

Systematic Review Protocol: The effectiveness of policies, programs or interventions to improve health and psychosocial outcomes for young people leaving the out of home care system: a systematic review

Template last updated: June 2020

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Funder	What Works for Children's Social Care
Date	Addendum added November 2020
Version	Changes to Version 1.0. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An updated search strategy has been provided in order to identify research published up to October 30, 2020. The previous strategy, provided by a former partner and capturing literature only up to 1 January 2020, could not be executed by the review team. The review management tool used by the team was changed from Rayyan to Covidence.

Summary

Young people who leave or transition out of out-of-home care (OOHC) arrangements commonly experience poorer outcomes across a range of indicators — including, higher rates of homelessness, unemployment, reliance on public assistance, physical and mental health problems, and contact with the criminal justice system — relative to their counterparts

The structure for this protocol template draws on the PRISMA-P (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic review and Meta-Analysis Protocols) 2015 checklist

in the general population. The age at which young people transition from OOHC varies between and within some countries — for most, formal support ceases between the ages of 18 and 21.

Transitions support programs are generally available to young people toward the end of their OOHC placement, although some can extend beyond. They often encourage the development of skills required for continued engagement in education, obtaining employment, maintaining housing and general life skills. Little is known about the effectiveness of these programs, or of policies to raise the age at which support is available to young people in OOHC. This systematic review will seek to identify programs and/or interventions that improve outcomes for youth transitioning from the OOHC system into adult living arrangements.

Using the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-analysis Protocols (PRISMA-P) guidelines, this review will identify programs, interventions and policies that seek to improve health and psychosocial outcomes amongst this population that have been tested using robust controlled methods. Primary outcomes of interest are homelessness, health, education, employment, exposure to violence and risky behaviour. Secondary outcomes are relationships and life skills. A search strategy has been developed that involves searching thirteen databases of published literature in multiple languages. Unpublished literature will also be searched. A meta-analysis will be undertaken if identified studies are suitably homogeneous. Risk of bias will be assessed using tools appropriate to the study methodology. Outcomes across studies will be assessed using the Grading of Recommendations, Assessment, Development and Evaluation (GRADE) methodology.

This review will be completed by February 2021.

Part 1) Rationale and question formulation

Rationale

Young people who move on from care arrangements commonly experience continued disadvantage and poor outcomes across a range of indicators — including high rates of homelessness, unemployment, reliance on public assistance, physical and mental health problems, and contact with the criminal justice system^{1,2,3,4,5}. These ongoing difficulties may reflect health, mental health and other challenges arising from earlier life experiences involving child maltreatment, shortcomings in the support they received while in care (including preparation for living on their own without parental support), and their need to live on their own far earlier than their peers in the general population who often have substantial family support well into adulthood.

The type and mode of support to care leavers varies, but can involve formal life skills training programmes, personal adviser or keyworker support, cash assistance, and housing support. Transition support programmes are generally available to young people toward the end of their care placement, although some extend beyond. They often encourage the development of skills required for continued engagement in

¹ Doyle JJ (2007) Child protection and child outcomes: Measuring the effects of foster care. *American Economic Review*, 97(5):1583–610

² Courtney ME, Dworsky A, Pollack H (2007) When Should the State Cease Parenting? Evidence from the Midwest Study. Chicago IL.

³ Cusick GR, Havlicek JR, Courtney ME. (2012) Risk for arrest: The role of social bonds in protecting foster youth making the transition to adulthood. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 82(1):19–31.

⁴ Hook J & Courtney M (2010) Employment of former foster youth as young adults: Evidence from the Midwest Study. Chicago IL; 2010.

⁵ Stewart CJ, Kum HC, Barth RP, Duncan DF (2014) Former foster youth: Employment outcomes up to age 30. *Child Youth Services Review*, 36:220–9.

education, obtaining employment, maintaining housing and general life skills.

Around the turn of the millennium the vulnerability of young people leaving care was increasingly recognised as an issue of importance in several jurisdictions, and since then there have been progressive policy changes across the UK. In England, the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 extended the expected age of leaving care to 18 and required local authorities to produce a pathway plan, appoint a personal adviser, and provide continued support to the age of 21 (24 for those in education and training). Subsequent legislation following the Staying Put programme provides for fostered young people to stay with foster carers to the age of 21, and the Staying Close programme provides continued support for children in residential care. Similar initiatives have been introduced in other countries and the emerging international evidence is broadly supportive.

However, the proportion of young people staying on with foster carers is still relatively low⁶ in England, with diversity in the extent, types, timing and in models of support^{7,8}, and evidence of shortcomings in planning and workforce preparation⁹, budget constraints and other implementation challenges¹⁰. There is an urgent need to synthesise available learning about how practice can best be strengthened, and any policy changes this would require. The financial cost of young people not moving on successfully is high — the lifetime cost of a one-year cohort of 19-year-old care leavers not being in employment, education or training (NEET) has been estimated as £150 million more than if they had the same NEET rate as other 19-year-olds¹¹ - but the personal costs to their health and wellbeing are even more significant.

Reflecting its place as an emergent policy issue, the volume of research published on care leavers has increased substantially in the last twenty years, but this literature has not been the subject of high-quality synthesis. The time is therefore ripe for a systematic review to inform ongoing policy and practice discussions about how best to support young people moving on, and shape future research.

Research question(s)

The primary research question for this review will be:

What policies, programmes or interventions are effective at improving health and psychosocial outcomes for young people leaving the out of home care system?

Secondary research questions are:

⁶ Department for Education (2020) *Fostering in England 2018-2019: main findings*, available online: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fostering-in-england-1-april-2018-to-31-march-2019/fostering-in-england-2018-to-2019-main-findings>

⁷ Munro E, Lushy C, NCAS, Maskell-Graham D, Ward H and Holmes L (2012) *Final Report of the Staying Put: 18+ Family Placement Programme*, London, Department of Education

⁸ Roberts I (2018) *Staying Put: An Unfulfilled Promise*, London, the Fostering Network

⁹ HM Government 2016 *Keep on caring*, London, available online: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/535899/Care-Leaver-Strategy.pdf

¹⁰ Mendes P and Rogers J (2020) 'Young People Transitioning from Out-of-Home Care: What are the Lessons from Extended Care Programmes in the USA and England for Australia?' *British Journal of Social Work* <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcaa028>

¹¹ National Audit Office 2015 *Care leavers' transitions to adulthood*, London, available online: <https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Care-leavers-transition-to-adulthood.pdf>

- What are the key components and features of effective policies, programmes and interventions?
- What are the conditions necessary for successful implementation?
- What are the implications for policy, services and practice in England?

The PICOS framework, presented below in summarised form, will be used to answer the aforementioned research questions:

Population — Youth aged between 16 and 25 who:

- are not living with their birth parents / family; AND
- are in foster care / out-of-home-care / public care / looked after (UK) / state care / government care; AND
- have been placed in care due to concerns related to child maltreatment; AND
- are transitioning from care into adult living arrangements.

Intervention — Programs or interventions that:

- provide support and/or assistance to help youth prior to leaving care and/or as they transition and/or after they leave care;
- are delivered in the community;
- support young people transitioning from their country's statutory out-of-home care systems into adult living.

Comparator — treatment as usual, another intervention, no intervention, or wait-list control

Outcome(s) — eight (six primary and two secondary) health and psychosocial outcomes will be investigated
Health and psychosocial outcomes

Study design(s) — studies using experimental and quasi-experimental designs will be included.

Part 2) Identifying relevant work

Search Strategy

Electronic databases

The following databases will be searched for studies published between 1990 and October 30, 2020:

- Campbell Library
- Cinahl via EBSCO
- Cochrane Register of Trials via Ovid
- ERIC via Proquest
- Libris
- PsycINFO via Ovid
- MEDLINE via Ovid
- EMBASE via Ovid
- Sociological Abstracts via Proquest
- Social Services Abstracts via ProQuest
- SocIndex via EBSCO
- NHS Economic Evaluation Database via Ovid
- Health Technology Assessment via Ovid

Other sources	<p>Clearinghouses, government agencies and organisations known to be undertaking research in this area from the United Kingdom, United States, European Union, Australia, Canada and New Zealand will be examined for unpublished material. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Care Online (SCIE) • International Research Network on Transitions to Adulthood from Care • Australian Institute of Family Studies • Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago • California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare <p>References from included studies will be reviewed.</p> <p>Key authors — of either relevant primary studies or of systematic reviews — will be identified during the search process and will be contacted by email to ascertain if they are aware of any supplemental and/or additional literature.</p>
Key search terms	See attached search strategy (Part 5)
Draft search strategy	See attached search strategy (Part 5).

Study selection criteria

Inclusion criteria	<p>Inclusion criteria organised by PICO domain are included below:</p> <p>Study design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Randomised Controlled Trials (RCT) including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ individual RCTs, ○ cluster RCTs, • Step-Wedge designs with random time allocation • Non-equivalent control group designs using parallel cohorts that adjust for baseline equivalence • Difference-in-Difference estimation • Synthetic control group methods • Studies based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ covariate matching, ○ propensity score-based methods, ○ doubly robust methods, ○ regression adjustment, ○ regression discontinuity designs, and ○ instrumental variable estimation. <p>Qualitative studies and economic evaluations will be included if they are conducted as part of a qualifying study and will be used only to generate hypotheses, inform us about the interventions and populations, and inform or deepen our understanding of the quantitative findings.</p> <p>Population Youth aged between 16 and 25 Youth in OOHC for reasons of child maltreatment or risk of child maltreatment, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • foster care • guardianship
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • kinship care • group care • residential care • congregate care <p>Intervention Interventions, programs or services delivered in the home / community.</p> <p>Comparison Treatment as usual, another intervention, no intervention, or wait-list control.</p> <p>Outcome <i>Primary Outcomes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness • Health • Education • Employment • Exposure to violence (as either victim or perpetrator) • Risky behaviour <p><i>Secondary Outcomes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships • Life skills <p>Setting Countries where a statutory care system for child maltreatment exists.</p> <p>Publication status No restrictions are placed on the type of publication to be included.</p> <p>Language Any study with an abstract, or translation, available in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, German, Mandarin or Cantonese will be included during title and abstract screening¹².</p>
<p>Exclusion criteria</p>	<p>Exclusion criteria organised by PICO domain are included below:</p> <p>Study design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-primary studies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature reviews • Systematic reviews • Meta-analysis • Studies without a valid counterfactual, including designs that do not include a parallel cohort that establish or adjust for baseline equivalence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single group pre-post designs • Control group designs without matching in time and establishing baseline equivalence • Cross-sectional designs • Non-controlled observational (cohort) designs • Case-control designs • Case studies / series • Surveys • Qualitative designs and economic evaluations not undertaken in the context of an included quantitative study

¹² If deemed relevant, full text screening and data extraction will be undertaken by a reviewer proficient in that language. In the event that any additional studies are identified in additional languages, the review team will endeavour to locate reviewers proficient in that language to screen and extract data.

	<p>Population</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth in OOHC settings for reasons other than child maltreatment • Youth that have returned to the care of their parents prior to their exit from the OOHC system • Youth that are currently incarcerated, including in youth justice settings • Youth aged less than 16 and greater than 25 <p>Intervention</p> <p>Interventions, programs or services delivered in settings other than the home / community.</p> <p>Comparison</p> <p>Studies using comparators other than treatment as usual, another intervention, no intervention, or wait-list control.</p> <p>Outcome</p> <p>Studies looking at outcomes other than the primary and secondary outcomes specified above.</p> <p>Setting</p> <p>Countries where a statutory care system for child maltreatment does not exist.</p>
<p>Process of study selection</p>	<p>Title and abstracts will be reviewed by two authors. Following the title screen, titles and abstracts of identified records will be screened by two reviewers, using the liberal accelerated method. Subsequently, the full text of all potentially eligible evaluations will be retrieved and reviewed for eligibility, independently, by two members of the team using a priori eligibility criteria.</p>

Study records

<p>Data collection</p>	<p>For included studies, data will be extracted independently by two reviewers into an online form developed for this review.</p>
<p>Data management process</p>	<p>Citations identified from the search strategy will be imported into the online systematic review application Covidence for screening.</p>
<p>Data items</p>	<p>The following information will be obtained: study design, study outcomes, sample size, location, study timeframe, study population, population demographics, intervention details as well as information required to conduct risk of bias assessments and a meta-analysis (if feasible).</p>
<p>Outcomes and prioritisation</p>	<p>Outcomes of interest include the following, at least three months following the age at which eligibility for out of home care terminates in the jurisdiction in which the study takes place. We will also measure outcomes at the point at which any policy, program or intervention ceases.</p> <p>Primary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness — we will include measurement that allows us to determine whether or not an individual has or does not have a permanent place to live; • Health — we will include health outcomes or service usage, including emergency department presentations, hospitalisations, mental health outcomes and sexual health test results;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education — we will include measurements of: high school completion, high school grades, enrolment in or attainment of a trade qualification and enrolment in or attainment of a university qualification; • Employment — we will include measurements of whether an individual has a job, their wages, is unemployed or uses unemployment benefits; • Exposure to violence (as either victim or perpetrator) — we will include any measurement of crime perpetration i.e., whether or not an individual has been arrested, convicted, spent time in a locked setting (jail/prison) or crime victimisation; • Risky behaviour — we will include measurement of risky behaviour including illicit drug use, alcohol use, risky sexual activity and either the onset or delay of teen pregnancy. <p>Secondary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships — we will include measurements of whether individuals have attained or maintained supportive relationships with others, including mentors, peer mentors or supportive peers; • Life skills — we will include measurements of the attainment of competencies required for independent living, these include, but are not limited to learning how to budget, attain essential services and perform essential household tasks.
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Part 3) Risk of bias assessment

Risk of bias assessment criteria	<p>Risk of bias of included randomised control trials will be assessed using the updated Cochrane Risk of Bias 2.0 tool.</p> <p>Non-randomised studies will be assessed using the ROBINS-I tool.</p> <p>The quality of any economic evaluations will be assessed using guidelines suggested by the Cochrane and Campbell Economics Methods Group.</p>
Purpose of risk of bias assessment	<p>Risk of bias assessments will be used to explore heterogeneity and informing decisions regarding suitability of meta-analysis and in assessing the strength of inferences supporting GRADE recommendations.</p>

Part 4) Summarising the evidence

Data synthesis	<p>In accordance with Campbell and Cochrane guidelines, we will try to maximise the likelihood of being able to quantitatively synthesise primary and secondary outcomes across studies using a meta-analysis.</p> <p>If more than one study with suitable data can be identified, we intend to perform a meta-analysis if the population, intervention, comparison, and outcomes are similar enough to reasonably combine or standardise for comparison.</p> <p>This analysis will be conducted using the R Project for Statistical Computing.</p> <p>For each outcome, we will explore heterogeneity by preparing box plots, forest plots and examining the I^2 statistic. If limited heterogeneity is found using the I^2 statistic, we will use a fixed effects model. If there is significant heterogeneity, we will use a random effects model. These models will allow us to estimate the pooled effect size and its 95% confidence interval for each</p>
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	<p>outcome. For both approaches we will perform a meta-analysis using the longest follow-up period possible for each outcome.</p> <p>Data from randomised and non-randomised trial designs will not be pooled. Nor will we pool data from non-randomised studies of different study designs.</p> <p>If the conditions for a meta-analysis are not met, we will describe and synthesise trial findings narratively and/or use descriptive measures (median effect size and range) to describe their effects.</p> <p>We will synthesis data around each of our primary outcomes (homelessness, health, education, employment, exposure to violence and risky behaviour).</p> <p>For binary outcomes — we will calculate a risk ratio and a 95% confidence interval.</p> <p>For continuous data — if a consistent outcome measure is used, we will calculate the mean difference.</p> <p>Where different measures are used to examine primary outcomes, we will calculate the standardised mean difference if possible.</p> <p>Where data from the same outcome are reported in different studies as dichotomous or continuous data, we will transform these (if appropriate) to enable pooled estimates of effect.</p> <p>If effect sizes are missing or displayed in ways that do not allow us to determine a pooled estimate, we will use the Campbell Collaboration effect size calculator¹³. If we are not able to calculate an effect size in this manner, we will contact the authors and seek to obtain the information required for us to do so.</p> <p>We do not anticipate any subgroup analysis due to the scope of literature published in this area. However, if it possible, we will undertake a subgroup analysis by gender.</p>
<p>Meta-bias(es)</p>	<p>The presence of publication bias arising due to missing results will be assessed by examining the distribution of results in a funnel plot.</p>
<p>Confidence in cumulative evidence</p>	<p>Outcomes across studies will be assessed using the Grading of Recommendations, Assessment, Development and Evaluation (GRADE) methodology.</p>
<p>Reporting and interpreting findings</p>	<p>Results will be presented in a ‘summary of findings’ table, that includes the results of the GRADE assessment.</p> <p>To support the review team to interpret the results and understand what they mean from a practice perspective, a series of focus groups will be held with care leavers. The purpose of these focus groups is to discuss emergent findings and obtain input from those with lived experience.</p> <p>The discussion section will be arranged around the EMMIE framework which takes into account the effect, mechanism, moderators, implementation and economic impact of the policies, programs or interventions included in the analysis.</p>

¹³ <https://campbellcollaboration.org/research-resources/effect-size-calculator.html>

Registration

This review has been registered with PROSPERO: CRD42020146999

Personnel

The members of the review team and their roles are outlined below:

- **Jane Lewis** — Director, Centre for Evidence and Implementation — will be the project director
- **David Taylor** — Senior Advisor, Centre for Evidence and Implementation — will be the lead reviewer
- **Sangita Chakraborty** — Research Assistant, Centre for Evidence and Implementation — will provide research assistance
- **Georgina Mann** — Research Assistant, Centre for Evidence and Implementation — will provide research assistance
- **Bianca Albers** — Associate Director, Centre for Evidence and Implementation, will provide technical support and methods expertise
- **Aron Shlonsky** — Professor and Head of Department (Social Work), Monash University — will provide methods and content expertise
- **Phillip Mendes** — Associate Professor, Department of Social Work, Monash University — will provide content expertise
- **Geraldine Macdonald** — Professor, School for Policy Studies, University of Bristol — will provide methods and content expertise
- **Kevin Williams** — Chief Executive Office, The Fostering Network — will provide policy and practice expertise

Timeline

Date	Activity	Staff responsible/leading
3 Jul 2020	Submission of draft protocol to WWC-CSC	DT
10 Jul 2020	Submission of updated protocol to WWC-CSC following receipt of comments	DT
17 Jul 2020	Submission of revisions to PROSPERO registration (if required)	DT
24 Jul 2020	Submission of protocol to peer reviewed journal	DT
24 Jul 2020	Completion of screening and finalisation of included studies	DT
14 Aug 2020	Completion of title and abstract screening of electronic search results	DT & SC

28 Aug 2020	Completion of full text screening of electronic search results	DT & SC
Sep 2020	Contact authors of included studies to identify unpublished work	DT, AS, GM
Sep 2020	Search & contact experts to identify unpublished work	DT, SC, AS
2 Oct 2020	Complete data extraction from studies which meet inclusion criteria	DT & SC
16 Oct 2020	Synthesise results (either quantitatively or narratively)	DT, AS
30 Oct 2020	Complete assessment of outcomes for risk of bias	DT, SC, AS
13 Nov 2020	Complete assessment of outcomes using GRADE	DT, SC, AS
Nov/Dec 2020	Convene focus groups with care leavers to discuss emergent findings	KM
Nov/Dec 2020	Drafting including discussion based on EMMIE framework to WWCS	DT, SC, AS, JL, PM, GM, KM
15 Jan 2020	Submission of draft review to WWC-CSC	DT
12 Feb 2020	Submission of final review to WWC-CSC	DT
Mar 2020	Submission of manuscript to peer reviewed journal	DT

Part 5) Search Terms

Cochrane Controlled Register of Trials via Ovid

1. child welfare/ or foster home care/
2. (foster adj2 (youth or child* or care)).ti.
3. (foster adj2 (youth or child* or care)).ab
4. Independent Living/
5. independent living.ti.
6. independent living.ab
7. Self Care/
8. (extend* adj2 (care or foster* or out of home care or OOHC or looked after)).mp.
9. (leav* adj2 (care or foster* or out of home care or OOHC or looked after)).mp.
10. (transit* adj2 (care or foster* or out of home care or OOHC or looked after)).mp.
11. (ag* out adj2 (care or foster* or out of home care or OOHC or looked after)).mp.
12. (emancipat* adj2 (care or foster* or out of home care or OOHC or looked after)).mp
13. 1 or 2 or 3
14. 4 or 5 or 6 or 7 or 8 or 9 or 10 or 11 or 12
15. 13 and 14
16. (RCT or Trial* or randomi* or random* allocat* or random* assign* or (control* adj1 Intervention*) or (treatment* adj1 control*) or evaluat* study or control group* or control condition* or comparison group* or comparison condition* or time series or (before adj1 after) or pre post or longitudinal or repeated measures or effect size* or comparative effective* or experiment* or pre-experiment* or difference in difference* or instrumental variable* or Propensity score or (control* adj1 treat*) or wait* list or quasi ex* or quasiexperiment* or matched control or matched comparison).ti.
17. (RCT or Trial* or randomi* or random* allocat* or random* assign* or (control* adj1 Intervention*) or (treatment* adj1 control*) or evaluat* study or control group* or control condition* or comparison group* or comparison condition* or time series or (before adj1 after) or pre post or longitudinal or repeated measures or effect size* or comparative effective* or experiment* or pre-experiment* or difference in difference* or instrumental variable* or Propensity score or (control* adj1 treat*) or wait* list or quasi ex* or quasiexperiment* or matched control or matched comparison).ab
18. Clinical Trial or Empirical Study or Experimental Replication or Followup Study or Longitudinal Study or Prospective Study or Retrospective Study or Quantitative Study or Treatment Outcome or Field Study or Mathematical Modeling).mp.
19. 16 or 17 or 18
20. 15 and 19

Cinahl via EBSCO

21. (MH "Foster Home Care") OR (MH "Foster Parents") OR (MH "Child, Foster")
22. (MH "Child Welfare+")
23. TI foster n2 child* OR TI foster n2 youth OR TI foster n2 parent* OR TI foster n2 care* OR TI foster n2 home
24. AB foster n2 child* OR AB foster n2 youth OR AB foster n2 parent* OR AB foster n2 care* OR AB foster n2 home
25. (TI (extend* n2 care or foster*)) OR (AB (extend* n2 care or foster*))
26. (TI (leav* n2 care or foster*)) OR (AB (leav* n2 care or foster*))
27. (TI (transit* n2 care or foster*)) OR (AB (transit* n2 care or foster*))
28. (TI (ag* out n2 care or foster*)) OR (AB (ag* out n2 care or foster*))
29. 1 OR 2 OR 3 OR 4
30. 5 OR 6 or 7 or 8
31. 9 AND 10
32. (MH "Randomized Controlled Trials") OR (MH "Clinical Trials")
33. (MH "Evaluation" OR ("MH Program Evaluation"))
34. TI "Randomized Controlled Trials" OR TI "Clinical Trials"
35. (MH "Quasi-Experimental Studies+")

36. (MH "Quasi-Experimental Studies") OR (MH "Nonequivalent Control Group") OR (MH "Time Series") OR (MH "Repeated Measures") OR (MH "Retrospective Design") OR (MH "Time and Motion Studies")
37. (quasi-experiment* OR quasiexperiment* OR "propensity score*" OR "control* group*" OR "control condition*" OR "treatment group*" OR "comparison group*" OR "wait-list*" OR "waiting list*" OR "intervention group*" OR "experimental group*" OR "matched control*" OR "matched groups" OR "matched comparison" OR "experimental trial" OR "experimental design" OR "experimental method*" OR "experimental stud*" OR "experimental evaluation" OR "experimental test*" OR "experimental assessment" OR "comparison sample" OR "propensity matched" OR "control sample" OR "control subject*" OR "intervention sample" OR OR "no treatment group" OR "nontreatment control" OR "pseudo experimental" OR "pseudo randomi?ed" OR "quasi-RCT" OR "quasi-randomi?ed" OR "compared with control*" OR "compared to control*" OR "compared to a control*" OR "non-randomi?ed controlled stud*" OR "nonrandom* assign*")
38. 12 or 13 or 14 or 15 or 16 or 17
39. 11 and 18

ERIC via Proquest

1. MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Child Safety") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Child Welfare") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Foster Care")
2. ti(foster N/2 child*) OR ti(foster N/2 parent*) OR ti(foster N/2 care*) OR ti(foster N/2 home*)) OR (ab(foster N/2 child*) OR ab(foster N/2 parent*) OR ab(foster N/2 care*) OR ab(foster N/2 home))
3. MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Independent living") OR MAIN SUBJECT.EXACT("Daily living") OR ((extend* NEAR/2 (care OR foster*)) OR (leav* NEAR/2 (care OR foster*)) OR (transit* NEAR/2 (care OR foster*)) OR (ag* out NEAR/2 (care OR foster*))) OR su("Transitional programs")
4. S1 OR S2
5. S3 AND S4
6. RCT OR Trial* OR randomi* OR "random* allocat*" OR "random* assign*" OR (control* n/1 intervention*) OR (treatment* n/1 control*) OR "evaluat* study" OR "control group*" OR "control condition*" OR "comparison group*" OR "comparison condition*" OR "time series" OR "before after") OR ("pre post" OR longitudinal OR "repeated measures" OR "effect size*" OR "comparative effective*" OR experiment* OR pre-experiment* OR "difference?in?difference*" OR "instrumental variable*" OR "propensity score*" OR (control* n/1 treat*) OR "wait* list" OR "quasi ex*" or quasiexperiment* OR "matched control" OR "matched comparison"
7. (MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Control Groups") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Matched Groups") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Quasiexperimental Design") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Randomized Controlled Trials") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Program Evaluation") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Outcomes of Treatment") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Medical Care Evaluation") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Replication (Evaluation)") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Evaluation Research") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Scientific Research") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Therapy") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Cost Effectiveness") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Medical Evaluation") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Program Effectiveness") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Outcome Measures") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Experimental Groups") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Experimental Programs") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Data Analysis") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Comparative Analysis") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Intervention"))
8. S6 OR S7

9. S5 AND S8

PsycINFO via Ovid

1. foster care/ or child welfare/ or foster children/ or foster parents/ or protective services/
2. (foster adj2 (youth or child* or care)).ti.
3. (foster adj2 (youth or child* or care)).ab.
4. independent living programs/
5. independent living.ti.
6. independent living.ab.
7. self-care skills/
8. self-determination/
9. (extend* adj2 (care or foster* or out of home care or OOHC or looked after)).mp.
10. (leav* adj2 (care or foster* or out of home care or OOHC or looked after)).mp.
11. (transit* adj2 (care or foster* or out of home care or OOHC or looked after)).mp.
12. (ag* out adj2 (care or foster* or out of home care or OOHC or looked after)).mp.
13. (emancipat* adj2 (care or foster* or out of home care or OOHC or looked after)).mp
14. 1 or 2 or 3
15. 4 or 5 or 6 or 7 or 8 or 9 or 10 or 11 or 12 or 13
16. 14 and 15
17. (Clinical Trial or Empirical Study or Experimental Replication or Followup Study or Longitudinal Study or Prospective Study or Retrospective Study or Quantitative Study or Treatment Outcome or Field Study or Mathematical Modeling).md
18. (RCT or Trial* or randomi* or random* allocat* or random* assign* or (control* adj1 Intervention*) or (treatment* adj1 control*) or evaluat* study or control group* or control condition* or comparison group* or comparison condition* or time series or (before adj1 after) or pre post or longitudinal or repeated measures or effect size* or comparative effective* or experiment* or pre-experiment* or difference in difference* or instrumental variable* or propensity score or (control* adj1 treat*) or wait* list or quasi ex* or quasiexperiment* or matched control or matched comparison).ti.
19. (RCT or Trial* or randomi* or random* allocat* or random* assign* or (control* adj1 Intervention*) or (treatment* adj1 control*) or evaluat* study or control group* or control condition* or comparison group* or comparison condition* or time series or (before adj1 after) or pre post or longitudinal or repeated measures or effect size* or comparative effective* or experiment* or pre-experiment* or difference in difference* or instrumental variable* or propensity score or (control* adj1 treat*) or wait* list or quasi ex* or quasiexperiment* or matched control or matched comparison).ab.
20. 17 or 18 or 19
21. 16 and 20

MEDLINE via Ovid

1. exp Foster Home Care/or exp Child Welfare/ or exp Child, Foster/ or foster care.mp
2. child protective services.mp or Child protective services/
3. (foster adj2 (youth or child* or care)).ti
4. (foster adj2 (youth or child* or care)).ab
5. exp Independent living/ or exp self care/ or exp self-neglect/ or exp social participation
6. independent living.ti
7. independent living.ab
8. (extend* adj2 (care or foster* or out of home care or OOHC or looked after)).mp
9. (leav* adj2 (care or foster* or out of home care or OOHC or looked after)).mp.
10. (transit* adj2 (care or foster* or out of home care or OOHC or looked after)).mp.
11. (ag* out adj2 (care or foster* or out of home care or OOHC or looked after)).mp
12. (emancipat* adj2 (care or foster* or out of home care or OOHC or looked after)).mp
13. 1 or 2 or 3 or 4
14. 5 or 6 or 7 or 8 or 9 or 10 or 11 or 12

15. 13 and 14
16. (RCT or Trial* or randomi* or random* allocat* or random* assign* or (control* adj1 Intervention*) or (treatment* adj1 control*) or evaluat* study or control group* or control condition* or comparison group* or comparison condition* or time series or (before adj1 after) or pre post or longitudinal or repeated measures or effect size* or comparative effective* or experiment* or pre-experiment* or difference in difference* or instrumental variable* or Propensity score or (control* adj1 treat*) or wait* list or quasi ex* or quasiexperiment* or matched control or matched comparison).ti.
17. (RCT or Trial* or randomi* or random* allocat* or random* assign* or (control* adj1 Intervention*) or (treatment* adj1 control*) or evaluat* study or control group* or control condition* or comparison group* or comparison condition* or time series or (before adj1 after) or pre post or longitudinal or repeated measures or effect size* or comparative effective* or experiment* or pre-experiment* or difference in difference* or instrumental variable* or propensity score or (control* adj1 treat*) or wait* list or quasi ex* or quasiexperiment* or matched control or matched comparison).ab
18. clinical trial/ or observational study/ or comparative study/ or evaluation study/
19. case-control studies/ or cohort studies/ or follow-up studies/ or longitudinal studies/ or prospective studies/ or retrospective studies/ or controlled before-after studies/ or cross-sectional studies/ or historically controlled study/ or interrupted time series analysis/ or feasibility studies/
20. 16 or 17 or 18 or 19
21. 15 and 20

EMBASE

1. foster care/ or foster child/
2. child welfare/ or child protection
3. (foster adj2 (youth or child* or care)).ti.
4. (foster adj2 (youth or child* or care)).ab.
5. independent living/ or independent living program.mp.
6. independent living.ti.
7. independent living.ab.
8. (extend* adj2 (care or foster* or out of home care or OOHC or looked after)).mp.
9. (leav* adj2 (care or foster* or out of home care or OOHC or looked after)).mp.
10. (transit* adj2 (care or foster* or out of home care or OOHC or looked after)).mp.
11. (ag* out adj2 (care or foster* or out of home care or OOHC or looked after)).mp.
12. (emancipat* adj2 (care or foster* or out of home care or OOHC or looked after)).mp
13. self care/ or self care skills.mp.
14. 1 or 2 or 3 or 4
15. 5 or 6 or 7 or 8 or 9 or 10 or 11 or 12 or 13
16. 14 and 15
17. (RCT or Trial* or randomi* or random* allocat* or random* assign* or (control* adj1 Intervention*) or (treatment* adj1 control*) or evaluat* study or control group* or control condition* or comparison group* or comparison condition* or time series or (before adj1 after) or pre post or longitudinal or repeated measures or effect size* or comparative effective* or experiment* or pre-experiment* or difference in difference* or instrumental variable* or propensity score or (control* adj1 treat*) or wait* list or quasi ex* or quasiexperiment* or matched control or matched comparison).ti.
18. (RCT or Trial* or randomi* or random* allocat* or random* assign* or (control* adj1 Intervention*) or (treatment* adj1 control*) or evaluat* study or control group* or control condition* or comparison group* or comparison condition* or time series or (before adj1 after) or pre post or longitudinal or repeated measures or effect size* or comparative effective* or experiment* or pre-experiment* or difference in difference* or instrumental variable* or propensity score or (control* adj1 treat*) or wait* list or quasi ex* or quasiexperiment* or matched control or matched comparison).ab
19. clinical study/ or case control study/ or intervention study/ or longitudinal study/ or major clinical study/ or prospective study/ or retrospective study/ or comparative study/ or controlled study/ or experimental study/ or feasibility study/ or observational

- study/ or quasi experimental study/ or replication study/ or cross-sectional study/ or controlled clinical trial/ or pretest posttest control group design/ or static group comparison/ or cross-sectional study/ or outcome assessment/
20. 17 or 18 or 19
21. 16 and 20

Sociological Abstracts

1. SU.EXACT.EXPLODE("Foster Children") OR SU.EXACT("Child Welfare Services") OR SU.EXACT.EXPLODE("Foster Care") OR SU.EXACT("Surrogate Parents")
2. (ti(foster N/2 child*) OR ti(foster N/2 parent*) OR ti(foster N/2 care*) OR ti(foster N/2 home*)) OR (ab(foster N/2 child*) OR ab(foster N/2 parent*) OR ab(foster N/2 care*) OR ab(foster N/2 home*))
3. S1 OR S2
4. MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Self Care") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Deinstitutionalization") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT.EXPLODE("Independent Living") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Independence")
5. (extend* NEAR/2 (care or foster*))
6. (leav* NEAR/2 (care OR foster*))
7. (transit* NEAR/2 (care OR foster*))
8. (ag* out NEAR/2 (care OR foster*))
9. S4 OR S5 OR S6 OR S7 OR S8
10. S3 AND S9
11. MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Empirical Methods") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Treatment") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Quantitative Methods") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Evaluation") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Statistical Significance") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Treatment Programs") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Placebo Effect") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Research Methodology") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Treatment Outcomes") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Effectiveness") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("RANDOMNESS")
12. (quasi-experimental OR quasi-experiment or quasiexperiment OR "propensity score" OR "control group*" OR "control condition*" OR "treatment group*" OR "comparison group*" OR "wait-list*" OR "waiting list*" OR "intervention group*" OR "experimental group*" OR "matched control" OR "matched group*" OR "matched comparison" OR "experimental trial" OR "experimental design" OR "experimental method*" OR "experimental stud*" OR "experimental evaluation" OR "experimental test*" OR "experimental assessment" OR "comparison sample" OR "propensity matched" OR "control sample" OR "control subject*" OR "intervention sample" OR "no treatment group" OR "nontreatment control" OR "pseudo experimental" OR "pseudo randomi?ed" OR "quasi-RCT" OR "quasi-randomi?ed" OR "compared with control*" OR "compared to control*" OR "compared to a control*" OR "non-randomi?ed controlled stud*" OR "nonrandomly assigned")
13. ti((RCT OR Trial* OR randomi* OR "random* allocat*" OR "random* assign*" OR (control* n/1 intervention*) OR (treatment* n/1 control*) OR "evaluat* study" OR "control group*" OR "control condition*" OR "comparison group*" OR "comparison condition*" OR "time series" OR "before after") OR ("pre post" OR longitudinal OR "repeated measures" OR "effect size*" OR "comparative effective*" OR experiment* OR pre-experiment* OR "difference in difference*" OR "instrumental variable*" OR "propensity score" OR (control* n/1 treat*) OR "wait* list" OR "quasi ex*" OR quasiexperiment* OR "matched control" OR "matched comparison"))
14. ab((RCT OR Trial* OR randomi* OR "random* allocat*" OR "random* assign*" OR (control* n/1 intervention*) OR (treatment* n/1 control*) OR "evaluat* study" OR "control group*" OR "control condition*" OR "comparison group*" OR "comparison condition*" OR "time series" OR "before after") OR ("pre post" OR longitudinal OR "repeated measures" OR "effect size*" OR "comparative effective*" OR experiment*

- OR pre-experiment* OR "difference in difference*" OR "instrumental variable*" OR "propensity score" OR (control* n/1 treat*) OR "wait* list" OR quasi ex* OR quasiexperiment* OR "matched control" OR "matched comparison"))
15. S11 OR S12 OR S13 OR S14
16. S10 AND S15

Social Services Abstracts

1. SU.EXACT.EXPLODE("Foster Children") OR SU.EXACT("Child Welfare Services") OR SU.EXACT.EXPLODE("Foster Care") OR SU.EXACT("Surrogate Parents")
2. (ti(foster N/2 child*) OR ti(foster N/2 parent*) OR ti(foster N/2 care*) OR ti(foster N/2 home*)) OR (ab(foster N/2 child*) OR ab(foster N/2 parent*) OR ab(foster N/2 care*) OR ab(foster N/2 home*))
3. S1 OR S2
4. MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Self Care") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Deinstitutionalization") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT.EXPLODE("Independent Living") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Independence")
5. (extend* NEAR/2 (care or foster*))
6. (leav* NEAR/2 (care OR foster*))
7. (transit* NEAR/2 (care OR foster*))
8. (ag* out NEAR/2 (care OR foster*))
9. S4 OR S5 OR S6 OR S7 OR S8
10. S3 AND S9
11. MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Empirical Methods") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Treatment") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Quantitative Methods") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Evaluation") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Statistical Significance") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Treatment Programs") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Placebo Effect") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Research Methodology") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Treatment Outcomes") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Effectiveness") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("RANDOMNESS")
12. (quasi-experimental* OR quasi-experiment OR quasiexperiment OR "propensity score*" OR "control* group*" OR "control condition*" OR "treatment group*" OR "comparison group*" OR "wait-list*" OR "waiting list*" OR "intervention group*" OR "experimental group*" OR "matched control*" OR "matched groups" OR "matched comparison" OR "experimental trial" OR "experimental design" OR "experimental method*" OR "experimental stud*" OR "experimental evaluation" OR "experimental test*" OR "experimental assessment" OR "comparison sample" OR "propensity matched" OR "control sample" OR "control subject*" OR "intervention sample" OR "no treatment group" OR "nontreatment control" OR "pseudo experimental" OR "pseudo randomi?ed" OR quasi-RCT OR quasi-randomi?ed OR "compared with control*" OR "compared to control*" OR "compared to a control*" OR "non-randomi?ed controlled stud*" OR "nonrandomly assigned")
13. ti((RCT OR Trial* OR randomi* OR "random* allocat*" OR "random* assign*" OR (control* n/1 Intervention*) OR (treatment* n/1 control*) OR "evaluat* study" OR "control group*" OR "control condition*" OR "comparison group*" OR "comparison condition*" OR "time series" OR "before after") OR ("pre post" OR longitudinal OR "repeated measures" OR "effect size*" OR comparative effective* OR experiment* OR pre-experiment* OR "difference in difference*" OR "instrumental variable*" OR "propensity score" OR (control* n/1 treat*) OR "wait* list" OR "quasi ex*" OR quasiexperiment* OR "matched control" OR "matched comparison"))
14. ab((RCT OR Trial* OR randomi* OR "random* allocat*" OR "random* assign*" OR (control* n/1 Intervention*) OR (treatment* n/1 control*) OR "evaluat* study" OR "control group*" OR "control condition*" OR "comparison group*" OR "comparison condition*" OR "time series" OR "before after") OR ("pre post" OR longitudinal OR repeated measures OR effect size* OR comparative effective* OR experiment* OR

- pre-experiment* OR "difference in difference*" OR "instrumental variable*" OR "propensity score" OR (control* n/1 treat*) OR "wait* list" OR "quasi ex*" or quasiexperiment* OR "matched control" OR "matched comparison"))
15. S11 OR S12 OR S13 OR S14
 16. S10 AND S15

SocIndex via EBSCO

1. ((DE "FOSTER home care") OR (DE "FOSTER mothers") OR (DE "FOSTER parents") OR (DE "FOSTER children") OR (DE "FOSTER grandparents") OR (DE "CHILD protection services"))
2. TI foster n2 child* OR TI foster n2 youth OR TI foster n2 parent* OR TI foster n2 care* OR TI foster n2 home OR TI "foster famil*" OR TI "fostering orphan*" OR TI "looked after children" OR TI "out of home care" OR TI "out of home placement" OR TI "substitute care" OR TI "looked after youth"
3. AB foster n2 child* OR AB foster n2 youth OR AB foster n2 parent* OR AB foster n2 care* OR AB foster n2 home OR AB "foster famil*" OR AB "fostering orphan*" OR AB "looked after children" OR AB "out of home care" OR AB "out of home placement" OR AB "substitute care" OR AB "looked after youth"
4. (extend* n2 (care or foster*))
5. (leav* n2 (care or foster*))
6. (transit* n2 (care or foster*))
7. (ag* out n2 (care or foster*))
8. DE "LIFE skills"
9. 1 or 2 or 3
10. 4 or 5 or 6 or 7 or 8
11. 9 and 10
12. DE "CLINICAL trials" OR DE "RANDOMIZED controlled trials" OR DE "OUTCOME assessment (Social services)" OR DE "SOCIAL services -- Evaluation" OR DE "FOLLOW-up studies (Medicine)" OR DE "PLACEBOS (Medicine)" OR DE "BLIND experiment" OR placebo* OR random* OR "comparative stud*" OR clinical NEAR/3 trial* OR research NEAR/3 design OR evaluat* NEAR/3 stud* OR prospectiv* NEAR/3 stud* OR (singl* OR doubl* OR trebl* OR tripl*) NEAR/3 (blind* OR mask*)
13. TI cohort* OR AB cohort* OR TI case-control* OR AB case-control* OR TI cross-section* OR AB cross-section* OR TI comparative* OR AB comparative* OR TI "validation stud*" OR AB "validation stud*" OR TI "evaluation stud*" OR AB "evaluation stud*" OR TI random* OR TI longitudinal* OR AB longitudinal* OR TI follow-up OR AB follow-up OR TI prospective OR AB prospective OR TI retrospective OR AB retrospective OR TI experimental OR AB experimental OR AB random*
14. (quasi-experimental OR quasi-experiment OR quasiexperiment* OR "propensity score*" OR "control group*" OR "control condition*" OR "treatment group*" OR "wait-list*" OR "waiting list*" OR "intervention group*" OR "experimental group*" OR "matched control" OR "matched groups" OR "matched comparison" OR "experimental trial" OR "experimental design" OR "experimental method*" OR "experimental stud*" OR "experimental evaluation" OR "experimental test*" OR "experimental assessment" OR "comparison sample" OR "propensity matched" OR "control sample" OR "control subject*" OR "intervention sample" OR "no treatment group" OR "nontreatment control" OR "pseudo experimental" OR "pseudo randomi?ed" OR "quasi-RCT" OR "quasi-randomi?ed" OR "compared with control*" OR "compared to control*" OR "compared to a control*" OR "non-randomized controlled stud*" OR "nonrandomly assigned")
15. 13 or 14 or 15
16. 12 and 16

NHS Economic Evaluation Database

1. Child welfare/
2. (foster adj2 (youth or child* or care)).mp.
3. independent living.ti
4. self Care/
5. (extend* adj2 (care or foster* or out of home care or OOHC or looked after)).mp.
6. (leav* adj2 (care or foster* or out of home care or OOHC or looked after)).mp.
7. (transit* adj2 (care or foster* or out of home care or OOHC or looked after)).mp.
8. (ag* out adj2 (care or foster* or out of home care or OOHC or looked after)).mp.
9. (empancipat* adj2 (care or foster* or out of home care or OOHC or looked after)).mp
10. 1 or 2
11. 3 or 4 or 5 or 6 or 7 or 8 or 9
12. 10 and 11

Health Technology Assessment

1. Foster Home Care/
2. Child Welfare/
3. (foster adj2 (youth or child or care)).mp
4. independent living.mp
5. (extend* adj2 (care or foster* or out of home care or OOHC or looked after)).mp.
6. (leav* adj2 (care or foster* or out of home care or OOHC or looked after)).mp.
7. (transit* adj2 (care or foster* or out of home care or OOHC or looked after)).mp.
8. (ag* out adj2 (care or foster* or out of home care or OOHC or looked after)).mp.
9. (empancipat* adj2 (care or foster* or out of home care or OOHC or looked after)).mp
10. self care/
11. 1 or 2 or 3
12. 4 or 5 or 6 or 7 or 8 or 9 or 10
13. 11 and 12