

Abstract

Title – Trends in the National Foster Care System

Program of Study – Public Policy

Presentation Type – **Choose one of the following:** Physical Poster

Subtype –Textual or Investigative

Mentor Name and Mentor Email - Dr. Mary Prentice (msprentice@liberty.edu)

Student Name and Email - William Norris (wjnorris2@liberty.edu)

Abstract: This presentation will show the current trends of the National Foster Care system and how it has changed over the past twenty years. There have been debates over the rights of the LGBT community in adopting children, where the place of religion is. More and more the real focus of the system has been forgotten, the children that are in it. There have been several ambiguities about Foster Care in the United States. This makes it crucial for a policy writer or a politician who wants to make a change to the system to be able to understand the nuances of the system, and how their policies will affect it. This study attempts to give a road map to this job by compiling data from the past twenty years of the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System reports and analyzing them for discernable patterns and conclusions. Once this has been achieved it will be compared to major pieces of legislation that has been passed during this period that has had an impact on the Foster Care System. With the number of children entering and leaving the system as the first baseline, among several other variables such as total number and number of adoptions, it will attempt to determine which policies are good for the children in the system, and which of them is harmful to them. It would also open avenues of further research given the conclusions of the data.

Christian Worldview Integration: My Christian worldview affects my research and this topic in two separate ways. The first is the call that God has given Christians to care the children, and to care for the fatherless. The second is that God calls on us to be wise and prudent. Psalms 82:3-4 instructs us to care for the weak and the fatherless. Deut. 10:18 states that God defends the cause of the fatherless. Proverbs 31:8 gives a call for followers of Christ to speak up for those who cannot speak up for themselves. Especially today the young are among those who cannot speak for themselves. That is why it is crucial for the Church and individual Christians to step up in regard to Foster Care. God gave us a mandate to protect the Children. This does not just stop after they are born, and abortion is no longer a threat to the child. Knowing that the family is the best way to show the child the love of Christ and bring him up in “the way he should go”, it is mandated for a Christian politician to try to improve the Foster Care system if he can, to ensure the best for the children who need it. God also calls on Christians to be wise and prudent. This means that we need to take advantage of the resources that God has given us, to fulfill the mission that he has given us. Thus, a Christian would be well served by knowing just how the system worked, and especially its condition, in order to effectively change the organization. It does a Christian no good to neglect to seek knowledge and could led to them harming the system rather than help it. God has called on us to care for the children, and he has given us the political tools needed to fulfill this call.