concerned people will be connected with foster care. After taking help from Community Umbrella Agency, interested resource parent will have a license, which will show that the resource parent is legal and support for foster care.

*Legislations by the law*

Department of Human Services is operational in Philadelphia, which is working to promote well-being, safety, and permanency of children. This department works for those children who are at higher risks, abused and they are neglected by their parents. When a child needs health protection, safety or for the welfare Department of Human Services takes children under the custody and removes them from their homes and care centers. The priority of this department is to provide the safety of children and to secure their lives before any crisis and incidents. With the help of legislation and court order, children are allowed to enter foster care centers. When the Department of Human Services requires an emergency order than the court provides a court-ordered placement and this is known as the Order of Protective Custody. A license is also required by the Community Umbrella Agency to become a foster parent and they are interested to provide safety and permanency. Philadelphia is tracing 450 children to make possible improvements and settlements for their safety and their protection. The recent initiative of Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act require the enhanced efforts to avoid disruptions in schooling and for their safety (Amanda et al.).

**Is foster care is safe or not**

There is a need for adopting and ensuring significant measures to meet the desired standards of the foster care system for the children. This perspective is important to consider to ensure a better application of the idea of the foster care system. It is important for all the stakeholders to timely recognize the actual needs concerning the geographical domain of the foster center. It is noteworthy to mention that different interrelated aspects lead to the successful establishment of the foster care system.

**Recommendations**

Children do not have an idea about the risks and dangers, therefore, it is important to make their lives secure and provide them protection. They need a safe environment for their upbringing and grooming, if they are appreciated and they are provided with enough care they will improve. However, there is a need to make some improvements in the foster care systems in Philadelphia. The following maybe some of the recommendations, which will help to improve the foster care systems.

a. Mental health is important to stay healthy because brain controls all the body mechanisms. Children’s mental health is important because they are sensitive towards things including behaviors and environmental conditions while they expect care and emotional support from people living around them. In the case of foster care, the responsibility of foster parents is to take care of the mental well-being of children because they are in direct relation with them. The mental stability of foster children needs one core objective for the overall domain of the foster care system. This approach is important to ensure a successful future for all the foster children by giving them the necessary confidence.

Proper education for foster children is another mandatory indicator or parameter to determine the effectiveness of the foster care center. It is one of the primary responsibilities of the management of the foster care system to ensure the availability of basic education for every foster child without any discrimination. It is observed that many abandoned children never have the opportunity to complete basic education level. The active role of the foster center needs to be supportive to help children when it comes to the attainment of basic education level.

Socialization is another critical spectrum that requires necessary attention by the management of the foster center. It is one core responsibility of the administration to create better chances of social activities for the foster children. It is crucial to understand the importance of necessary socialization during the development phase of children. It is crucial for them to actively interact in society to understand different dimensions of social life and overall civic development. Foster children should have a better understanding when it comes to their proper interactions with others in the society and formed a necessary association for personal and social development. The foster care center needs to create better activities for the children so they can develop associations with other members of society.

**Conclusion**

Philadelphia is improving the foster care quality services to ensure that no child feels unsafe whether it is home or any foster care system. Every system has to seek license by the state courts which is responsible for the security of children who are not enough mature to idealize about right and wrong. They are not aware of the threats that is why it is the responsibility of communities, people, and foster care centers to provide security to children. State organizations have to make sure they are observing the foster care system in the state and check whether children are provided with quality services or not.

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