



Over Half of Americans Consider Providing Foster Care but Majority Unsure if Eligible, Kidsave-Gallup Study Finds

Black Americans Show More Foster Care Knowledge, Adoption Engagement and Involvement in Programs with Children in Foster Care than Americans of Other Racial and Ethnic Backgrounds.

Washington, D.C. — November 16, 2023 — In a new report, *Americans' Views of U.S. Foster Care: Elevating Black Americans' Perspectives and Experiences*, Kidsave and Gallup examine how the American public — especially Black Americans — view the foster care system and adoption from foster care. The findings show that almost two-thirds of the population know little (43%) or nothing (20%) about the U.S. foster care system, and just one in four (27%) have positive views about the system. The study aims to identify barriers to mentoring, fostering and adoption, with a focus on Black foster youth, to help increase the number of potential foster and adoptive parents.

Adults who trust that the foster care system gives equal treatment to children regardless of their race and ethnicity are much more likely to also have a positive or very positive perception of the system overall (46%), compared to adults who disagree the system provides equal treatment (14%). Two-thirds (68%) of Americans don't know if they are eligible to provide foster care, while 24% say they know they are eligible.

The study also investigates barriers to providing foster care. Forty-five percent of the population say that a major obstacle to fostering is not having enough training and resources for them to feel prepared. Four in ten Americans (44%) say concern about the child's emotional and behavioral challenges is another major barrier to providing foster care, followed by changes a potential caregiver would have to make to their home or living situation for both fostering (42%) and adopting from foster care (41%). One in four Black Americans (25%) and one in five Hispanic Americans see racial or ethnic discrimination as a major barrier to considering foster care (21%) or adoption (20%).

"This first-of-its-kind study on the barriers and perceptions of Americans, and Black American adults in particular, will include significant culturally responsive data to help inform policy and practice recommendations in the foster care system on a nationwide and local level," said Randi Thompson, CEO and co-founder of Kidsave. "We hope Kidsave, through the initiative of The EMBRACE Project, will help to uncover the issue of overrepresentation of Black foster youth in America, start significant conversations, and create partnerships with governments, organizations and companies to find adoptive homes or mentors for our most marginalized populations."

Participating in a program to connect with children in foster care was shown to increase the odds of also adopting from foster care by seven times, even among those who have never fostered before. Sixteen percent of Black Americans have participated in a program to work with children in foster care, compared to the national rate of 11%.

Other key findings from the report that shed light on Black Americans' experiences include:

- Forty-six percent of Black Americans say they know some or a lot about foster care, compared to just 37% of Americans overall.
- One in four Black adults have thought a lot about adopting from foster care (26%), compared to about one in six Americans overall (18%).
- Black Americans report lower levels of confidence in key aspects of the U.S. foster care system.
 - Seven in 10 agree the foster care system could do more to help biological families stay together (71%), compared to 59% of all adults.
 - Black Americans are the least likely to agree that the foster care system supports children in need of care regardless of the child’s racial or ethnic background (29%) compared to the national average (35%).

“Understanding public perceptions and attitudes on foster care and adoption is pivotal to overcoming barriers and improving the pool of foster and adoptive parents for children in need,” said Camille Lloyd, Director of Gallup Center on Black Voices. “The findings underscore that familiarity with the system, greater knowledge of foster care and financial resources potentially enhance support for prospective caregivers, and this research is a necessary and important step toward informing those efforts.”

To view the full study, please see the [**Americans’ Views of U.S. Foster Care**](#) report.

About Kidsave

Kidsave is a children’s charity dedicated to helping older kids in foster care — who are often overlooked and forgotten by society — be seen, find family and thrive. For 25 years, Kidsave has used its innovative programs in the U.S. and around the world to help older kids (ages 9-18) in foster care and orphanages find lasting connections with mentors, hosts and adoptive families.

About Gallup

Gallup delivers analytics and advice to help leaders and organizations solve their most pressing problems. Combining more than 80 years of experience with its global reach, Gallup knows more about the attitudes and behaviors of employees, customers, students and citizens than any other organization in the world.

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