

Project C.A.R.E.S.

Culturally Affirming and Responsive Education Specialist



CLD children in foster care with disabilities experience success in supportive and healthy environments when multiple professionals, work together with shared strategies and cultural competency. Project CARES is an interdisciplinary collaborative designed to recruit, retain, and prepare 24 students from underrepresented groups in school psychology, school counseling, and school social work programs as highly qualified Culturally Affirming and Responsive Education Specialists (CARES).

Funder: Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs

Dates of Grant: 2012-2017

Begin Date: Summer 2013

Statistics about Foster Youth:

- Over 400,000 children in the U.S. are in foster care and 68% are school-aged
- 60% entering through reports of child abuse or neglect
- California's has 68,000 foster youth, the largest of all the States

These youth experience withering educational outcomes:

- 78% of students in foster care attend low achieving school
- 0-40% receive special education services
- Score 16-20% lower than children not in foster care on the statewide standardized achievement measures
- 46% of students in foster care fail to complete high school
- 35% have experienced four or more school changes and each school move results in a six-month loss of educational progress
- In California, 83% of students in foster care repeat a grade
- 75% are working below grade level
- Only 30% of students in foster care graduate

Children in Foster Care with Disabilities:

- Approximately 30-40% receive special education services
- Often unserved, underserved, overlooked, or ignored
- More likely to be in segregated special education classes and restrictive settings
- Experience delayed or unimplemented IEPs, and have little access to quality mental health services.

Why we do it: Respond to the need to improve outcomes for children in foster care with disabilities from diverse backgrounds.

- How we do it: Interdisciplinary (SP, SC, SSW), CARES Seminars (monthly), Institutes (2/year), CASA Training, Fieldwork, & Coursework
- What we learn: Child welfare system, Academic and Mental Health interventions, advocacy & policy, and interdisciplinary work
- How long is the grant: 2 years
- Recruitment and Student Package:
- Graduate students from the School Psychology, School Counseling and School Social Work Programs at SDSU (3 School Psychology Students, 3 School Counseling Students, and 3 Social Work Students)
- Startup Money (Fall and Summer), Monthly Stipends, Books, Conference Travel, CASA Reimbursement, Technology Allowance

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