Racial Matching in Foster Care Placements and Subsequent Placement Stability: A National Study

Catherine A. LaBrenz[1] · Jangmin Kim[2] · Marian S. Harris[3] · Jandel Crutchfield[1] · Mijin Choi[2] · Erica D. Robinson[1] · Erin Findley[1] · Scott D. Ryan[1]

Abstract

Placement instability for children in foster care has an adverse effect on child safety, permanency, and well-being. Some studies have examined racial matching between caseworker-child to improve child outcomes, but fewer have explored racial matching in foster care placements and subsequent outcomes. This study examined the impact of same-race foster home placements on placement stability. This study used data from the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis System (AFCARS), an administrative database containing the children in care for each fiscal year (FY). The analytic sample included $n = 36,191$ children aged 0–17 years who entered foster care in FY 2015 and were placed with a non-relative foster family and remained in the same placement throughout FY 2015. We followed this sample through FY 2019 to compare racially-matched initial placements and subsequent placement changes. The authors conducted an inverse probability-weighted regression adjustment model using Stata version 16. Approximately three-quarters of children were in a racially matched foster home when they entered foster care, and two-thirds experienced placement stability. Non-Hispanic White children had the highest rates of racially matched placements. After adjusting for other factors, racial matching increased the likelihood of placement stability ($b = .05$, $p < .001$). The relationship between child race/ethnicity and placement stability varied among those in racially-matched and transracial placements. Initial findings highlight the importance of recruiting foster families of color and we identify areas for future research that could track child and foster parent characteristics with each placement move.

Annually, more than 270,000 children enter the foster care system (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2017; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services [USDHHS], 2018). Once in care, children often experience placement instability, also referred to as placement changes or placement disruption. Placement instability occurs each time a child moves to a new foster home or other placement while in care. Estimates of placement instability vary; nationwide, one study found that less than 40% of states have an average of two or fewer placements for children in foster care

(Casey Family Programs, 2018); however, in a separate study, Dolan et al. (2013) found that 72.6% of children in care had placement stability (only one placement) during the first 18 months in foster care. Indeed, placement instability negatively impacts child behavior (Barth et al., 2007), academic achievement (Pears et al., 2015), and decreases the likelihood of achieving permanency (Pasalich et al., 2016). Thus, it is important to identify factors that could decrease the risk of placement instability for children and youth in foster care.

Placement Stability: A Review of the Literature

For children who enter foster care because of maltreatment, consistent relationships with caregivers are the most significant protection from developing further emotional and cognitive damage (Gunnar & Quevedo, 2007).

✉ Catherine A. LaBrenz
  catherine.labrenz@uta.edu

[1] The University of Texas at Arlington School of Social Work, 211 South Cooper Street, Arlington, TX 76019, USA

[2] Texas State University School of Social Work, San Marcos, TX, USA

[3] University of Washington Tacoma School of Social Work & Criminal Justice, Tacoma, WA, USA

With every change in placement, a child's environment changes (Taussig et al., 2007). Relational stability or permanency involves long-term, caring, and accepting relationships with adults in their lives, such as biological or foster parents (Stott & Gustavsson, 2010). Yet, relational stability for children in care continues to be a major problem for child welfare agencies throughout this country, as less than 40 percent of states average two or fewer placements for children in foster care (Jones et al., 2016).

Placement instability, or disruptions in foster care placements, has an adverse effect on child safety, permanency, and well-being. Instability or interruptions in foster care placements interfere with children attaining permanent legal guardianship, building trust, and can create barriers to self-sufficiency in adulthood (Stott & Gustavsson, 2010). Placement instability is also related to a child's chances for family reunification as demonstrated in findings from Goerge's (1990) landmark study, in which one-third of children in foster care reunited with their parents after the first placement, thirteen percent reunited after two placements, and only 5% reunited after three placements.

In parallel, researchers have explored correlates of placement (in)stability. Child factors such as older child age (Oosterman et al., 2007; Rubin et al., 2007), child behavior problems (Chamberlain et al., 2006; Font et al., 2018; Konijn et al., 2019; O'Neill et al., 2012; Oosterman et al., 2007; Vanderfaeillie et al., 2018), and less integration into the foster home (Leathers, 2006) have been linked to placement instability. In addition, foster parent characteristics such as parenting problems, unrealistic expectations, and conflicts between birth and foster parents increased the likelihood of placement instability (Montserrat et al., 2020; Vanderfaeillie et al., 2018). Thus, it is important to consider child and foster family factors that may contribute to the (in)stability of placement.

Although placement changes in some cases may be a "progress" move (defined as a move to a less restricted setting, such as going from a residential treatment center to a non-relative foster home), Font et al. (2018) found the majority of placement changes to be non-progress moves (e.g., changes that are just as restrictive or more restrictive than the child's prior placement, or moves due to risk of abuse). In their study of 23,760 foster children who had experienced 66,585 placements in Texas, they found that 57–71% of moves to a new placement ended with a non-progress move. They also found that non-progress moves were typically statistically equivalent across races, except for Black children who had a greater risk for non-progress moves while placed in non-shelter settings, such as non-relative and kinship settings.

Race, Ethnicity, and Disproportionality

Placement stability may also be impacted by implicit bias and structural racism, both of which have led to poorer outcomes for youth of color in foster care. Decades of research have found disparate outcomes among children in foster care based on race and ethnicity. Race is defined as "a social reality dictated by the color of someone's skin" (Koppelman, 2020, p. 11), whereas ethnicity is based on cultural differences and "refers to the historical origins of an individual's family" (Koppelman, 2020, p. 12). As both race and ethnicity are social constructs, specific categories may change over time. In this study, we conceptualized race and ethnicity based on how it was categorized in the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS), the federally collected database of characteristics of children in foster care each year in the U.S. Racial/ethnic categories in AFCARS data include: non-Hispanic Black, non-Hispanic White, non-Hispanic American Indian, non-Hispanic Asian, non-Hispanic Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Multiracial (at least two of the racial categories identified previously), or Hispanic (any race/ethnicity). Thus, when we refer to *racial* disparities, we focus on differential outcomes among the racial/ethnic groups based on how the groups are categorized in the administrative child welfare data.

Racial differences in foster care are significant because Black, American Indian, and other children of color are disproportionately represented in the child welfare system (Dettlaff et al., 2020; LaBrenz et al., 2021). For example, there were approximately 437,283 children in foster care in September 2018, of whom 23% were Black, 21% were Hispanic (of any race), and 10% were other races or multiracial (Child Information Gateway, 2020). However, in the same year across the entire child population in the U.S., 14% were Black, 25% were Hispanic, and 11% belonged to other racial/ethnic groups (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2020). Thus, children of certain racial or ethnic groups are overrepresented in foster care. There are disparities in outcomes across decision points in child welfare, from the initial call and investigation to Child Protective Services (CPS) to removals and exits from the system (Harris & Hackett, 2008). Although fewer national studies have examined racial disparities in placement stability, in a study of one urban county, Font and Kim (2021) found that Black and Hispanic children had an increased risk of instability compared to their White peers. In a separate study of children in Texas, Sattler et al. (2018) found that Hispanic children were more likely to experience placement instability due to child factors, whereas Black children were more likely to experience instability due to "placement mismatch" (p. 157). Therefore, it is particularly important to identify strategies to increase placement stability for the youth of color.

Among children in care, the most common placement type is with a non-relative foster family, accounting for 46 percent of placements in 2019 (USDHHS, 2020). Federal legislation requires states to make efforts to recruit foster and adoptive families that reflect the diversity of children in care (Hanna et al., 2017). Yet, few national studies to date have examined racial diversity among non-relative foster families or how same-race foster families may impact child outcomes.

Transracial foster homes may be more common for children of color, given the large proportion of White foster and adoptive homes. Although few national studies have examined foster parent demographics, Vandivere et al. (2009) found that 63% of parents who adopted from foster care were White, while 27% of parents who adopted from foster care were Black and 5% were Hispanic. Although that study included both relative and non-relative adoptions, it highlights an overrepresentation of White adoptive parents, compared to the proportion of White children in care. In parallel, Leathers et al. (2019) conducted a study on a sample of 139 children in long-term foster care in a Midwestern state and found that 82.4% of Hispanic children were in a transracial foster home placement, compared with only 24.3% of White children. However, their study was limited in size and not necessarily generalizable.

Transracial Family Placements

As the initial placement in foster care is the first instance to address trauma from the forced removal and loss of connections with one's family and neighborhood, it is particularly important to have a sense of normalcy and familiarity. However, children may be placed with foster families and in communities whose racial or ethnic backgrounds differ from their own (Taussig et al., 2007). This may be due, in part, to feasibility issues (Chenot et al., 2019) or a need for more diligent recruitment efforts (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2020), although few studies have explored racial matching in initial foster care placements. Much of the literature on transracial placements has focused on adoptive families, often in the context of intercountry adoption—and referred to as transcultural placements. This current paper focuses on transracial family placements among children in foster care; therefore, in the following section, we provide contextual information to differentiate prior literature from the United States and studies from Europe or Oceania that focus more on transcultural/intercountry placements.

One recent scoping review examined outcomes associated with matching children and families in care—including placement stability (Haysom et al., 2020). However, this review concluded that research has been intermittent and more current studies are needed to explore the relationship between racially matched foster homes and placement stability. While few studies have examined the specific link between racially matched foster homes and placement stability, there have been more studies on experiences and identity among transracially adopted or placed youth. Some studies found that in transracial foster placements, parents often lack exposure to a child's racial, ethnic, and cultural experiences (Daniel, 2011) and are unfamiliar with addressing acts of racism directed toward the child (Samuels, 2009). In one qualitative study, Black children shared their feelings of discomfort in placements with White foster parents because of broader societal perceptions of negative relationships among White and Black individuals (Whiting & Lee, 2003). In another study, transracial adoptees shared the tension experienced in having to "act White" in certain contexts and to "act Black" in others; participants expressed feeling 'othered' in both scenarios (Butler-Sweet, 2011). This tension of belonging has also been reported among transracial adoptees of other racial and ethnic backgrounds (Goss et al., 2017). These accounts pose questions about the role of racial matching in placements as a means of promoting normalcy and smoother adjustments for children in care.

In fact, in a study of Indigenous children involved with child welfare in Australia, Cripps and Laurens (2015) found that long-term well-being and resilience were associated with connections to family, community, and culture. A qualitative study of foster parents in Canada found that foster parents who perceived cultural matches with children had smoother transitions, helped children feel secure, and lowered stress (Brown et al., 2009). A recent systematic review synthesized 14 qualitative studies on the ethnic identity of transracially placed foster children (Degener et al., 2021). However, the majority of articles synthesized were from the United Kingdom, Canada, or Australia, and studies included both transracial adoptive families and foster families. Thus, although there has been a focus on maintaining cultural connections and identity among children in care, there is a need to continue to understand how racially matched foster placements may impact outcomes, particularly here in the United States. It is also important to explore whether the impact of racial matching differs across varying racial/ethnic groups.

Child Welfare Legislation Pertaining to Racial Background

A few key pieces of legislation have offered contrasting priorities on the racial/ethnic makeup of child welfare placements over the last few decades. For example, in an effort to promote timely permanency for children of color disproportionately represented in care, the Multiethnic Placement Act (MEPA) of 1994 and the Interethnic Adoption Provisions (IEP) of 1996 prohibited federally-funded agencies

from: (1) denying a person the opportunity to foster or adopt based on the race, color, or national origin (RCNO) of the foster or adoptive parent or the child involved; or (2) denying or delaying foster or adoptive placement of a child due to RCNO of the foster or adoptive parent or the child involved (Multiethnic Placement Act [MEPA], 1994; Removal of Barriers to Interethnic Adoption, 1996). At the same time, MEPA also required states to actively recruit foster and adoptive families of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, such to better reflect the population of children in care (MEPA, 1994). While these pieces of legislation were intended to reduce disparities among racial and ethnic minority children, critics suggest that they oversimplified the issue of race and adoption (Jennings, 2006) and negated historic factors that inhibit adequate recruitment of families of color (McRoy & Griffin, 2012).

An earlier piece of legislation, The Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 (ICWA), prioritized the value of cultural and racial continuity. ICWA acknowledged tribal authority over American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) children involved in child welfare services (CWIG, 2021). Procedural guidelines set forth in the legislation aimed to prevent the removal of AI/AN children from their families and tribal communities, and to preserve AI/AN children's cultural heritage, following historic practices to the contrary (Goldsmith, 2002). The need to restore trust with AI/AN communities (Barnes et al., 2019) and to preserve AI/AN children's connection to their culture (Crofoot & Harris, 2012; Sahota, 2019) is clear in the literature, and of timely importance, given ongoing racial disparities for AI/AN children in care (Bussey & Lucero, 2013; Haight et al., 2019; LaBrenz et al., 2021). A systematic review of studies from 1972 to 2018 identified characteristics for successful resource parents in Indian country, which included strong cultural identity, willingness to access tribal resources, and willingness to access kin/family as resources (Day et al., 2021). However, not all children have the opportunity for racial or cultural matching in placement or the opportunity to remain in their home communities (Zeijlmans et al., 2017).

The Current Study

Given the importance of placement stability for youth in care and racial disparities in placement stability, this study sought to explore the relationship between racial matching in non-relative foster home placements and subsequent placement stability. In doing so, we sought to gather prevalence and correlates of racial matching in non-relative foster homes, and explore the relationship between racial matching and placement stability. As such, this study was guided by the following two research questions: (1) What is the prevalence and correlates of racially matched foster homes

across the U.S?; and (2) What is the relationship between racially matched foster care placements and child outcomes after adjusting for other child and foster parent factors? We hypothesized that children of color would have lower rates of racially-matched placements than White children. We also hypothesized that racially matched placements would improve child placement stability, particularly among children of color in care.

Methods

Sampling Procedures

Data for this study come from the AFCARS. AFCARS is released annually and contains information on all children in foster care during each fiscal year (FY). As part of AFCARS, states collect case-level data on children in foster care and are required to submit a report for each period a child is in foster care; they are required to submit their data electronically to the Children's Bureau twice per year. The Children's Bureau combines the two files submitted each year into an annual database. The database is housed at the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect (NDACAN), where a team processes and distributes the data to researchers (National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect, 2018).

For this study, we utilized the FY 2015 AFCARS foster care file (version 5), FY 2016 AFCARS foster care file (version 3), FY 2017 AFCARS foster care file (version 4), FY 2018 AFCARS foster care fie (version 2), and FY 2019 AFCARS foster care file (version 1) to examine a cohort of children who entered care in FY 2015 and were placed with a non-relative foster family for their first placement. The versions utilized were the most up-to-date datasets; as states update data, a new version of the dataset may be released. This cohort was followed through FY 2019 to examine the relationship between racially matched initial foster placements and subsequent placement stability.

We excluded Multiracial children from the analysis because it could have been possible to have a transracial placement with a Multiracial child (e.g., identifying as Asian and White) and Multiracial foster parent (e.g., identifying as Black and Hispanic). Since AFCARS only includes foster parent demographics for the current placement, we excluded cases where the child had more than one placement in the FY 2015. Overall, 56.5% of children in the sample experienced placement stability (e.g., one placement) during the first FY in care; therefore, our analytic sample consists of $n = 36,191$ children who entered care in FY 2015, were placed with the same non-relative foster family for the entire FY 2015, had valid data on the foster parent and child race/ethnicity, and identified as non-Hispanic White, non-Hispanic Black,

American Indian, Asian, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, or Hispanic (any race).

Measures

Placement Stability

The dependent variable in our analyses was placement stability. This was operationalized from an item in AFCARS that calculated the total number of placements experienced since foster care entry. To determine the association between an initial racially-matched placement and subsequent placement instability, the total number of placements was dichotomized into two categories: children who experienced stability in their initial placement with no subsequent placements (1) and those who had at least one placement disruption or move since their entry into foster care (0). A total of 67.34% of children in the subsample experienced placement stability during the study period.

Racial Matching

We defined racial matching as a non-relative foster placement in which at least one foster parent belonged to the same racial/ethnic group as the child. Child race/ethnicity was taken from a derived race and ethnicity variable in AFCARS, and foster parent race/ethnicity was reported from a series of dichotomous variables for each racial/ethnic group. Cases were coded as 1 if the child's reported race/ethnicity was the same as at least one foster parent (e.g., a child who was Hispanic and foster parent who was Hispanic) and 0 if the child was placed with foster parents who belonged to a different racial/ethnic group than their own. In the multivariable analyses, racial matching was entered as a treatment variable to examine its relationship with placement stability while adjusting for differences in demographics of children assigned to a racially matched placement.

Covariates

In the multivariable analyses, we added child sex, child age (at start of FY 2015), child race/ethnicity, child behavior problems, and child emotional disturbance as covariates of placement stability. Child sex was a dichotomous measure in which females were coded as 1 and males were coded as 0. Child age was a continuous variable measured in the number of years the child was at the last removal. Child race/ethnicity was a categorical variable that was originally coded as non-Hispanic White (1), non-Hispanic Black (2), non-Hispanic American Indian (3), non-Hispanic Asian (4), non-Hispanic Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (5), Multiracial (6), or Hispanic (7). Given the small number of children within some racial/ethnic groups in the analyses and the small number of children from each non-White racial/ethnic group who were in a racially matched foster home, we recoded the variable to include non-Hispanic White children (1), and all other racial/ethnic groups (0). Child behavior problem was an item that asked if a child was removed from their family of origin due to their behavior; if the caseworker reported yes, children were coded as 1 and all others were coded as 0. Child emotional disturbance was a dichotomous variable that captured whether the caseworker reported any "emotional disturbance" of the child—those reported as "yes" were coded as 1, and those reported as "no" were coded as 0.

In addition to child race/ethnicity, child sex, child age at removal, and emotional disturbance, we also added the following covariates to the weighted regression with racial matching as a treatment condition: foster family structure, foster parent race/ethnicity, child disability, and total number of removals. Foster family structure was a categorical variable, in which married two-parent families were coded as 1 (reference group), unmarried two-parent families were coded as 2, single mothers were coded as 3, and single fathers were coded as 4. Foster parent race/ethnicity was a categorical variable in which foster parents who were non-Hispanic White were coded as 1 (reference group), non-Hispanic Black foster parents were coded as 2, non-Hispanic American Indian parents were coded as 3, non-Hispanic Asian parents were coded as 4, non-Hispanic Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander parents were coded as 5, and Hispanic foster parents were coded as 6. Child disability was a dichotomous variable in which children whose caseworker reported that they had a disability were coded as 1, and those who did not were coded as 0. Finally, the total number of removals was a continuous variable that measured the total number of foster care entries a child had.

Sample Demographics

Table 1 displays sample demographics. As seen in Table 1, there were slightly more male ($n = 18,687$; 50.06%) than female ($n = 18,643$; 49.76%) children. The largest proportion of children identified as non-Hispanic White ($n = 21,939$; 58.76%), followed by non-Hispanic Black ($n = 10,555$; 28.27%), Hispanic ($n = 3,310$; 8.87%), American Indian ($n = 1,040$; 2.79%), Asian ($n = 355$, 0.95%), or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander ($n = 138$, 0.37%). The average age at entry was 5.20 ($SD = 5.35$).

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were run to calculate averages on key variables, and frequencies of sample demographics. To answer the main research question, the authors utilized inverse probability weighted regression adjustment (IPWR).

Table 1 Characteristics of children who entered care to a non-relative foster placement in 2015 (N = 36,191)

	N	%
Child behavior problem	1,610	4.44
Emotionally disturbed	1,753	4.84
Child gender		
Male	18,687	50.06
Female	18,643	49.76
Child race/ethnicity		
Non-Hispanic White	21,939	58.76
Non-Hispanic Black	10,555	28.27
Hispanic	3,310	8.87
American Indian	1,040	2.79
Asian	355	0.95
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	138	0.37
Any racial match	26,716	71.55
Placement stability	25,049	67.34
Foster family structure		
Married couple	24,649	66.02
Unmarried couple	2,014	5.39
Single female	9,950	26.65
Single male	724	1.94
Foster parent # 1 race/ethnicity		
Non-Hispanic White	25,794	69.08
Non-Hispanic Black	10,197	27.31
Hispanic	335	0.90
American Indian	342	0.92
Asian	290	0.78
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	122	0.33
Foster parent # 2 race/ethnicity		
Non-Hispanic White	20,171	54.02
Non-Hispanic Black	3,783	10.13
Hispanic	238	0.64
American Indian	233	0.62
Asian	238	0.64
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	105	0.28
Child age at removal	5.19 (0.02)	
Total number of removals	1.21 (0.01)	

IPWR is an approach to estimate unbiased treatment effects when there is a treatment or intervention but no randomization in assignment (Caldera, 2019). IPWR provides double robustness, in that it estimates weights based on estimated selection to treatment and probability of treatment among all individuals. In this case, we hypothesized that racial matching was not a random assignment and sociodemographic child and foster parent characteristics might impact the likelihood of racial matching. As such, racial matching was operationalized as a treatment variable and included in the IPWR model to control for potential differences in the probability of assignment to racial matching by child race/
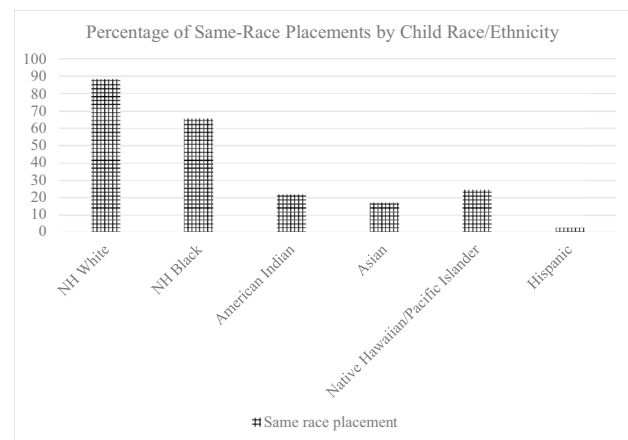
Fig. 1 Racial matching by child race/ethnicity

ethnicity, foster parent race/ethnicity, child age, and foster family structure. Therefore, in the regression models, we present the coefficients of the independent variables and covariates in relation to placement stability, as well as the coefficients for foster parent demographic variables to control for potential differences in the likelihood of having a racially-matched placement in the home. All analyses were conducted in Stata, version 16.

Results

As seen in Table 1, approximately two-thirds of children were in a racially matched placement when they entered foster care, and 67.34% (n = 25,049) had placement stability.

Research Question 1: Prevalence and Correlates of Racially Matched Foster Placements

Figure 1 displays the proportion of children who were in racially matched placements by child race/ethnicity. Non-Hispanic White children had the highest rates of racially matched placements, followed by non-Hispanic Black children, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander children. Children who were Hispanic or Asian had the lowest rates of racially matched placements.

Research Question 2: Racial Matching and Placement Instability

To answer the second research question, an IPWR model was conducted in Stata. Table 2 displays the findings of the multivariable analysis.

As displayed in Table 2, the probability of having placement stability during the study period among those not

Table 2 Inverse probability weighted regression adjustment of racial matching and placement stability from the 2015–2019 AFCARS, $N = 36{,}191$

Characteristics	Model 1 (racial matching + covariates)	
	b	95% CI
Placement stability		
ATE racial match	.05***	.03 to .06
P0mean racial match	.62***	.60 to .63
OME0		
Non-Hispanic, White	− .25***	− .32 to − .19
Female child	− .01	− .09 to .05
Child age	.01	− .01 to .01
Child behavior	0.14	− 0.05 to .34
Emotional disturbance	− .28***	− .44 to − .12
OME1		
Non-Hispanic, White	.05**	.01 to .08
Female child	.01	− .02 to .04
Child age	− .01*	− .01 to − .00
Child behavior	.01	− .07 to .08
Emotional disturbance	− .22***	− .29 to − .14
Racial matching		
Child's race		
NH, White	1.29***	1.25 to 1.33
Foster family structure		
Married couple	Ref.	
Unmarried couple	.07*	.01 to .14
Single female	.01	− .03 to .04
Single male	.19***	.08 to .31
Foster parent's race		
NH, Black	.21***	.16 to .25
NH American Indian	.22***	.05 to .38
NH Asian	− .89***	− 1.08 to − .70
NH Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	− .68***	− .96 to − .40
Hispanic	− .65***	− .82 to − .48
Child age	0.01**	0.01 to 0.01
Female child	0.04**	.01 to .07
Child disability	− .04	− .16 to .06
Emotional disturbance	− 0.09**	− .17 to − .02
Total number of removals	0.01***	− .01 to .04
Model fit		
Wald Chi^2	6673.55***	

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

in racially-matched placements was .62 (95% CI .60–.63, $p < .001$). The average treatment effect of racial matching was .05 (95% CI .03–.06, $p < .001$), reflecting an increased probability of placement stability among those in racially-matched placements.

In the *OME0*, estimates are presented of covariates on placement stability among untreated (e.g., not racially matched) placements. Children who were emotionally disturbed and White children in transracial placements had a decreased probability of placement stability compared to children of other races and those who were not emotionally disturbed.

The *OME1* estimates reflect probabilities of various covariates and placement stability among children who received treatment (e.g., in racially-matched placements). Among these cases, White children had a higher probability of placement stability than children of other races ($b = .05$, 95% CI .01–.08, $p < .01$). Children who were emotionally disturbed had a lower probability of placement stability than those who were not ($b = − .22$, 95% CI − .29 to − .14, $p < .001$).

The final portion of Table 2 presents the probability of experiencing a racially matched placement by child race, foster family structure, foster parent race, child age, child sex, child disability, emotional disturbance, and the total number of removals. White children were more likely to experience a racially matched placement than children of color ($b = 1.29$, 95% CI 1.25–1.33, $p < .001$). Unmarried couples ($b = .07$, 95% CI .01–0.14, $p < .05$) and single male foster parents ($b = .19$, 95% CI .08–.31, $p < .001$) were more likely to have a racially matched placement than married foster parents. Foster parents who were non-Hispanic Black ($b = .21$, 95% CI .16–.26, $p < .001$), or American Indian ($b = .22$, 95% CI .05–.38, $p < .001$) were more likely to have a racially matched placement than White foster parents, while foster parents who were non-Hispanic Asian ($b = − .89$, 95% CI − 1.08 to − 0.70, $p < .001$), Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander ($b = − 0.68$, 95% CI − .96–.40, $p < .001$), or Hispanic ($b = − .65$, 95% CI − .82–.48, $p < .001$) were less likely than White foster parents to experience a racially matched placement.

Discussion

This study examined the prevalence of racially matched foster homes and the impact of racial matching in initial non-relative foster placements on subsequent placement stability. Overall, approximately two-thirds of children in our sample experienced placement stability during the study period. That is similar to Dolan et al. (2013) finding that 72.6% of children experienced one placement during their first 18 months in care. Consistent with our first hypothesis, non-Hispanic White children had the highest percentage of racially matched placements (almost 90%), while Hispanic children had the lowest percentage (less than 10%). To our knowledge, this is one of the first studies that has used national data to estimate racial matching in non-relative foster family placements. These findings align with one recent study of the Multiethnic Placement

Act, in which the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2020) found that 90% of transracial adoptions from foster care involved children of color adopted by parents of a different race. Thus, it would appear that recent trends in transracial adoption from foster care mirror trends in transracial foster care placements.

Consistent with our second hypothesis, racial matching slightly increased the probability of placement stability among children in our sample. To our knowledge, this is the first national study that has examined the relationship between racially matched non-relative foster home placements and placement stability. Some prior researchers have found that racial matching between a child and a child welfare caseworker may impact outcomes such as reunification or length of stay in care (Ryan et al., 2006). Furthermore, the relationship between child race/ethnicity and placement stability changed when comparing those in racially matched placements to those in transracial placements. While few prior studies have examined the relationship between racially matched foster home placements and placement stability, Chenot and colleagues (2019) concluded that racial matching of caseworkers and children could help reduce disproportionality. Thus, more research is needed to better understand the racial matching process in foster home placements and subsequent outcomes, including placement stability.

In addition, child emotional disturbance decreased the likelihood of placement stability, regardless of racial matching. This aligns with several prior studies that have found child behavior problems or other emotional disturbances to negatively impact placement stability (Chamberlain et al., 2006; Font et al., 2018; Vanderfaeillie et al., 2018). Therefore, in addition to matching based on racial identity, it is possible that other factors such as foster parent expectations of the child and resources to address child problem behaviors also be considered when placing children.

Although not part of our initial research question, by adjusting for potential differences in the probability of having a racially matched placement, we found foster parent demographics that impacted the likelihood of receiving a child that shared their racial identity. Notably, Black and American Indian non-relative foster parents were more likely to have a same-race placement than White non-relative foster parents. This may reflect attempts by caseworkers to maintain racial and cultural connections and identities when possible. However, non-relative foster parents who were Asian, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, or Hispanic were less likely to have a same-race placement than White foster parents. It is possible that this is a result of the relatively small number of Asian and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander children entering foster care each year. It is also possible that *familismo* or other values of extended family and kinship care might increase kinship placements among children

of color (Ayón & Aisenberg, 2010), reducing the need for non-relative foster families. It is also possible that there has been less active recruitment of foster parents from Asian or Hispanic communities. This could be an area of focus for future research and practice.

Our findings build upon prior research that has found some advantages among same-race placements, particularly for children of color (Samuels, 2009). Our finding across the entire sample, that racially-matched placements improved the likelihood of placement stability, builds upon research on transracially adopted children, in which racial socialization has been linked to outcomes such as positive identity development (Degener et al., 2021; Montgomery & Jordan, 2018). It is possible that same-race placements may help children navigate experiences of racism within the child welfare system. Dettlaff et al. (2020) presented a call to action based on anti-Black practices in child welfare, including differential treatment and judgments based on White standards. Our findings also align with the National Association of Black Social Worker's (2003) statement that calls for enhanced recruitment and retention efforts in Black/African American communities. When recruiting and placing children of color with non-relative foster parents, it is possible that in addition to race or ethnicity, agencies could consider factors such as language and cultural identity (Correa Capello, 2006) to ensure placements that allow children to maintain connections to their culture and racial identity of origin.

Limitations

The first limitation of our study is that we operationalized racial matching based on a child being placed with at least one foster parent who shares their racial/ethnic identity. Racial socialization may be different among foster families where both parents share the same racial/ethnic identity compared to those in transracial relationships. Second, as each year of AFCARS data provides a snapshot of children in care, to capture racially matched initial foster homes, we only included children who remained in one placement until the end of FY 2015. Therefore, we did not include children who experienced placement instability (e.g., a foster home change) during their first months in care. It is likely that this impacted the overall percentage of children in our sample that experienced placement stability during the study period. Third, as explored earlier in the discussion, the race/ethnicity variables in AFCARS do not capture the heterogeneity of each group. Prior research has critiqued lumping very heterogeneous groups together, such as all Hispanic families or all Asian families, given cultural differences based on nationality, descent, and ethnicity (Hasnain et al., 2020; Nguyen et al., 2017). Thus, it is possible that racial matches could be better captured in future research that includes other variables, such as family traditions and values

in addition to descent or ethnicity. Indeed, prior research on racial matching between mental health providers and clients found that measures of interpersonal trust, shared language, and shared beliefs and religion may be important to consider when matching (Brown et al., 2009; Cabral & Smith, 2011; Kim et al., 2021). Moreover, Choi et al. (2018) found differences in traditional core family values, processes, obligations, and youth outcomes when comparing Filipino and Korean Americans. Other scholars have noted discernable differences within racial/ethnic groups (Fluke et al., 2011) and how individuals may self-identify in diverse situations (Phinney & Ong, 2007). Therefore, it is possible that matching based only on reported race/ethnicity does not adequately explore intersectional identities or other factors such as language, culture, or national origin, which might provide a greater sense of familiarity and normalcy. Fourth, we were unable to differentiate progress from non-progress moves. It is also possible that children of color may experience more progress placement changes, as several studies have found children who are Black (Smith & Devore, 2004; Swann & Sylvester, 2006), Latinx (Kopera-Frye, 2009), or American Indian (Kopera-Frye, 2009) experience higher rates of both kinship care and congregate care (Ganasarajah et al., 2017) than White children. Fifth, due to the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978, many American Indian children in out-of-home placements may not have data in AFCARS as they are placed within the Tribal Court (National Indian Child Welfare Association, n.d.). Thus, it is possible that the American Indian children in this sample are not representative of all American Indian children removed due to maltreatment. Finally, the operationalization of foster parent race/ethnicity and placement moves in AFCARS only allowed us to examine the impact of racial matching in the first foster placement and subsequent outcomes.

Implications for Research

Several research implications exist in light of the aforementioned limitations in the present study. While the use of AFCARS data enabled analysis of a large data set over multiple years, it also made many of the nuances of racial matching difficult to capture. Future research could be designed to assess racial matching with greater detail and diversity of variables (e.g., type of placement move, child and family characteristics). Further, these studies should be replicated periodically to understand evolving trends related to racial matching in foster home placements and subsequent placement stability; as evidenced in our literature review, few researchers have explored this relationship. As policies continue to prioritize keeping children in their home communities and connected to their families and cultures of origin, it is important to track trends and make recommendations as needed. Researchers could investigate whether

there are differences in the impact of racial matching with both foster parents in two-parent households, whether there are differences in progress moves based on race/ethnicity, and whether racial matching in an initial placement could impact the type of placement move. Also highlighted in this study, researchers could target which factors influence racial matching in placement, as well as which factors influence recruitment and retention of foster families of color. Despite legislation that prohibits placement delay based on race or ethnicity, the present study suggests there could be advantages to racial matching that warrant further exploration.

Implications for Policy

Given the results of this study, policymakers should hold state child welfare departments accountable for efforts to recruit foster parents of color, specifically those who are underrepresented. However, given historical trauma and mistrust in communities of color, it is important to partner with key community leaders and take the time to develop meaningful relationships (Hanna et al., 2017). Furthermore, barriers to engagement, such as language, location, and past trauma with systems (including child welfare) should be addressed (Correa Capello, 2006).

Prior researchers have found that racial matching in other contexts (e.g., caseworker-child) is not always feasible as child welfare agencies often lack sufficient workers of diverse racial and ethnic groups (Chenot et al., 2019). Given the high percentage of non-Hispanic White foster parents in our sample (almost 70%), it is possible that racial matching is not feasible for non-relative foster parents in many areas due to the relatively low percentage of foster parents from other racial/ethnic groups. Certainly, child welfare workers are limited in their abilities to provide racially-matched foster care placements if the pool of available families does not match the demographic makeup of children in care. Furthermore, they may also be limited by the availability of technical resources with which to quickly identify family matches. Our findings support the call in the recent U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2020) report that calls for agencies to more diligently recruit "a diverse base of foster and adoptive parents" in light of MEPA. Although MEPA originally was focused on reducing the time to adoption, our findings highlight a need to adjust policies related to diverse foster parent recruitment and retention as well. Therefore, policymakers can promote funding for the technological infrastructure necessary to document and sort relevant attributes of available foster families. Furthermore, agency policies related to matching should also include foster parent expectations and resources to address child behavioral and mental health needs, as children who were categorized as emotionally disturbed had consistently lower odds of placement stability in our study.

As mentioned, recruitment efforts should include the diversity of language, beliefs, customs, and other characteristics, which may provide a sense of normalcy for children. At the same time, policies around initial assessment of children entering care should be strengthened to include these same details, such that adequate information is available from which to match children and foster families. By collecting more robust information about traditions, practices, and culture of children entering care and foster families, it may be possible to better match children and foster normalcy.

Conclusion

Findings from this study suggest that racial matching may have a positive effect on placement stability for children and youth in non-relative foster care placements. As child welfare systems work to address racial disproportionality and improve outcomes for children of color, more research could explore the role of active recruitment and retention of foster parents of color to better support children of color in care. In addition to racially matched placements, future research could also explore matching children and foster parents based on other identities such as national origin, language, culture, beliefs, and backgrounds.

Declarations

Conflict of interest The authors have no conflicts of interest to report.

References

Annie E. Casey Foundation (2020). *What the data say about race, ethnicity, and American youth.* Retrieved March 12, 2019, from https://www.aecf.org/blog/what-the-data-say-about-race-ethnicity-and-american-youth#:~:text=In%202018%2C%2050%25%20of%20the,Hawaiian%20or%20other%20Pacific%20Islander

Ayón, C., & Aisenberg, E. (2010). Negotiating cultural values and expectations within the public child welfare system: A look at *familismo* and *personalismo*. *Child & Family Social Work, 15*(3), 335–344. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2206.2010.00682.x

Barnes, A. R., Constantine Brown, J. L., & McCarty-Caplan, D. (2019). The unintended consequence of the Indian Child Welfare Act: American Indian trust in public child welfare. *Children and Youth Services Review, 98*, 221–227. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2019.01.012

Barth, R. P., Lloyd, E. C., Green, R. L., James, S., Leslie, L. K., & Landsverk, J. (2007). Predictors of placement moves among children with and without emotional and behavioral disorders. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders, 15*, 46–55. https://doi.org/10.1177/10634266070150010501

Brown, J. D., George, N., Sintzel, J., & St. Arnault, D. (2009). Benefits of cultural matching in foster care. *Children and Youth Services Review, 31*, 1019–1024. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2009.05.001

Bussey, M., & Lucero, N. M. (2013). Re-examining child welfare's response to ICWA: Collaborating with community-based agencies to reduce disparities for American Indian/Alaska Native children. *Children and Youth Services Review, 35*(3), 394–401. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2012.12.021

Butler-Sweet, C. (2011). "A healthy black identity" transracial adoption, middle-class families, and racial socialization. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies, 42*(2), 193–212. https://doi.org/10.3138/jcfs.42.2.193

Cabral, R. R., & Smith, T. B. (2011). Racial/ethnic matching of clients and therapists in mental health services: A meta-analytic review of preferences, perceptions, and outcomes. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 58*(4), 537–554. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0025266

Caldera, S. (2019). *Techniques for robustness and threats to inference: Inverse probability weighted regression adjustment.* Retrieved March 12, 2019, from https://www.sites.utexas.edu/prc/files/IPWRA.pdf

Casey Family Programs (2018). *What impacts placement stability?* Retrieved October 3, 2018, from https://www.casey.org/placement-stability-impacts/

Chamberlain, P., Price, J. M., Reid, J. B., Landsverk, J., Fisher, P. A., & Stoolmiller, M. (2006). Who disrupts from placement in foster and kinship care? *Child Abuse & Neglect, 30*(4), 409–424. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2005.11.004

Chenot, D., Benton, A. D., Iglesias, M., & Boutakidis, I. (2019). Ethnic matching: A two-state comparison of child welfare workers' attitudes. *Children and Youth Services Review, 98*, 24–31. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2018.12.008

Child Welfare Information Gateway. (2017). *Foster care statistics 2016.* U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Children's Bureau

Child Welfare Information Gateway. (2020). *Foster care statistics 2018.* U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau

Child Welfare Information Gateway. (2021). *The Indian Child Welfare Act: A primer for child welfare professionals.* U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau. Retrieved March 3, 2019, from https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/ICWA/

Choi, Y., Park, M., Lee, J. P., Yasui, M., & Kim, T. Y. (2018). Explicating acculturation strategies among Asian American Youth: Subtypes and correlates across Filipino and Korean Americans. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 47*, 2181–2205. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-018-0862-1

Correa Capello, D. (2006). Recruiting Hispanic foster parents: Issues of culture, language, and social policy. *Families in Society: THe Journal of Contemporary Social Services, 87*(4), 529–535. https://doi.org/10.1606/1044-3894.3568

Cripps, K., & Laurens, J. (2015). Protecting Indigenous children's familial and cultural connections: Reflections on recent amendments to the Care and Protection Act 2007. *Indigenous Law Bulletin, 8*(17), 11–15.

Crofoot, T., & Harris, M. S. (2012). An Indian child welfare perspective on disproportionality in child welfare. *Children and Youth Services Review, 34*, 1667–1674. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2012.04.028

Daniel, E. (2011). Fostering cultural development: Foster parents' perspectives. *Children and Youth Services Review, 33*(11), 2230–2240. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2011.07.005

Day, A. G., Murphy, K. S., & Whitekiller, V. D. (2021). Characteristics and competencies of successful resource parents working in Indian country: A systematic review of the research. *Children and Youth Services Review, 121*, 105834. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.105834

Degener, C. J., van Bergen, D. D., & Grietens, H. W. E. (2021). The ethnic identity of transracially placed foster children with an ethnic minority background: A systematic literature review. *Children & Society*. https://doi.org/10.1111/chso.12444

Dettlaff, A. J., Weber, K., Pendleton, M., Boyd, R., Bettencourt, B., & Burton, L. (2020). It is not a broken system, it is a system that needs to be broken: The upend movement to abolish the child welfare system. *Journal of Public Child Welfare, 14*(5), 500–517. https://doi.org/10.1080/15548732.2020.1814542

Dolan, M., Casanueva, C., Smith, K., & Ringeisen, H. (2013). NSCAW child well-being spotlight: More than one quarter of children placed out of home experience placement disruption in the first 18 months after a maltreatment investigation. *OPRE Report # 2013–05*. Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, Administration for Childrne and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Fluke, J., Harden, B., Jenkins, M., & Ruenrdanz, A. (2011). *Disparities and disproportionality in child welfare: Analysis of the research*. Center for the Study of Social Policy, Alliance for Racial Equity in Child Welfare. Retrieved March 21, 2021, from https://casala.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Disparities-and-Disproportionality-in-Child-Welfare_An-Analysis-of-the-Research-December-2011-1.pdf#page=11

Font, S. A., & Kim, H. W. (2021). Sibling separation and placement instability for children in foster care. *Child Maltreatment*. https://doi.org/10.1177/10775595211012482

Font, S. A., Sattler, K. M. P., & Gershoff, E. T. (2018). Measurement and correlates of foster care placement moves. *Children and Youth Services Review, 91*, 248–258. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2018.06.019

Ganasarajah, S., Siegel, G., & Sickmund, M. (2017). *Disproportionality rates for children of color in Foster care: Fiscal year 2015*. Retrieved March 21, 2021, from https://www.ncjfcj.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/NCJFCJ-Disproportionality-TAB-2015_0.pdf

Goerge, R. M. (1990). The reunification process in substitute care. *Social Services Review, 64*(3), 422–475.

Goldsmith, D. J. (2002). In the best interests of an Indian child: The Indian Child Welfare Act. *Juvenile & Family Court Journal, 53*(4), 9–17. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1755-6988.2002.tb00070.x

Goss, D. R., Byrd, W. C., & Hughey, M. W. (2017). Racial authenticity and familial acceptance among transracial adoptees: A bothersome bargain of belonging. *Symbolic Interaction, 40*(2), 147–168. https://doi.org/10.1002/symb.282

Gunnar, M., & Quevedo, K. (2007). The neurobiology of stress and development. *Annual Review of Psychology, 58*(2007), 145–173. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.58.110405.085605

Haight, W., Waubanascum, C., Glesener, D., Day, P., Bussey, B., & Nichols, K. (2019). The center for regional and tribal child welfare studies: Reducing disparities through indigenous social work education. *Children and Youth Services Review, 100*, 156–166. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2019.02.045

Hanna, M. D., Boyce, E. R., & Yang, J. (2017). The impact of historical trauma and mistrust on the recruitment of resource families of color. *Adoption Quarterly, 20*(1), 65–82. https://doi.org/10.1080/10926755.2016.1149536

Harris, M. S., & Hackett, W. (2008). Decision points in child welfare: An action research model to address disproportionality. *Children and Youth Services Review, 30*(2), 199–215. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2007.09.006

Hasnain, R., Fujiura, G. T., Capua, J. E., Thanh Bui, T. T., & Khan, S. (2020). Disaggregating the Asian 'other': Heterogeneity and methodological issues in research on Asian Americans with disabilities. *Societies, 10*(3), 58. https://doi.org/10.3390/soc10030058

Haysom, Z., McKibbin, G., Shlonsky, A., & Hamilton, B. (2020). Changing considerations of matching foster carers and children: A scoping review of the research and evidence. *Children and Youth Services Review*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.105409

Jennings, P. K. (2006). The trouble with the multiethnic placement act: An empirical look at transracial adoption. *Sociological Perspectives, 49*(4), 559–581. https://doi.org/10.1525/sop.2006.49.4.559

Jones, A. S., Rittner, B., & Affronti, M. (2016). Foster parent strategies to support the functional adaptation of foster youth. *Journal of Public Child Welfare, 10*(3), 255–273. https://doi.org/10.1080/15548732.2016.1148092

Kim, J., Choi, M., LaBrenz, C. A., Harris, M. S., Boyd, R., & Pierce, B. J. (2021). Model fidelity and child well-being in family team conference: The interaction effect of racial matching and child race. *The British Journal of Social Work*. https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcab027

Konijn, C., Admiraal, S., Baart, J., van Rooij, F., Stams, G. J., Colonnesi, C., Lindauer, R., & Assink, M. (2019). Foster care placement instability: A meta-analytic review. *Children and Youth Services Review, 96*, 483–499. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2018.12.002

Kopera-Frye, K. (2009). Needs and issues of Latino and Native American nonparental relative caregivers: Strengths and challenges within a cultural context. *Family & Consumer Sciences, 37*(3), 394–410. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077727X08329563

Koppelman, K. L. (2020). *Understanding human differences: Multicultural education for a diverse America* (6th ed.). Pearson.

LaBrenz, C. A., Findley, E., Graaf, G., Baiden, P., Kim, J., Choi, M. J., & Chakravarty, S. (2021). Racial/ethnic disproportionality in reunification across U.S. child welfare systems. *Child Abuse & Neglect*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2020.104894

Leathers, S. J. (2006). Placement disruption and negative placement outcomes among adolescents in long-term foster care: The role of behavior problems. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 30*(3), 307–324. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2005.09.003

Leathers, S. J., Spielfogel, J. E., Geiger, J., Barnett, J., & Vande Voort, B. L. (2019). Placement disruption in foster care: Children's behavior, foster parent support, and parenting experiences. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 91*, 147–159. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2019.03.012

McRoy, R., & Griffin, A. (2012). Transracial adoption policies and practices: The US experience. *Adoption & Fostering, 36*(3–4), 38–49. https://doi.org/10.1177/030857591203600305

Montgomery, J. E., & Jordan, N. A. (2018). Racial-ethnic socialization and transracial adoptee outcomes: A systematic research synthesis. *Child & Adolescent Social Work Journal, 35*(5), 439–458. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10560-018-0541-9

Montserrat, C., Llosada-Gistau, J., & Fuentes-Peláez, N. (2020). Child, family and system variables associated to breakdowns in family foster care. *Children and Youth Services Review*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2019.104701

Multiethnic Placement Act of 1994, H. R. 4181—103rd Congress (1994). Retrieved March 21, 2022, from https://www.congress.gov/bill/103rd-congress/house-bill/4181/text

National Association of Black Social Workers (2003). *Preserving families of African ancestry ©*. Retrieved September 1, 2021, from https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.nabsw.org/resource/resmgr/position_statements_papers/preserving_families_of_afric.pdf

National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect (2018). *AFCARS foster care annual file: User's guide.* Author.

National Indian Child Welfare Association (n.p.d.). *HHS final AFCARS rule impacts data collection for American Indian and Alaska Native children.* Retrieved March 21, 2022, from https://www.nicwa.org/latest-news/afcars-data-collection-for-native-children/#:~:text=AFCARS%20is%20the%20federal%20government's,service%20disparities%20impacting%20Native%20children

Nguyen, B. M. D., Alcantar, C. M., Curammeng, E. R., Hernandez, E., Kim, V., Paredes, A. D., Freeman, R., Nguyen, M. H., & Teranishi, R. T. (2017). *The racial heterogeneity project: Implications for educational research, policy, and practice.* Retrieved March 21, 2022, from https://equityinlearning.act.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/R1641-racial-heterogeneity-project-2017-06.pdf

O'Neill, M., Risley-Curtiss, C., Ayón, C., & Rankin Williams, L. (2012). Placement stability in the context of child development. *Children and Youth Services Review, 34*(7), 1251–1258. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2012.02.018

Oosterman, M., Schuengel, C., Slot, N. W., Bullens, R. A. R., & Doreleijers, T. A. H. (2007). Disruptions in foster care; A review and meta-analysis. *Children and Youth Services Review, 29*(1), 53–76. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2006.07.003

Pasalich, D. S., Fleming, C. B., Oxford, M. L., Zheng, Y., & Spieker, S. J. (2016). Can parenting intervention prevent cascading effects from placement instability to insecure attachment to externalizing problems in maltreated toddlers? *Child Maltreatment, 2*, 175–185. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077559516656398

Pears, K. C., Kim, H. K., Buchanan, R., & Fisher, P. A. (2015). Adverse consequences of social mobility for children in foster care: A prospective longitudinal study. *Child Development, 86*, 1210–1226. https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.12374

Phinney, J. S., & Ong, A. D. (2007). Conceptualization and measurement of ethnic identity: Current status and future directions. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 54*(2), 271–281. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0167.54.3.271

Removal of Barriers to Interethnic Adoption (1996). (Inter-ethnic Adoption Provisions), P.L. 104–188, 42 U.S.C. 471a(3). Retrieved March 21, 2022, from https://www.hhs.gov/civil-rights/for-individuals/special-topics/adoption/interethnic-adoption-provisions/index.html#:~:text=On%20August%2020%2C%201996%2C%20President,adoption%20or%20foster%20care%20placements

Rubin, D. M., O'Reilly, A. L. R., Luan, X., & Localio, A. R. (2007). The impact of placement stability on behavioral well-being for children in foster care. *Pediatrics, 119*(2), 336–344. https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2006-1995

Ryan, J. P., Garnier, P., Zyphur, M., & Zhai, F. (2006). Investigating the effects of caseworker characteristics in child welfare. *Children and Youth Services Review, 28*(9), 993–1006. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2005.10.013

Sahota, P. (2019). Culture and emotional well-being in adolescents who are American Indian/Alaska Native: A review of current literature. *Child Welfare, 97*(3), 1–21.

Samuels, G. M. (2009). 'Being raised by white people': Navigating racial difference among adopted multiracial adults. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 71*(1), 80–94. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2008.00581.x

Sattler, K. M. P., Font, S. A., & Gershoff, E. T. (2018). Age-specific risk factors associated with placement instability among foster children. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 84*, 157–169. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2018.07.024

Smith, C. J., & Devore, W. (2004). African American children in the child welfare and kinship system: From exclusion to over inclusion. *Children and Youth Services Review, 26*, 427–446. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2004.02.005

Stott, T., & Gustavsson, N. (2010). Balancing permanency and stability for youth in foster care. *Children and Youth Services Review, 32*(4), 619–625. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2009.12.009

Swann, C. A., & Sylvester, M. S. (2006). Does the child welfare system serve the neediest kinship care families? *Children and Youth Services Review, 28*, 1213–1228. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2005.11.007

Taussig, H. N., Culhane, S. E., & Hettleman, D. (2007). Fostering healthy futures: An innovative preventive intervention for preadolescent youth in out-of-home care. *Child Welfare, 86*(5), 113–131.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau. (2018). *The AFCARS Report.* Retrieved March 3, 2021, from https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/afcarsreport25.pdf

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2020). *The Multiethnic Placement Act 25 years later.* Washington. Retrieved March 21, 2022, from https://aspe.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/private/pdf/264526/MEPA-Research-summary.pdf

Vanderfaeillie, J., Goemans, A., Damen, H., Van Holen, F., & Pijnenburg, H. (2018). Foster care placement breakdown in the Netherlands and Flanders: Prevalence, precursors, and associated factors. *Child & Family Social Work, 23*(3), 337–345. https://doi.org/10.1111/cfs.12420

Vandivere, S., Malm, K., & Radel, L. (2009). *Adoption USA. A chartbook based on the 007 National Survey of Adoptive Parents.* Retrieved March 21, 2022, from https://aspe.hhs.gov/reports/adoption-usa-chartbook-based-2007-national-survey-adoptive-parents-0

Whiting, J. B., & Lee, R. E., III. (2003). Voices from the system: A qualitative study of foster children's stories. *Family Relations, 52*, 288–295. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3729.2003.00288.x

Zeijlmans, K., López, M., Grietens, H., & Knorth, E. J. (2017). Matching children with foster carers: A literature review. *Children and Youth Services Review, 73*, 257–265. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2016.12.017