

**Keeping siblings together improves each child's educational competence and reduces behavioral issues in the classroom.**

- Sabrina M. Richardson & Tuppett Yates, *Siblings in Foster Care: A Relational Path to Resilience for Emancipated Foster Youth*, 47 *Child. & Youth Svcs. Rev.* 378 (2014), <https://adlab.ucr.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Richardson-Yates-2014.pdf>

Using data from 170 recently emancipated youth from the California foster care system between the ages of 17 and 21, this study investigates the correlation between sibling co-placements during foster care with subsequent educational and occupational competence, housing quality, relational adjustment, and civic engagement. It analyzes these outcomes in relation to the proportion of time which a child had spent placed with, versus separated from, his or her siblings. Evaluation of educational outcomes were based on a youth's attained level of education, GPA, and school conduct, as well as stated educational values and aspirations. Low levels of competence were marked by dropping out without a diploma and with no plans to pursue further education. Moderate levels of competence were marked by a diploma or GED and clear plans to pursue post-secondary education or training. And the highest levels of competence were marked by attendance and success at community college or a four-year university. The study found that "[s]ibling co-placement [was] uniquely associated with higher educational competence," especially for male children. *Id.* at 383.

- Brianne Kothari et al., *A Longitudinal Analysis of School Discipline Events Among Youth in Foster Care*, 93 *Child. & Youth Svcs. Rev.* 117 (2018), <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8204670/pdf/nihms-1597058.pdf>

This paper discusses a study of school discipline-related problems for students in foster care, evaluating which factors make a student more likely to be disciplined in school. Looking at 315 youth within the Oregon Department of Education, the study found that sibling separation is directly linked to an increase in disruptive behaviors at school, resulting in higher school discipline events for separated siblings. Specifically, the study concluded that "living apart from one's sibling increased the odds of youth experiencing school discipline events by [greater than] 65%." *Id.* at 12. Children in foster care are, on average, three times more likely than their peers to experience discipline events in school. The paper notes that these discipline events can have larger repercussions on a student's education, including dropping out of school, repeating a grade, and becoming engaged in delinquent and criminal behavior. As a result, finding ways to decrease the incidence of disciplinary events that students in foster care experience is important to the students' educational outcomes.

- Rebecca L. Hegar & James A. Rosenthal, *Foster Children Placed with or Separated from Siblings: Outcomes Based on a National Sample*, 33 *Child. & Youth Svcs. Rev.* 1245 (2011), <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0190740911000661?via%3Dihub>

This paper discusses a study of children in foster care who have siblings, drawing data from a large, national U.S. database. Using three categories of sibling placement (with all siblings, with some siblings, with no siblings), the study looks at school performance and

incidence of behavioral problems, as reported by foster parents, teachers, and the children themselves. The largest impact of sibling placement noted is school performance as rated by teachers. "School performance of children placed with all siblings exceeded" the performance both of children placed alone and those placed with only some siblings. *Id.* at 1250. This study improved on past research by taking a "child-centered" definition of siblings, in which all those whom a child considered to be their siblings were counted as such. It also measured the effect of partial sibling separation, noting that academic performance was highest for children placed with all of their siblings.