Funder: Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs

Dates of Grant: 2012-2017

Statistics about Foster Youth:
• Over 400,000 children in the U.S. are in foster care and 68% are school-aged
• 60% entering through reports of child abuse or neglect
• California has 68,000 foster youth, the largest of all the States

These youth experience withering educational outcomes:
• 78% of students in foster care attend low achieving school
• 0-40% receive special education services
• Score 16-20% lower than children not in foster care on the statewide standardized achievement measures
• 46% of students in foster care fail to complete high school
• 35% have experienced four or more school changes and each school move results in a six-month loss of educational progress
• In California, 83% of students in foster care repeat a grade
• 75% are working below grade level
• Only 30% of students in foster care graduate

Children in Foster Care with Disabilities:
• Approximately 30-40% receive special education services
• Often unserved, undeserved, overlooked, or ignored
• More likely to be in segregated special education classes and restrictive settings
• Experience delayed or unimplemented IEPs, and have little access to quality mental health services

Why we do it: Respond to the need to improve outcomes for the children in foster care with disabilities from diverse backgrounds.
• How we do it: Interdisciplinary (SP, SC, SSW), CARES Seminars (monthly), Institutes (2/year), CASA Training, Fieldwork, & Coursework
• What we learn: Child Welfare system, Academic and Mental Health interventions, advocacy & policy, and interdisciplinary work
• How long is the grant: 2 years

Recruitment and Student Package:
• * Graduate students from the School of Psychology, School Counseling and School Social Work Programs at SDSU (3 School Psychology Students, 3 School Counseling Students, and 3 Social Work Students)
• *Startup Money (Fall and Summer), Monthly Stipends, Books, Conference Travel, CASA Reimbursement, Technology Allowance

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