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*the truth about*

THE LIFELONG IMPACT OF  
ADOPTION & FOSTER CARE



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Our vision is to be a healing adoptee community who revolutionize the systems that impact them. Adoption and foster care have historically catered to decision-makers rather than being transparent, adoptee centered, and trauma informed. We believe adoptees have the right to information and ownership of their own story, with a sense of felt safety and belonging. We seek to hold space for adoptees to co-exist with all the chapters of their story, with opportunity to revolutionize the systems that impact them.

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Contact us: Heather Enright at [heather@theadopteecollective.com](mailto:heather@theadopteecollective.com) and Kara Donaldson at [Kara@theadopteecollective.com](mailto:Kara@theadopteecollective.com)

keep this  
good news in mind

*We've gathered this data to help bring clarity to the common experience and impact of having care experience in foster care or adoption.*

*As you look through these statistics, keep this good news in mind.*

## **NEUROPLASTICITY -**

**“the capacity of the nervous system to develop new neuronal connections.”**

*(dictionary.com)*

- It's never too late. Trauma impacts the brain, body, biology, behavior, and belief.
- But, the brain has an amazing ability to heal and form new neural connections.
- There's always time for healing.
- You can't change your heritage. But, you CAN change your legacy.

# Kids who've been in foster care are:

7 times more likely to experience depression

3 times as likely to have Auditory Processing Disorder, hearing impairments, & vision issues

6 times as likely to exhibit behavioral problems

2 times as likely to have learning disabilities, developmental delays, asthma, obesity, and speech problems

5 times as likely to feel anxiety

# Mental Health & Foster Care

## Children in Foster Care

Up to 80% of children in foster care have significant mental health issues, compared to 18-22% of the general population.

*Factors that impact this disparity:*

- History of complex trauma
- Frequently changing situations and transitioning
- Broken family relationships
- Inconsistent and inadequate access to mental health services
- Over-prescription of psychotropic medication

## Adults who were in Foster Care:

Types of mental health issues that are most common for adults who were in foster care:

- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Depression
- Panic disorder
- Generalized Anxiety Disorder

### ***Protective and preventative factors for youth in foster care:***

Children who have effective self-regulation skills and manage their emotions have fewer placement disruptions or behavior problems and are more likely to find employment when they exit care. (childwelfare.gov - Children's Bureau 2015)

Youth in foster care who have natural mentors during adolescence have improved young adult outcomes. (youth.gov)

*Research shows*

Higher proportions of adopted persons attend therapy (17.71%) than nonadopted persons (8.76%).

Miller et al., 2000

Milestone events like marriage and childbirth commonly bring on feelings of grief and loss in adopted individuals.

(Nydam, 2007; Silverstein & Kaplan 1988)

Being adopted can lead to stress over lack of genetic information and issues with identity development.

(Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2004)

Evidence from the reviewed studies suggests increased risk of mental health difficulties for adult adoptees.

Building and maintaining close relationships is a common struggle for adopted persons.

(Corder, 2012)

# Common Experiences for Adoptees

Adoptees have higher incidents of panic disorder without agoraphobia, specific phobias, and generalized anxiety disorder.

Self-esteem, self-concept, self-control, and moral self-approval are common areas of struggle for adult adoptees.

Adoptees experience higher levels of depression and anxiety.

*Certain personality and behavioral disorders, and neuroticism occur in higher rates in adoptees.*

Adult adoptees rated bonds with their families lower than nonadoptees, and they were more likely to experience dissolution of marital or cohabiting partnerships.

Being older at the time of adoption is associated with a less positive adjustment.