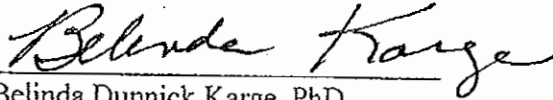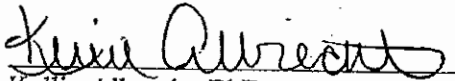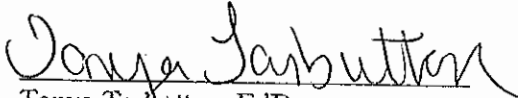# ACCEPTANCE

This dissertation, TEACHER-STUDENT INTERACTION, THE IMPACT IT HAS ON FOSTER YOUTH AND THEIR SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE, was prepared under the direction of the candidate's Dissertation Committee. It is accepted by the committee members in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in the School of Education, Concordia University Irvine.

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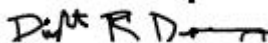Committee Member

The Dissertation Committee, the Dean, and Executive Director of the Doctor of Education Program of the School of Education, as representatives of the faculty, certify that this dissertation has met all standards of excellence and scholarship as determined by the faculty.

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TEACHER-STUDENT INTERACTION, THE IMPACT IT HAS ON FOSTER YOUTH AND

THEIR SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

by

Patricia Krcmar

A Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of
Requirements for the
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Doctor of Education
In
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ABSTRACT

Studies have been conducted on the effects of teacher-student interaction and student achievement. However, there is a need to examine the teacher-student interactions concerning at-risk students specifically the foster youth. This grounded-theory study examines the teacher-student interaction and the effects of social-emotional intelligence on the foster youth through qualitative and quantitative methods using the Foster Student Interaction and Social-Emotional Intelligence survey (FSI&SEI) open-ended questions, interviews, and journals. A Southern California District educates approximately 500 foster students. This high school located in the urban district was chosen because they had the highest number of foster youth. The 15 participants who participated in the study consisted of a site administrator, a counselor, teachers, and foster parents. After collecting, the FSI&ESI seven participants agreed to be interviewed. The overall findings of this study indicate that teacher awareness of who their foster students are, struggles foster students face, and intentional conversations regarding the whole child impact the foster student's social-emotional intelligence as well as their ability to form relationships with teachers.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The primary goal of the education system is to prepare all students to meet their academic requirements and to provide each student with the opportunity for collegiate and career advancement (Conley & McGaughy, 2012; U.S. Department of Education, n.d.). In 2013, the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) established allocating new funds for foster youth to assist in academic and social achievement (California Department of Education, 2016). Research has shown that teacher-student interaction (Pianta, 1999) and social-emotional intelligence (Weissberg, 2016) are critical in achieving both academic and social success. Therefore, it is essential to comprehend the research concerning foster youth with an emphasis on how the teacher-student interaction plays a role in the academic and social-emotional achievement.

Background of the Study

One of the most vulnerable subgroups in this country affected by the achievement gap is foster youth due to unique academic and behavioral needs (Levy et al., 2014). The National Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention (2010) stated, "Educators and policy-makers often say that education starts at home" (p. 1). Unfortunately, some foster youth experienced abuse or neglect at home, which leads to the placement into foster care (Leve et al., 2012). The transition is only one of many hurdles that foster youth must overcome to become successful academically and socially. With help from the government and child welfare agencies, many of these hurdles were limited by implementing different laws and policies (Gustavsson & MacEachron, 2012).

The U.S. Department of Education and the U.S Department of Health and Human Services are providing guidance and support to school districts, and child welfare agencies

regarding the requirements in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) (U.S. Department of

Education, 2016). On June 23, 2016, U.S. Secretary of Education John B. King Jr. stated,

> It is our responsibility to protect all students' right to a high-quality education.
> Children in foster care are among our most vulnerable students. After listening to
> our local partners and stakeholders, working together with the Department of
> Health and Human Services, we have made releasing this guidance a priority so
> that states, school districts and child welfare agencies will have the critical tools
> needed to ensure educational stability for foster youth and to dramatically
> improve their educational outcomes and ultimately give them an equal
> opportunity to succeed in school and beyond in college, career, and life. (U.S.
> Department of Education, 2016, para 3)

Legislation to Support Foster Youth

In addition to the recent implementation of the LCFF education agencies are asked to

focus on the foster youth. The government has been developing guidelines to protect the foster

child (California Department of Education, 2016). The federal government passed the Fostering

Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008. This legislation requires the

educational agencies and the child welfare agencies to collaborate in concentrating on what is

best for the foster student. This act allows students to stay at the current school during home

placement changes and requires prompt school enrollment (U.S. Department of Education,

2016).

The Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997, signed into law by President Clinton was

created to ensure the child's safety while working towards the goal of providing a permanent

home in an efficient manner (Camp, 1997). The foster youth is a group of children considered at

risk. Therefore, the California Child Welfare Council was established through the implementation of the Child Welfare Leadership and Accountability Act of 2006. The council is responsible for improving how the different agencies and the courts communicate and collaborate in regards to the welfare of the foster youth (California Child Welfare Council, 2015).

To further support foster children California passed the Assembly Bill (AB) 490 in 2003 and became active in 2004. The bill passed with the hope that these new guidelines if followed would help create stability and educational opportunities for the foster youth. AB 490 takes into consideration all the different obstacles a student in foster care might face. Students in foster care under the AB 490 can stay in their current school even if the foster placement is out of the school boundaries as long as it is the student's best interest. Schools must also grant access to enrichment and extracurricular activities, services, and academic resources offered to all students. Foster children can experience multiple placements in a single year, and AB 490 mandates schools automatically enroll the student even if registration documents are missing. Educational placement must be based on the best interest of the foster student in the least restrictive setting to support the needs of the student. Due to the circumstances of a student in foster care having to be present at court hearings or court ordered activity the school may not count absences against the student or lower the student's grades. Finally, AB 490 states that education agencies must transfer the student's records within two business days of being notified that the student is transferring (California Foster Youth Education Task Force, 2010).

Foster youth can attend multiple schools during their educational experience and that often causes academic concerns, loss of credits, and delays in graduating (Gustavsson & MacEachron, 2012; Pears, Kim, Buchanan, & Fisher, 2015). Students that transferred from one

school had a 44% less chance of graduating (Neiheiser, 2015). To combat this problem, AB 167 was created and passed in October 2009 and took effect in January 2010. AB 167 allows students that transfer into a new high school in the eleventh or twelfth grade to be exempt from district graduation requirements that exceed the state graduation requirements (California Foster Youth Education Task Force, 2010).

Assembly Bill (AB) 854

The Legislature recognized the need for identifying and developing a plan to support the special needs of children living in the foster care system. A high percentage of foster children struggle with academics and therefore drop out of school (National Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention, 2010). It is essential that programs, which support the unique needs of foster children, are funded adequately to improve the likelihood of academic and social success (Neiheiser, 2015). The legislation passed amendments to the AB 854 in 2015 per the new stipulations of the LCFF due to the need for funding (California Legislative Information, 2015). Below are the new provisions of the AB 854, which commenced in the 2015-2016 fiscal year and every year after that. The bill details the specific responsibilities of the Superintendent as well as the education agencies in creating a Foster Youth Services Coordinating Program that support positive learning outcomes for the foster youth (California Legislative Information, 2015):

> As part of the program, the bill would authorize a county office of education, or
> consortium of county offices of education, to apply to the Superintendent for
> grant funding, to the extent funds are available, to operate an education-based
> foster youth services coordinating program to provide educational support for
> pupils in foster care. (California Legislative Information, 2015 para. 1)

Within the bill, the consortiums would be required to work with the County Offices of Education (California Legislative Information, 2015):

> The bill would require the Superintendent, on or before October 31, 2015, to develop an allocation formula to determine the allocation amounts for which each county office of education or consortium of county offices of education is eligible and, within 30 days, to submit the allocation formula to appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the Legislature for review and to the Department of Finance for approval, as specified. (para. 1)

Before the changes any county office of education or organizations that supported foster youth could apply for a grant from the Superintendent of Public Instruction that would provide funding to help foster youth. Funds were allocated as long as they were available. Now the bill states that, the Superintendent of Public Instruction is to provide a formula in determining the distribution of funds (California Legislative Information, 2015):

> This bill would instead require each foster youth services coordinating program to identify the foster youth educational services coordinator to facilitate the provision of educational support to any pupil in foster care residing or attending school in the county or consortium of counties, as specified. The bill would require each foster youth services coordinating program, as a condition of receiving funding, to develop and implement a foster youth services coordinating plan, as specified, for purposes of establishing guiding principles and protocols to provide supports for foster care pupils aligned with certain population priorities. The bill would require each foster youth services program to establish a local interagency Executive Advisory Council, as provided. (para. 2)

The previous bill stated that, if funding was available a coordinator had to be designated. However, with the current bill, an organization will only receive funding if there is a designated coordinator along with outlining the structure designed to support the foster youth (California Legislative Information, 2015):

> This bill would instead require each county office of education and consortium of county offices of education providing a foster youth services coordinating program to report to the Superintendent, by May 15 of each even-numbered year, any information the Superintendent may require and that is accessible to the foster youth services coordinating program for purposes of preparing the report that would instead be submitted to the appropriate fiscal and policy committees of the Legislature and the Governor by July 1 of each even-numbered year. The bill would require the report to include different information, including aggregate educational outcome data, as specified. (para. 3)

Before the amendments, organizations that supported foster youth had to report to the Superintendent of Public Instruction by January 1 of every even numbered year. The Superintendent would request the necessary information from the organizations needed to communicate with the Legislature and the Governor by February 15 regarding the different services administered by the various agencies. In addition, the Foster Youth Services Coordinating Program will only operate if the funds were provided (California Legislative Information, 2015).

The final amendment eliminated the need for adhering to all the provisions and detailing program effectiveness along with cost effectiveness for the state (California Legislative Information, 2015). Consequently, with the combination of the Adoption Families Act, AB 490,

and the AB 854 the foster youth are beginning to receive the support and attention needed to become successful citizens of society.

Reporting

In 1982, the Voluntary Cooperative Information System (VCIS) was implemented by the Department of Health and Human Services Administration on children, youth and families. The system gathered national data on foster youth, but it had multiple weaknesses. Some of the weaknesses were variations in state reporting periods, discrepancies regarding definitions of terms, and changes in reporting (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2017).

To collect data that is more accurate on foster youth who are placed by the state welfare, the Congress mandated on December 22, 1993 that, the Social Security Act (Section 427) cover the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS). The implementation of AFCARS required individual objectives dealing with the creation of accurate and consistent data by using standard definitions, methodologies, and standards, statewide and national information on characteristics of foster youth and parents, and data on the amount and nature of support from the local, state, and federal foster care programs. The final two objectives provided included statewide and national data on the foster care population and information on the youth and the type of assistance. In addition to collecting accurate and reliable data, the AFCARS was established to discuss policy development and program management at the state level and the federal level (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2017).

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Statement of the Problem

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Currently only half of the youth in foster care graduate high school by age 18 and less than 5% graduate college (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). Also, foster students score between 16 and 20 percentile points below their classmates (National Data Archive on Child

Abuse and Neglect, 2017). Considering the statistics on foster youth and their academic success, the question becomes how teachers can influence the trajectory for foster students.

Social-emotional success is another struggle foster children encounter. Twenty-four percent of foster students have either been suspended or expelled from school, which is three times more than their peers (Scherr, 2007). A study conducted by Vacca (2008) reported that 25% of foster children struggle with post-traumatic stress syndrome (PTSS). Understanding the social-emotional needs of foster children is a critical step in improving their social-emotional success.

Social-emotional intelligence is a significant factor in student academic and overall success (Rimm-kaufman & Chiu, 2007; Schonfeld et al., 2015; Weissberg, 2016). Studies have been done on different social and emotional learning programs and the necessity for professional development (Hagelskamp, Brackett, Rivers, & Salovey, 2013; Kumar, Rose, & Subramaniam, 2008; Lantieri & Nambiar, 2012; Rimm-Kaufman & Chiu, 2007). However, little research has been done on how teachers can utilize social-emotional intelligence to support academic and social success in the foster youth.

Along with social-emotional intelligence, the development of a healthy attachment allows students to be successful in school (Weissberg, 2016). Sabol and Pianta (2012) argued that a positive relationship with a teacher could help at-risk students learn how to form healthy attachments. Considering the possible influence that a teacher has on the students and the diversity of the student population within the classroom, the research question is asked how does the teacher-student relationship affect the student and how does this relationship influence the social-emotional intelligence of the student?

Purpose of the Study

In a presidential proclamation, President Barack Obama (April 28, 2016) stated from the White House, "The success of our country tomorrow depends on the well-being of our children today. . . Foster youth deserve the security and strong support structures they need to achieve their dreams" (para. 1). Educators are a vital part of the support structure necessary for the foster youth to reach their goals.

A significant amount of research on the teacher-student relationship has been conducted (Driscoll, Wang, Mashburn, & Pianta, 2011; Garbacz, Zychinski, Feuer, Carter, & Budd, 2014; Hamre & Pianta, 2006; Pianta, 1999; Sabol & Pianta, 2012). These studies have described the need for positive teacher-student relationships and the impact it has on academic success. There has been little research on how this relationship promotes social-emotional intelligence within foster youth.

A participant in the study declared, "It is a group of our students that by and large have needs that surpass the typical student and it is our job to serve the needs of all students." Therefore, the purpose of this study is to understand how attachments, social-emotional intelligence, and teacher-student relationships intertwine to support academic and social success in foster youth.

Significance of the Study

Josh Shipp (March 12, 2018, retrieved from: https://joshshipp.com/one-caring-adult/), an acclaimed speaker about youth empowerment, who grew up in the foster care system, proposed, "Every kid is one caring adult away from being a success story." The findings of this study will affect society, considering foster youth are at a greater risk of homelessness and serving judicial time (Dworsky, Napolitano, & Courtney, 2013; Ryan, Hernandez, & Herz, 2007; Richards,

2014). Therefore, the demand for a deeper understanding of the unique needs of foster youth in education is paramount. Sabol and Pianta (2012) stated that having at least one caring adult in a child's life is essential in protecting at-risk children. For many foster children that one caring adult is their teacher. This study addresses the important issue of teacher-student interaction and the need for schools to support the foster youth in their development of social-emotional intelligence. Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) lays the foundation for learning and increases one's ability to succeed not only in school but also in life (Weissberg, 2016). This study defines how a teacher advances the foster youth's social-emotional intelligence through his or her interactions with the student.

The Researcher

The researcher has been in elementary education for the past 16 years and 15 of which she worked at different schools with diverse populations and different needs. During those 15 years, the researcher was a teacher leader, and she was a sponsor of a service organization that supported foster youth. Beginning in 2004, the researcher taught in the district. During this time, the researcher has served as a grade level teacher and as a Teacher on Special Assignment assisting in the professional development of elementary teachers in the area of mathematics. Through the duration of the employment, the researcher has worked at multiple schools cultivating relationships with administrators and colleagues.

Definition of Terms

The definitions below provide clarity of the following terms used throughout the study:

Attachment Theory: The theory describes the necessity to form emotional and physical attachments to another individual for a person to take risks, grow, and develop as a person. John Bowlby coined the term Attachment Theory in the 1960s. Bowlby's studies led him to conclude

that for an infant or child to grow up mentally healthy they need to experience a warm, intimate, and continuous relationship with the mother (Bretherton, 1992).

Common Core State Standards (CCSS): The CCSS are the academic standards in Mathematics and English Language Arts that outline what a student should learn by the end of each grade level. The standards provided the opportunity for all students to graduate from high school with the ability to be college and career ready. The CCSS were created in 2009 by a group of educators comprised of school chiefs, governors, administrators, and teachers that all recognized the need for clear, consistent, and high-quality standards for all the states (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2017).

Emotional Intelligence (EQ): Bradberry and Greaves (2009) stated that, "Emotional Intelligence (EQ) is the ability to recognize and understand emotions in yourself and others, and your ability to use this awareness to manage your behaviors and relationships" (p. 17). EQ affects how individuals manage behavior, maneuver through social situations, and make personal decisions that lead to positive results. EQ unlike one's Intelligence Quotient (IQ) is a skill learned throughout life. Although there is a growing focus on EQ, there is still a global deficit in the understanding and awareness of one's emotions (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009).

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA): President Barack Obama signed ESSA into law on December 10, 2015. ESSA allows states to establish goals that address academic proficiency, English-language proficiency, and graduation rates as well as develop accountability programs that monitor the goals (Klien, 2016). ESSA includes requirements that will help promote success for students and schools. The law (a) establishes equity by upholding critical protections for high-need and disadvantaged students, (b) requires districts to use high academic standards, (c) promotes communication to educators, students, and communities using annual assessments, (d)

increases access to preschool, and (e) accountability for the low-performing schools (U.S.

Department of Education, 2017).

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA): The FERPA is a federal law that

includes all schools that receive funding from the U.S. Department of Education that protects the

privacy and rights of student education records (U.S. Department of Education, 2015).

Foster Youth: Foster youth are *c*hildren placed in the foster care system because their

biological parents are either unable or unwilling to parent (Neiheiser, 2015). There are

approximately more than 500,000 children in the foster care system. Foster children are an at-

risk population due to the adverse conditions in the homes. The majority of foster children

struggle with academic, developmental, social-emotional, and chronic medical problems

throughout their life (Jee et al., 2010).

Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP): The LCAP is a required aspect of

receiving LCFF funds that hold education agencies accountable and create transparency on how

the funds are used. School districts, County of Education, and charter schools are required to

create, adopt, and update the LCAP. Education agencies are to develop goals and ways to

measure student progress in all subgroups (California Department of Education, 2016).

Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF): The LCFF was implemented in 2013-2014 and

replaced the previous funding program. The LCFF establishes a stable base funding depending

on the number of students as well as takes into consideration the number of students considered

at-risk due to low socioeconomic status, English learners, or foster youth (California Department

of Education, 2016).

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs: In the 1940s, Abraham Maslow changed how society

viewed motivation. Maslow stated that human motivation could be divided into five basic

categories of need: (a) physiological, (b) safety, (c) social, (d) esteem, and (e) self-actualization.

According to the theory, a need that is satisfied is no longer a motivator. An individual is

motivated when a need is not fulfilled (Hanson, 2003; Farmer 2001; Maslow, 1943).

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL): Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is the process in

which individuals develop the fundamental skills to achieve success in school and life. SEL

provides the training in personal and interpersonal skills needed to handle oneself, one's

relationships, and work effectively and ethically. The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and

Emotional Learning (CASEL) has created a list of five cognitive, affective and behavioral

competencies that will lead students and individuals to be successful in social situations: self-

awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-

making (Lantieri & Nambiar, 2012).

Social Intelligence (SQ): Thorndike and Stein defined the term (SQ) in 1937. The term

describes one's ability to interpret other people's emotions and act acceptably around other

individuals (Arghode, 2013).

Theoretical Framework

To be able to close the achievement gap schools and teachers must consider the whole

child. An educator's training is often specific to an individual subject, which creates a narrow

focus on only one aspect of the student. Maslow's hierarchy of needs and his self-actualization

theory describes not only the importance of understanding one's self but also the importance of

understanding one another.

Abraham Maslow first defined the hierarchy of needs in the 1940s. The hierarchy is

represented as a triangle divided into four different categories: (a) physiological needs, (b) safety

and security needs, (c) belongingness and love needs, and (d) esteem needs; these are considered

the basic or primary needs (Maslow, 1943). Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory is one of the most commonly used theories in the study of psychology (D'Souza & Gurin, 2016). Maslow (1943) proposed that motivation drives humans to fulfill a need, and if a need is not met all other wants or interest are pushed to the side or forgotten about.

The starting point of the hierarchy also more commonly referred to as the physiological level; includes the need for food, water, sleep, and exercise. These needs provide homeostasis to a person's body (Maslow, 1943). The extreme lack of one of these physiological needs is what drives a person to obtain said needs (Taormina & Gao, 2013). For someone deprived of a physiological need that need envelops his or her thoughts. A person chronically deprived of food or water can define utopia as never having to worry about food or water. Happiness is characterized by the certainty of food and water and anything else is less important (Maslow, 1943). Maslow (1943) argued that an individual must have their physiological needs satisfied before reaching the next level. Foster children are potentially removed from their home due to abuse or neglect; therefore, their physiological needs are not being satisfied (Jee et al., 2010; Leve et al., 2012; Wiehe, 2001).

Safety and security needs is the next level in the hierarchy. This level focuses on the idea to be free from fear, physical violence, and abuse. While all humans experience this need, one can observe the need in infants and young children because they do not inhibit their reactions (Maslow, 1943; Taormina & Gao, 2013). Maslow (1943) concluded that children express their need for safety by relying on a structured and consistent routine. Parents quarrelling, physically abusing one another, divorce, physical punishment, or verbal abuse can initiate fear and anxiety in children. These experiences can cause the child to fear the loss of a parent's love or cling to the parents for security rather than love.

The third level is identified as the love needs. Belongingness and love needs include the desire for friendship, love and a sense of belonging (Farmer, 2001). The need for people to have attachments and to have a sense of belonging with others is vital to the human life (Taormina & Gao, 2013). Maslow (1943) stated that once one reaches this level, "He will hunger for affectionate relations with people in general, namely for a place in his group, and he will strive with great intensity to achieve his goal" (p. 381). Taormina and Gao (2013) concluded that while forming attachments are easy to develop for some people, social exclusion can lead to anxiety due to the feelings of isolation, social rejection, loneliness, and depression. Foster children often struggle with this need because of the lack of attachments (Jankowska et al., 2015). It is essential to understand the love needs include giving and receiving love (Maslow, 1943).

The fourth level of the basic needs are the esteem needs. Esteem needs pertain to the need for having respect from others and a positive self-concept (Farmer, 2001). Maslow (1943) argued that most people have a desire for a strong, structured, elevated evaluation of one's self in order to achieve self-respect, self-esteem, and the esteem of others. Taormina and Gao (2013) defined esteem for self as a person's ability to adequately evaluate one's attitude as well as recognize worthiness and value in one's nature. This statement supported Maslow's original classification of self-esteem which included desire for strength, achievements, adequacy, and confidence to help gain one's independence and freedom. Maslow defined the need for esteem of others as acquiring prestige, recognition, attention and appreciation (1943).

Maslow extended the hierarchy to include growth needs. When individuals fulfill their basic needs they shift from needs of self-interest to selflessness and concentrate on others (D'Souza & Gurin, 2016). Maslow (1943) argued that when the growth needs of an individual

are met they can develop innate talents and become who they are meant to be. Every individual

has growth needs, but each individual has different capabilities that make them unique. Students

that are at the self-actualization level are more likely to succeed academically. Some of the

characteristics found in these students were as follows: honesty, empathy, skills to listen and

learn, less anxiety, improved academic success, and less alienation (Farmer, 2001).

Self-actualization theory also discusses the importance of effective teachers. Teachers

that have reached the level of self-actualization are considered more aware of student needs

(Farmer, 2001). Maslow's theory stated, if one can accept, nurture, and care for oneself then in

turn they can care, accept, and nurture for others (Maslow, 1971). Therefore, when teachers

have reached the level of self-actualization, they can adequately support students academically

by being able to look at the whole child (Farmer, 2001).

Research Questions

The following questions guided the study to determine the impact the teacher-student

relationship had on foster youth's social-emotional intelligence.

1) How does the teacher-student relationship influence the foster youth's social-emotional

   intelligence?

2) How does the teacher-student relationship help foster children develop attachments?

3) How does the teacher-student relationship impact the foster parent and child relationship?

Limitations

The primary focus of this study is on the foster youth community and how the teacher-

student interaction can impact foster student's social-emotional intelligence. Foster children are

designated as an at-risk population, which created multiple obstacles for the researcher.

Recognizing who had the legal right of knowing who the foster children were and who could

communicate with the foster parents became a major obstacle. FERPA amended the law to grant education agencies the ability to disclose foster students' records to authorized child welfare agencies and records can be released to an authorized child welfare agency without notice to the parent following a judicial order (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Due to this limitation, the school counselor had to disseminate the cover and consent letters to the foster parents for the researcher. Foster students can experience multiple foster placements throughout their time in the system (Dorsey, Conover, & Cox, 2014; National Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention, 2010; Neiheiser, 2015); therefore, the foster children may have lived with the foster parent for a limited time. Another obstacle is that the foster youth population is constantly changing due to children entering and exiting the system. School mobility is a hurdle foster students face (Pears, Kim, Buchanan, & Fisher, 2015). Due to these aspects, the sample number of foster students fluctuated throughout the study. A third obstacle is the foster youth sampled in this study live in a high socio-economic area limiting the researcher from being able to generalize the findings to all foster children.

To gather data from the foster youth without interviewing them the parents completed a worksheet with their foster child that contained Likert scale questions and open-ended questions. Although the foster parents completed the questions with their children, it is possible that different answers could be rendered if the researcher was able to interview the foster children directly. Another form of instrumentation the researcher used is journaling from both the teachers and parents. The participants were given protocols on what to write about; however, the researcher was limited by the responses due to the participants' understanding and execution of the expectations.

Delimitations

This study had some delimitations. The topic of study was chosen based on California requirements, the growing population of foster students, and how teachers are often the constant adult in children's lives. The framework was based on Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs and understanding the hierarchal pyramid.

The district in this study has a population of approximately 55,000 students from transitional kindergarten to twelfth grade. With the research focusing on foster students the researcher used criterion sampling to narrow it to the 500 students in the foster care system spread across the 51 schools. Due to the vast number of foster students and schools, the study is going to focus on one school that has the highest population of foster youth. The high school has 62 foster students and 130 teachers. In addition to having the highest population of foster students, the high school has foster programs that teachers support. While the study focuses on foster students, the researcher did not communicate with the foster students directly in order to eliminate any risk of emotional trauma.

The researcher used a four-point Likert scale survey ensuring a non-neutral answer from participants (teachers and parents). The site administrator distributed the survey through email to increase anonymity. In addition, the site administrator developed relationships with the staff that allowed the staff to complete the survey without the lack of trust being a hindrance.

Assumptions

There are five main assumptions in this study. The primary assumption in this study is that the administrator, the counselor, teachers and parents responded to the Foster Student Interaction and Social-Emotional Intelligence survey and the interviews with honesty and accuracy. A second assumption is that, the researcher interpreted and communicated the

participants' responses accurately. Then, the participants agreed to be part of the study not for personal gain but for the positive impact on foster youth's education. Another assumption is that the researcher is employed in the district that was studied. Finally, all participants in this study interacted with the foster youth directly.

Organization of the Study

This research study is presented in five chapters. Chapter I includes the background of the study, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, the researcher, definition of terms, theoretical framework, research questions, limitations, delimitations, and the assumptions of the study.

Chapter II details the review of the literature, which includes foster youth and the challenges they face, foster parents, the Attachment Theory, teacher-student interaction, and social-emotional intelligence. Chapter III presents the methodology used for this research study. The chapter includes the selection of participants, instrumentation, data collection, and the data analysis procedures.

Chapter IV describes the study's findings including descriptive statistics, testing the research questions, and results of the data analyses for the three research questions. Chapter V delivers a summary of the entire study, discussion of the findings, implications for practice, recommendations for further research, and conclusions.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter discusses the rationale for conducting research regarding the impact the teacher-student interaction has on the foster youth and their social-emotional intelligence. Psychologists and educators have examined the importance of teacher-student interaction and the impact it has on student academic and behavioral success. The research in this paper is going to focus on social-emotional intelligence, areas of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management of foster children.

Over the past decade, there has been an increase in research of emotional and social intelligence and the impact on education (Rimm-Kaufman & Chiu, 2007). Educators have begun to recognize that we need to focus on the whole child and need to be aware of their social-emotional intelligence (Hoffman, 2009). Social-emotional intelligence can indicate a child's success in school and life (Bardberry & Greaves, 2009; Lantieri & Nambiar, 2012; Weissberg, 2016).

The education system with the implementation of the LCFF has designated Foster Youth a category of students deemed at-risk (California Department of Education, 2015). Foster children are a group of students that face family, social-emotional, and academic challenges (Cox, 2012; Jankowska et al., 2015; Jee et al., 2010; Gustavsson & MacEachron, 2012; Leve, 2012; Levy et al., 2014; Neiheiser, 2015; Pears et al., 2015).

Foster students have many obstacles to overcome, and school is sometimes the only constant in the lives of foster children. Therefore, it has become a goal of school districts to research different strategies they can implement to ensure the foster children's academic and

behavioral success. This study investigated how the teacher-student relationship impacted foster children and how it directly affected their social-emotional intelligence.

Research Questions

1) How does the teacher-student relationship influence the foster youth's social-emotional intelligence?

2) How does the teacher-student relationship help foster children develop attachments?

3) How does the teacher-student relationship impact the foster parent and child relationship?

The review of the literature describes the relevant articles and studies that support the research. Chapter II is organized into five different sections: (a) foster children, (b) foster parents, (c) Attachment Theory, (d) teacher-student interaction, and (e) social-emotional intelligence.

Foster Children

Who They Are

Our society is always being faced with heartbreaking realities. One reality that districts are now facing is the prominence of foster children in the schools. Foster children are taken from their homes due to physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, or parents that are unable or unwilling to take care of the child, or neglect (Jee et al., 2010; Leve et al., 2012; Wiehe, 2010). Then the youth have the potential to be placed with families they do not know and are expected to act like their peers.

According to the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) (2016), there are approximately 427,910 children in the foster care system in 2015. The numbers are constantly changing because children are entering and exiting the system continuously (Neiheiser, 2015). The foster care system does not cater to one gender, race or ethnicity. In

2015, 52% of foster children were male while 48% were female. In addition, 45% of the foster

youth were Caucasian while 23% were African American (Adoption and Foster Care Analysis

and Reporting System, 2016). Figure 1 depicts all the ethnicities represented in the foster care

system.

Foster Youth by Ethnicity
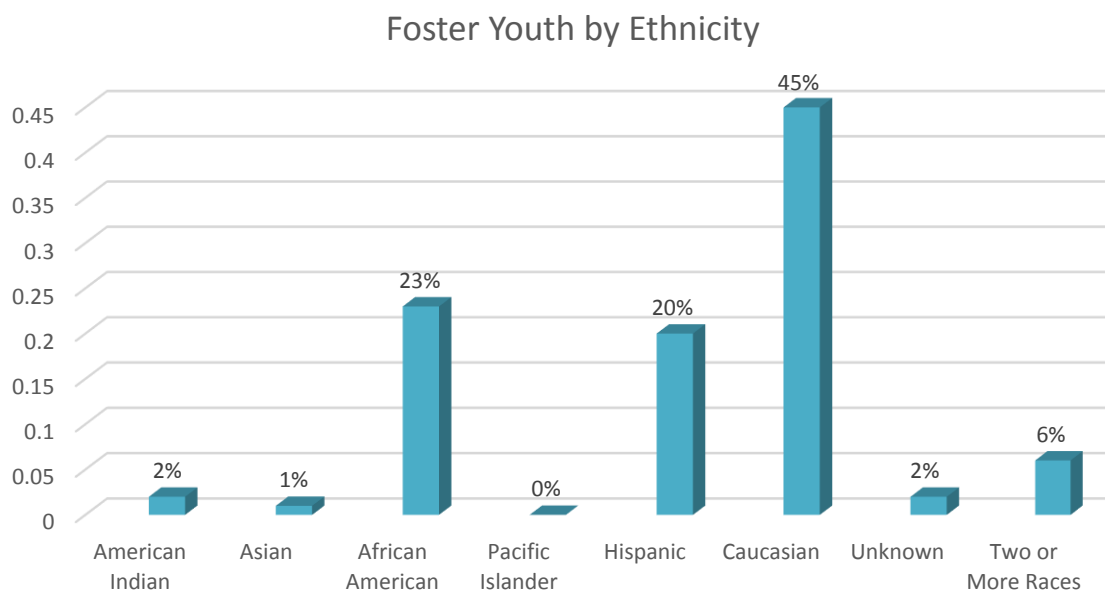
Figure 1. Foster Youth by Ethnicity (Source Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and
Reporting System, 2016)

The average age of children entering the foster care system is three (Braxton &

Krajewski-Jaime, 2011). Consequently, this is the age where brain development and growth is

the most active. Therefore, foster children have an increased risk of disruptions in brain

development (Leve et al., 2012). During this time a child's personality, learning processes, and

the ability to handle stress and emotions are developed. These different factors are influenced by

the child's environment (Braxton & Krajewski-Jaime, 2011). In a study done by Pears and

Fisher (2005), they noticed that foster children had deficits in cognitive function in the areas of

visuospatial processing, lower scores on intelligence tests, poor memory skills, and weakness in

language development. Leve et al. (2012) argued that the deficits influence academic

performance and cognitive development. When evaluating the research, it suggests that children in the foster care system could have brain vulnerabilities that could change the success rate at home, school, and social situations.

Although the foster care system was developed to be a temporary home for children, some remain in the system until they reach emancipation age (Braxton & Krajewski-Jaime, 2011). States recognize the emancipation age to be 18 years old and relinquish their responsibility to the children (Trejos-Castillo, Davis, & Hipps, 2015). As the age of the foster child increases, it becomes tremendously challenging to find a family to place them with (Neiheiser, 2015). Increased age and issues with the birth families are directly linked to why children remain in the system until the emancipation age. A child that stays in the foster care system for a long duration of time is more likely to have multiple family placements (Dorsey, Conover, & Cox, 2014; National Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention, 2010; Neiheiser, 2015).

Children living in the foster care system are faced with many different obstacles that can lead to the feelings of hopelessness, anger, sadness, betrayal, and being unloved (Braxton & Krajewski-Jane, 2011). Maslow's Theory of Motivation states that people have different levels of needs (Maslow, 1943). The fundamental level of need includes esteem, friendship and love, security and physical needs (Farmer, 2001; Maslow, 1943). This level of need must be filled to reach the top of the pyramid of motivation (Braxton & Krajewski-Jane, 2011; Maslow, 1943). Foster children have to face reality on a daily basis that their fundamental level of needs may not always be met.

Academic Risks

Children in the foster care system encounter many different struggles when entering school. Foster youth have an increased risk of being enrolled in special education programs, grade retention, poor academic performance, and low graduation rates (Gustavsson & MacEachron, 2012; Hahnel & Van Zile, 2012; Pears et al., 2015). Approximately 50% of the foster youth are placed in special education due to emotional or behavior disabilities (Morton, 2015). Neiheiser (2015) stated, "Students who experience foster care placements are 44% less likely to graduate from high school than their peers" (p. 23).

Attending a new school happens when children are taken from their biological parents and placed in foster care. Foster children can have an average of one-two placements a year and many times those placements require enrolling in a new school (Sydow & Flango, 2012). This situation leads to student records being incomplete, misplaced, or delayed in transition (Levy et al., 2015; Neiheiser, 2015). These factors contribute to foster students being placed in the wrong grade and not receiving services needed to be successful. Also, students who move frequently have difficulty making connections with their peers and teachers and participating in extracurricular activities (Sydow & Flango, 2012).

Noble (1997) stated that foster youth expend the majority of their energy taking care of themselves, and have little energy left to complete their homework or assignments. To cope with the stress of everyday life some foster children resort to cheating, disrupting class, failing class, and have high absenteeism. Foster children who are failing or have low self-esteem will cheat to please their foster parents, or hold out hope that they can go back to their biological parents (Noble, 1997). It is clear that foster youth have emotional and behavioral challenges they bring

to the classroom that the education system and teachers may not be trained to service the special needs (Morton, 2015).

Social and Emotional Risks

Foster children have the potential to have medical, developmental, and social-emotional problems (Dorsey et al., 2014; Jankowska, 2015; Jee et al., 2010; Leve et al., 2012). Unfortunately, due to the nature of the foster care system and the amount of times children experience multiple placements, it is increasingly difficult to provide the proper health care needed (Neiheiser, 2015) A study done by Jee et al. (2010) found that social–emotional problems increased with the age of the foster child. Although these problems present themselves later, early screening should be done to help support and possibly eliminate some of the issues (Jee et al., 2010).

Foster children are commonly taken from their biological parents while they are at school, so school becomes a reminder of fear and anxiety (Noble, 1997). Some children due to the physical abuse they experienced have learned they need to be aggressive in relationships because of the need to protect them from harm (Geroski & Knauss, 2000). Others use negative behaviors to gain attention, initiate contact, or asserting power over those who are older (Geroski & Knauss, 2000; Noble, 1997).

Attachment Risks

Foster children have to adjust and build new relationships with foster parents, their families, and classmates with every new placement. In a study conducted by McLean, Riggs, Kettler, and Delfabbro (2013) participants argued that some children lack the need to form attachments. This statement was directed to mainly adolescents who experienced multiple placements. Foster children are more prone to develop insecure attachment styles due to the

experiences they face (Jankowska et al., 2015). Harden (2017) explained that children who have experienced violence within their homes are prone to delays in interpersonal relationships. Attachment is connected with cognitive development and emotional regulation. In both of these areas, foster children are at a disadvantage due to the trauma of being neglected or abused (Leve et al., 2012).

Foster children often present avoidant-attachment traits. Attachment issues can have an impact on self-concept development, social interactions, and emotional functioning. Children with secure attachments have a positive mood, can regulate emotions in the classroom, and have coping strategies (Jankowska et al., 2015). Therefore, children who live with their biological family enter into school with an advantage based on attachments whereas the foster youth are timid to build attachments for fear of losing that relationship.

In the study done by Jankowska et al. (2015) foster children who experienced avoidant-attachment style depended mostly on themselves and were reluctant to trust others or ask for help. Insecure attachment styles presented higher forms of depression and anxiety in children (Kennedy, 2008). Attachment styles have been connected to a child's development of their self-esteem. If a child has an insecure attachment style, it can have an adverse impact on self-esteem (Jankowska et al., 2015).

Education Support

There are distinct concerns that are imparted onto foster children through years of abuse, neglect, and multiple placements. These include but are not limited to developmental, academic, behavioral, as well as medical stability. It is imperative an individual approach to support not only the foster children but also their educators in a clear structured program be implemented in daily school life (Neiheiser, 2015). Foster children are in a constant battle in receiving the types

of internal and external supports needed to be successful in school (Levy, 2014; National Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention, 2010; Pears et al., 2015.). It is paramount that educators develop an understanding of how the foster youth's experiences inside and outside the school environment affect classroom behavior and social situations (Levy et al., 2014). Districts since 2013 have implemented strategies and interventions to support foster children because of the LCAP (California Department of Education, 2015).

To begin this process, a school psychologist must provide professional development for all employees in the school regarding the needs of foster children (Jankowska et al., 2015). The staff needs to be instructed on the different strategies to use when disciplining foster children (Neiheiser, 2015). When the school community works as a team, foster children have a greater chance of succeeding on all levels.

Teacher role. Teachers can make a positive impact on a foster child. In a study conducted by Levy et al. (2014), the researchers examined barriers foster youth experienced in school and support structures at school. Through focus groups and interviews, the researchers learned that teachers who could identify their foster students and understand the trauma faced were able to provide a better support system.

Earning a foster child's trust and caring are two essential things a teacher can do to help foster children (Elias, 2009). Gaining trust is a process, and it starts the first day the child walks into the room. Foster children have been surrounded by negativity, so teachers need to concentrate on being positive, but it must be sincere (The Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning, 2010). Teachers can offer individualized tutoring to help the child gain academic success. Teachers through their actions can contribute to facilitate and develop the social-emotional supports that the foster children need (Neiheiser, 2015).

Nurse role. The school nurse is a critical part of the team. At the basic level, they are responsible for ensuring that the foster youth are healthy at school. With the proper support from the education agency, the nurse can have a positive effect on the child's health (Schneiderman, 2004). The nurse can determine if the child has any general medical needs and can make the proper referrals or recommendations for further medical interventions (Neiheiser, 2015). Also, a nurse's role of keeping a child healthy is essential for a child to be able to attend school, learn, and increase educational outcomes (Schneiderman, 2004).

Schneiderman (2004) conducted a study on the nurse's role of caring for foster youth and how the organization affected the nurse's role. Within this study, the nurses found it challenging to ensure the foster youth were getting adequate care because the agency did not release the names of the foster population. The organization felt that all students should have equal opportunity for the same care. Schneiderman stated, "Equal services for a population with unequal needs do not equate to equal health outcomes" (p. 350).

Counselor's role. Simms (1991) stated that foster youth face challenges because of the traumas they have endured. He categorized the trauma into three different phases: (1) challenges related to prior the placement, (2) challenges related to natural adaptation of foster care, and (3) challenges from the inappropriate management of the foster care system. Counselors have a vital role in supporting foster youth through these difficulties (Geroski & Knauss, 2000) by developing programs and interventions that focus on improving a child's mental health (Keys, Bemak, Carpenter, & King-Sears, 2001). Geroski and Knauss (2000) proposed that the intensity and complexity of foster youth needs sometimes cause counselors, teachers, site administrators, and foster parents to feel reactive (Keys et al., 2001) and overwhelmed.

School counselors provide different formats of counseling. Counselors hold individual counseling sessions to focus on developing and maintaining friendships, recognizing and controlling emotions, and coping with depression. In addition, group sessions are conducted to focus on specific concerns that relate to a group of students. This format provides comfort to foster children as they often feel isolated (Geroski & Knauss, 2000).

School counselors provide support to foster parents. Foster parents are faced with caring for children that potentially struggle with behavior, mental, and academic concerns. School counselors can provide support to parents in behavior management, parenting skills, and parent-child communication skills (Geroski & Knauss, 2000). Besides providing information and expertise, foster parents benefit from emotional support (Keys et al., 2001).

Keys et al., (2001) argued that while counselors are experts, collaborative conversations and consultations provide at-risk youth a greater opportunity to succeed. Neiheiser (2015) agreed that collaboration and communication amongst all parties are essential in supporting the foster child. Collaborative consultation allowed all parties to be viewed as experts and play a critical role in developing strategies and solutions that support the foster child's academic and social success. Hahnel and Van Zile (2012) stated that caseworkers are not informed about academic or social concerns until the matter has reached a critical point. Therefore, a collaborative consultation would allow the caseworker, foster parent, counselor, teacher, and site administrator to stay informed, share knowledge, and develop a comprehensive plan to be proactive versus reactive (Keys et al., 2001).

Collaboration and communication. Collaboration and communication between the agencies are vital to the success of foster youth (Neiheiser, 2015). However, the federal law, FERPA, is preventing agencies to communicate and collaborate with welfare agencies regarding

foster youth (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.). Due to the limited amount of collaboration between the different agencies and the school system, the academic progress of the foster youth is negatively affected. FERPA also prevents the foster youth's caseworker from accessing any academic records even though the court is in charge of making decisions to support the child (Hahnel & Van Zile, 2012). As concluded by the research it suggests that policy and lawmakers examine FERPA laws and make amendments to the law allowing education agencies to communicate and collaborate with the child welfare organizations that support foster youth.

Communication between the foster parents and the school is a critical tool to ensure the child is receiving all the support that is needed. Communication needs to be frequent, and the conversations should offer information about academic and social gains as well as concerns (Neiheiser, 2015).

Foster Parents

Harden (2017) proposed, "Children in foster care traverse a challenging journey through childhood, with many obstacles to their optimal development" (p. 43). Safety and family stability are two essential components in healthy child development (Harden, 2017). Approximately 75% of foster children reside with foster parents (Department of Health and Human Services, 2002); therefore, it is crucial to understand the role that foster parents have in providing a nurturing environment that facilitates positive child development. Buehler, Cox and Cuddeback (2003) commented that little research has been done on the different components that foster parents contribute to the foster experience.

Becoming a Foster Parent

The foster care program was created to ensure that all children were given the opportunity to live in a positive, nurturing environment (Braxton et al., 2011; Neiheiser, 2015).

An essential part of the selection process includes both the caseworker's ideas of characteristics

to be a successful foster parent and the combination of factors within the child, the foster family,

and the environment (Buehler et al., 2003). Prior to January 2017, to become a foster parent one

would need to obtain a foster parent license and certification, relative approval, adoption, and

guardianship approval. California now uses the program, Resource Family Approval (RFA), to

streamline the approval process to become a *resource family*. This approval process allows

families to need only one application, one background check, and a combined home

environment, and psychosocial assessment. RFA uses new improved approval standards, which

remain consistent regardless of a child's permanency plan. Finally, RFA increases stability in

foster care which can lead to improved outcomes for foster children (County of Riverside

Department of Public Social Services, 2017).

Family Stability

Child development is affected by different biological and environmental factors, with

family being the most prolific factor. The definition of development can be described as one's

cognitive, social, physical, and emotional maturation from infancy to adulthood. Researchers

have considered family stability to depict the family structure, parental mental health, positive

parenting styles, and stable relationships. The structure and the climate of the home play a

significant role in promoting the child's development (Harden, 2017). Because of the trauma, a

foster child faces being removed from their home, developing attachments and trusting

relationships can be a challenge (Jankowska, 2015; Melinder, Baugreud, Ovenstad, & Goodman,

2013). Caregivers that are emotionally and physically present, reliable and nurturing have a

greater chance of their foster children developing positive relationships with them. The

maltreatment a child encounters not only influences the ability to form trusting relationships it

also can be the cause of concerns regarding physical health, brain development, cognitive skills, and social-emotional intelligence. However, foster parents that provide a stable family environment that is focused on the child feeling safe and nurtured can decrease the impact of the trauma and teach resiliency (Harden, 2017).

Being a Successful Foster Parent

McLean et al. (2013) argued that the role of a foster parent was to provide a good home for a few years that would prepare the children for future relationships. Buehler et al. (2003) conducted a study to understand the different components that contributed to deciding to be a foster parent as well as the different stressors. Seeing the child grow up and making a difference in that child's life were the main two themes that were found that contributed to choosing to become a foster parent. Buehler, Rhodes, Orme, and Cuddeback (2006) believed that foster parents could be successful with the development of the following twelve domains: provide a secure and safe home, provide a nurturing environment, educational attainment and success, meeting the child's physical and mental needs, and promoting the child's social-emotional development. The remaining domains are multicultural needs and permanency planning, managing ambiguity and the demands of growing, supporting relationships and being a team player, coping with the loss of a foster child, developing skills as a foster parent, balancing the demands of being a foster parent and family, and supporting the foster child's relationship with their biological family (Buehler et al., 2006).

Secure and safe home. This domain focuses on the core need of providing a home that is safe and secure. While this domain may seem commonplace for most people for foster youth, it is the reason why they were removed from their family. It is suggested that both actual safety and the perception of safety are critical. One can describe the idea of safety and security as

freedom from abuse, freedom from neglect, an environment that minimizes injuries or accidents, a safe school, and neighborhood, and emotional security (Buehler et al., 2006). Fuentes, Salas, Bernedo, and Garcia-Martin (2014) stated that parenting styles provide a secure and safe home by providing guidelines for behavior, teaching rules, and encouraging foster children to be independent.

Nurturing environment. Providing a nurturing environment is one of the strongest predictors of a foster child adjusting to the home. It is important for the foster child to feel accepted and valued by their foster parents due to the trauma, and experiences that lead them to the current situation. That situation, being pulled from a biological family because of abuse or trauma can cause those children to develop not only emotional and behavioral issues but also biological and psychological problems. Being placed in an environment that limits the foster child's exposure to biologically and psychologically toxic events and gives them an environment that encourages successful development is usually considered a nurturing environment (Biglan, Flay, Embry, & Sandler, 2012). Foster parents need to demonstrate empathy and tolerance with the foster child. The child is going to be struggling with questions and feelings about their biological family, the current situation, and their future, therefore, it is beneficial that many foster parents volunteer because of their concern and love for children (Buehler et al., 2006).

Educational attainment and success. Kirk, Lewis-Moss, Nilsen, and Colvin (2013) stated, "One of the greatest disparities in educational attainment can be found among youth emerging from the foster care system" (p. 2). Children in foster care have a lower academic success rate than many other populations, making the need for support from foster parents a critical component. Foster parents need to show a commitment to the child's educational attainment and success (Buehler et al., 2006). As stated above currently only half of the youth in

foster care graduate high school by age 18 and less than 5% graduate college (U.S. Department of Education, 2016).In a study presented by Kirk et al. (2011) it was concluded that foster children have lower aspirations and educational attainment than their peers. The study identified parental support and involvement as a factor that contributed to a child's aspiration and success. Therefore, a parent's behavior and a foster student's self-perception can influence an adolescent's aspiration for academic success.

Physical, mental, social-emotional needs. In the Buehler et al. (2003) study participants cited that parenting children with severe behavior and emotional problems was a main stressor. Many foster children enter into the system with physical, mental, and social-emotional needs that can be difficult for the foster parent to navigate. Due to the complexity of these problems some parents do not feel adequately trained to support the foster child. Parents need to have a variety of positive parenting skills to handle the different behavior problems. Along with supporting the physical and mental needs parents need to have knowledge of developmental milestones and various tasks. Parents can use this understanding to promote the child's development of appropriate social skills (Buehler et al., 2006).

Multicultural needs and permanency planning. It is crucial for foster parents to be sensitive to multicultural needs of the foster youth to promote a healthy sense of identity (Buehler et al., 2006; Coakley & Gruber, 2015). Psychosocial and relational problems occur when parents do not have the appropriate culture knowledge to support the foster youth. However, parents that demonstrate cultural receptiveness by listening to the children and effective transcultural parenting can develop positive psychosocial outcomes. Therefore, it is vital to assess foster parents receptivity and willingness to transcultural parenting before placement (Coakley & Gruber, 2015).

Foster parents play a crucial role in the permanency planning process. Foster parents must be able to work with the appropriate parties involved to achieve permanency goals successfully. It is paramount for the foster parents to be heavily involved not only in planning but in also actualizing the plan for the foster children to meet their goals (Buehler et al., 2006). However, not all foster youth can return to their biological parents. For some of the foster youth permanency opportunities are found within the relationships with the foster parents (Frey, Cushing, Freundlich, & Brenner, 2007). The idea of the foster child leaving or the child being removed from the home is another stressor found in the Buehler et al. (2003) study. It is suggested that agencies provide transition policies to support both the families and the children to provide a smooth transition for all parties involved.

Managing ambiguity, demands, and growing as a foster parent. Acknowledging and understanding the health and well-being of the foster family and the community are some of the challenges when a foster child is placed in a home (Brown, St. Arnault, Sintzel, & George, 2011). An important skill of becoming a foster parent must be the ability to understand fully what the relationship with the foster child should be, knowing that it can be a temporary situation. Buehler et al. (2003) stated, "One of the unique developmental issues for foster parents is to learn how to love a foster child" (p. 77). The foster parent must have balance in the relationship to promote a stable environment to develop social-emotional faculties within the child. Understanding the mental, emotional, and physical demands of fostering is an essential part of becoming a successful foster parent. Being able to manage marital strain, negativity from birth children, and foster children's negative attitudes after visiting birth parents is critical for a successful term with a foster child. Foster parenting requires dedication of the heart but also

training. To be an effective foster parent, one must go through in service, continually learn, and develop parenting skills to ensure the optimal success for the foster child (Buehler et al., 2006).

       Supporting relationships and being a team player. One of the most challenging aspects of being a foster parent is supporting the communication between the child and the biological parents. The foster parent can play the part of the role model by demonstrating appropriate parenting skills as well as provide the necessary emotional support for all parties. Hedin (2015) argued that friendly relations between the foster parent and the biological parent could strengthen a foster child's social integration. Foster parents need to be able to be a team player as well as communicate with the therapists, teachers, birth parents, and caseworkers (Keys et al., 2001). Unfortunately, foster parents often experience red tape when trying to communicate with caseworkers, which leads to dissatisfaction (Buehler et al., 2006 & Buehler et al., 2003).

Infinite Loop of Developmental Success of Foster Parenting

       Similar to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Farmer, 2001; Maslow, 1943) the Infinite Loop of Developmental Success of Foster Parenting (Figure 2) is a graphic representation based on the twelve domains (Buehler et al., 2006) that if implemented can be a guide to successful foster parenting. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs outlines the different needs a person must obtain in order before one can reach self-actualization (Farmer, 2001). The Infinite Loop of Developmental Success of Foster Parenting is based on individual need, however when linked with all twelve domains that have been successfully integrated into the foster home gives the foster child the most potential for healthy development.
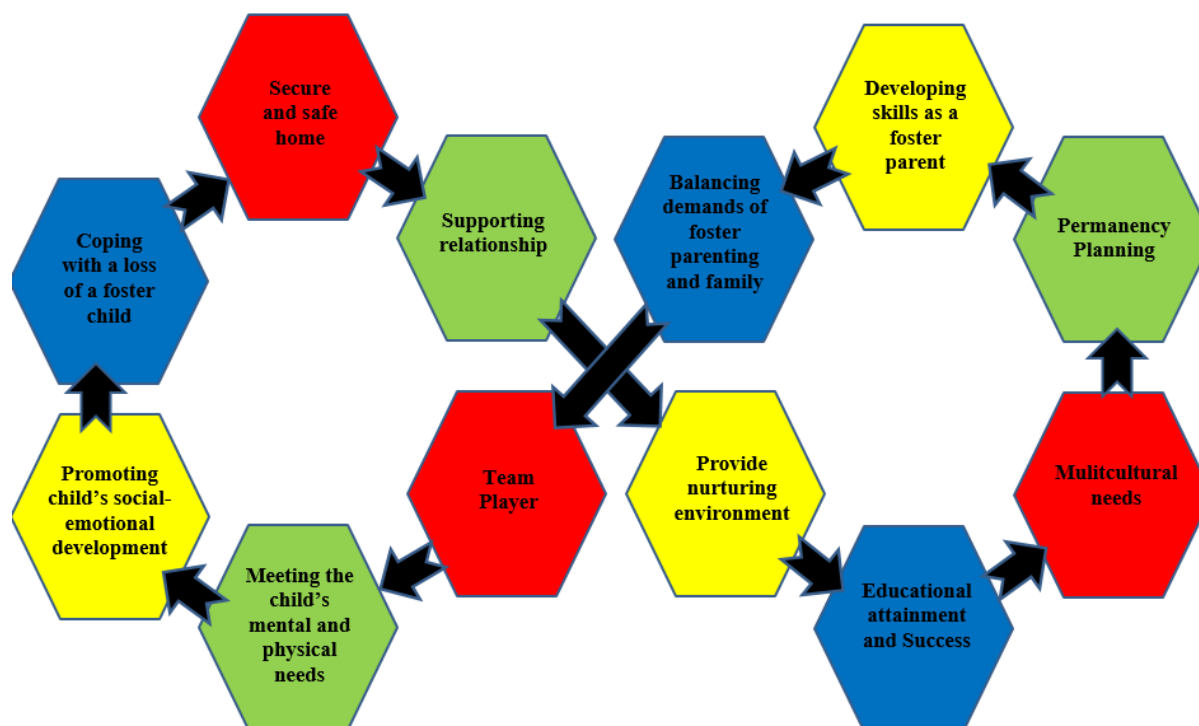
Figure 2. The Infinite Loop of Developmental Success of Foster Parenting (Source: Buehler et al., 2006; Farmer, 2001; Maslow, 1943. Graphic created by Krcmar, 2017)

Attachment Theory

The first day a child walks into school, ideas of relationships and social competencies have already begun to develop. A child born into this world has no attachments to an individual. The process of creating attachments starts at an early age with defining milestones throughout the first three years of life. The milestones may be affected by different variables, the main one being the child's environment (Zeanah, Berlin, & Boris, 2012). A child's upbringing will affect how relationships are formed with teachers. A theory that helps define the importance of relationships and social-emotional development (Bowlby, 1982) is the Attachment Theory (Sabol & Pianta, 2012).

Development of Attachment Theory

John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth began developing the theory starting in the early 1930's. Bowlby and Ainsworth developed the theory by combining knowledge of etiology, Cybernetics, developmental psychology, psychoanalysis, and information processing (Bretherton, 1992). Bowlby (1988) argued that there was a distinct difference between attachment and attachment behavior. Attachment is the tangible need of the child to be in close proximity to a person, usually a mother figure, who has a better outlook on life. Bowlby (1988) explained attachment behavior as, "Any form of behavior that results in a person attaining or maintaining proximity to some other clearly identified individual who is conceived as better able to cope with the world" (location 341).

Bowlby began doing research studies after World War II on children who were hospitalized and separated from their parents. Through Bowlby's research, the conclusion was made that an infant or young child needs to experience a positive, loving, consistent, and reliable relationship with a mother or mother figure to be mentally healthy. Bowlby (1988) defined attachment in children as the need to be close to and physical contact with a certain individual in cases of being frightened or sick. Foster youth have an increased risk of not developing the appropriate mental connections due to the possible lack of a mother figure. Zeanah, Berlin, and Boris (2011) proposed that attachment behaviors are characterized by the proximity need during times of stress. Bretherton (1992) argued, "Bowlby's view, excessive separation anxiety is due to adverse family experiences—such as repeated threats of abandonment or rejection by parents" (p. 763).

Ainsworth continued Bowlby's work and conducted a study in Ganda where the relationship between infants and mothers' sensitivity and interactions were observed. At the end

of the study, it was concluded that children who had a secure attachment also had mothers that were sensitive and infants with less sensitive mothers were linked to having insecure attachments (Bretherton, 1992). Through Bowlby's (1988) research, he concluded the definition of Attachment theory is both the physical need of attachment and the behavior it takes to achieve that need.

A Child's Development of Attachment

The Attachment Theory states that the relationship between the child and the parent has a direct impact on the child's development (Sabol & Pianta, 2012). The mother-child relationship establishes a set of guidelines for the child on how to interact with adults and behaviors in those relationships (Pianta, 1999).

The development of attachment is a reflection on the relationship between the child and their caregiver. The ability to be confident in an attachment figure to be available and responsive allows the child to feel secure and therefore continues the relationship. Bowlby (1988) stated that children who have experienced multiple adverse conditions are more likely to continue having adverse experiences. Adverse experiences that occurred in early childhood are usually independent from the child's actions, but in adolescence, the experiences are usually tied directly to the child's actions. For this reason, attachment concerns are evident in foster children. Zeanah et al. (2011) argued that foster care children have difficulties forming attachments because of the neglect they have experienced as well as being asked to form attachments with an adult they have never seen before while trying to resolve the attachment with the biological parents.

In a longitudinal study conducted by Gabler et al. (2014), the researchers concluded there was a correlation between the foster parent's sensitivity and the child's level of attachment.

Stovall-McClough and Dozier (2004) also found that foster parents would mirror the foster child's attachment behavior. If a child was avoiding interaction, the parent would withdraw. These actions are noticed within the first year of the placement (Gabler et al., 2014; Stovall-McClough & Dozier, 2004). As a result, of the studies, it is evident that clinical intervention needs to be provided for the foster parents to comprehend the unique attachment needs of foster children and how to nurture and develop healthy attachments (Zeanah et al., 2011). In a study conducted by McLean et al. (2013) they examined how attachment behaviors could influence the foster care system. Through interviewing foster caregivers the study showed that children who had severe attachment disorders would be more, successful placed in a group home rather than a single residential home. A group home would provide the foster child the freedom to not be forced to establish strong attachments with an individual person.

A secure attachment can be described as the caregiver being predictable and reliable to the child. The child knows the caregiver is sensitive to the needs and there is a sense of order (Zeanah et al., 2011). On the opposite end of the spectrum is disorganized and disorientated attachment. This form of attachment the caregiver is routinely not sensitive, and there is no order. Therefore, the child builds insecure attachments (O'Gorman, 2012; Zeanah et al., 2011). In the middle of the spectrum is the anxious, avoidant attachment. Children learn that the caregivers do not understand what is needed emotionally and as a result are insensitive (Dozier et al., 2009; Zeanah et al., 2011). Children who experience any form of attachment other than secure are at a risk of developing attachment insecurities (O'Gorman, 2012).

Role of Traumatic Events on Attachments

Children develop strategies to cope with stressful events by drawing on previous experiences and attachments to guide the reactions. Children who have had insecure attachments

have difficulty processing stressful situation that leads to a higher percentage of anxiety.

Children that experienced neglect and or abuse and are removed from the home by Child

Protective Services (CPS) are at a greater risk of having a traumatic reaction depending on the

attachment quality (Melinder et al., 2013). Parents who demonstrate attachment insecurities are

in danger of raising children who cannot handle stressful situations or exhibit the appropriate

emotions (Gahler et al., 2014). Children raised by parents with attachment insecurities also can

show behavioral adjustment concerns. Melinder et al. (2013) conducted a study to determine if

the parent's attachment insecurities would have an impact on the child's memory, accuracy and

suggestibility after being removed due to maltreatment. Another facet of this study was the

associations between parental attachment insecurities and the children's manifested distress

along with the child's behavioral adjustment during removal. The study concluded that

preschool aged childrens' memory was less accurate than those of elementary aged children.

There was no difference in memory performance between elementary and preadolescence.

Parental attachment insecurities highly predicted a child's level of distress when confronted with

the less stressful aspects of removal where as it was not a predictor with the more stressful

aspects of removal (Melinder et al., 2013). Therefore, the younger the children are removed

from the home, the less the memory and behavior is affected.

Attachment Correlation with Teachers

Attachment research used to concentrate on the relationship between parents and

children, but over the past two decades, the research has expanded to teachers and students

(Sabol & Piants, 2012; Verschueren & Koomen, 2012; Verschueren, 2015). Verschueren and

Koomen (2012) argued that the teacher-student relationship is not an example of an attachment

bond because the relationship is not exclusive or present for a long duration of time. Also,

students share the teacher with the other classmates, and then each year the students receive a new classroom and a new teacher. Understandably, the parents have more of an emotional investment in their children; therefore, the central role of the parent is to be the caregiver while the primary role of the teacher is to be the instructor (Rimm-Kaufman & Pianta, 2000). Despite these arguments, Verschueren and Koomen (2012) and Verschueren (2015), contended that teachers can be temporary attachment figures that provide a haven and a secure environment for the students.

Research has found a relationship between a child's security with parents and the security with teachers (Sabol & Pianta, 2012; Verschueren, 2015). Students who have experienced damaging relationships may impede the capacity of forming trusting bonds with others (Mowat, 2010). Verschueren (2015) proposed that children who have a troubled relationship or lack confidence in the availability with the parents have difficulty building strong relationships with teachers. The teacher's level of sensitivity can have a direct impact on the strength of the teacher-student relationship (Sabol & Pianta, 2012; Verschueren, 2015). Buyse, Verschueren, and Doumen (2011) studied the effects of the mother-child attachment and the teacher sensitivity in the classroom. The results from the study showed a relationship between the level of closeness and the level of teacher sensitivity. Therefore, these results imply that through teachers' behavior they can change a child's attachment structure (O'Connor & McCartney, 2006; Verschueren, & Doumen, 2011). Children who develop positive relationships in the early years of schooling correlate to the increase of engagement in school and the closeness of the relationship to the next teacher. Sabol and Pianta (2012) argued the more relational experiences in a school environment the children undergo, the less they will rely on early mother-child attachment in creating new relationships with teachers.

Teacher-Student Interaction

One of the most difficult challenges facing education is ensuring the developmental

competence of at-risk children who experience a variety of stressors and difficulties in their life

(Pianta, 1999). The word risk refers to a "probability linking a predictor, such as poor academic

skills, with an outcome such as dropping out of school" (Pianta, 1999, p. 11). Foster children are

considered at-risk due to the trauma they experienced (Cox, 2012; Gustavsson & MacEachron,

2012; Jankowska et al., 2015; Leve et al., 2012; Pears et al., 2015). Thus, it is argued that

positive teacher-student interactions can be an intervention to support at-risk students (Pianta,

1999).

Davis (2003) proposed that a good or positive relationship is defined as, "Supporting

children's motivation to explore as well as their regulation of social, emotional, and cognitive

skills" (p. 209). Also, a good relationship has low levels of conflict and high levels of closeness.

Closeness refers to the child's willingness to approach the teacher, and the warmth shared

between the teacher and child, while conflict relates to the negativity between the teacher and

child (Mason, Hajovsky, McCune, & Turek, 2017). Positive relationships can support a

student's social and academic success; however, an inadequate relationship can lead a student

feel alienated and run the risk of academic failure and behavior concerns (Poulou, 2015). The

relationship between teachers and students, students and peers, and between the school and home

is crucial for students to thrive in school (Mowat, 2010).

Teachers and students are part of a school community or a system and therefore do not

interact in isolation. The community can support or hinder the development of the relationship.

In a relationship, both the teacher and the student bring feelings, experiences, goals, and behavior

styles that will influence the quality of relationship they form and will affect the experience in the classroom (Davis, 2006; Hamre & Pianta, 2006; Pianta, 1999).

Importance of Relationships

The effects of a teacher-student relationship begin as early as preschool. The quality of the teacher-student relationship can influence not only a child's cognitive development but also their social development (Davis, 2003). Sabol and Pianta (2012) stated that,

> Some experts suggest that a relationship with at least one caring adult, not necessarily, a parent is perhaps the single most important element in protecting young people who have multiple risks in their lives, and for many children this adult is a teacher. (p. 213)

Foster children have the potential to live with many different foster parents throughout a single year (Leve et al., 2012; Pears et al., 2015) so many times a teacher is the only consistent adult in their life. Teachers who believe in their ability to impact students and have high expectations for students will interact to improve student achievement, engagement, and self-esteem (Hamre & Pianta, 2006). Teachers that nurture and respond to children's needs have the opportunity to lay the groundwork for students to understand and learn about their social and academic surroundings (Davis, 2003).

Developing an emotional connection with adults is critical in fostering a positive development in children (Sabol & Pianta, 2012). As Mowat (2010) stated **"**The extent to which teachers affirm (or not) young people and the extent to which young people are listened to and are enabled to communicate within a safe environment and trust is established are all key to success" (p. 176). The quality of emotional and instructional support from early elementary

teachers has been able to predict a child's academic, language, and social development (Garbacz et al., 2014).

Benefits of Teacher-Student Relationships

The impact of a positive teacher-student relationship can promote an increase in academic and behavioral development (Driscoll et al., 2011; Pianta, 1999; Myers & Pianta, 2008; Sabol & Pianta, 2012). The foster youth are at risk for academic and behavior concerns (Cox, 2012; Gustavsson & MacEachron, 2012; Leve et al., 2012; Levy et al., 2014; Morton, 2015; Neiheiser, 2015; Pears et al., 2015) and therefore could benefit from positive interactions with a teacher. Students who form robust and supportive relationships develop a sense of security at the school, and establish friendships with peers (Hamre & Pianta, 2006). The purpose of this study is to understand how attachments, social-emotional intelligence, and teacher-student relationships intertwine to support academic and social success in foster youth. This section directly links to the studies purpose.

Positive academic and behavioral success is driven by supportive teacher-student relationships due to a sense of belonging being sustained (Mason et al., 2017). Students who are perceived at-risk due to behavior concerns can learn adaptive behaviors through positive relationships. Strong relationships provide an avenue for students to make transitions to middle and high school easier (Davis, 2006). Middle school teachers that make themselves available and take the time to communicate with the students will begin developing the foundation of support (Hamre & Pianta, 2006). Davis (2006) reported that middle school students felt the teachers were not as friendly or supportive as the elementary teachers were. However, students that established a positive relationship with their middle school teacher showed an increase in motivation and outlook on academic tasks. Students that experience support will be interested in

academics and social activities that lead to achieving better grades and peer relationships. Even though students in high school have less time with their teachers, the relationships with adults are one of the most important indicators of success (Hamre & Pianta, 2006). Therefore, the need for positive teacher-student relationships at all grade levels is crucial.

Professional Development in Building Teacher-Student Relationships

Knowing the importance of developing teacher-student interactions is critical for teachers to be able to apply the fundamental relationship skills to interact with students effectively. Teachers first need to be given the proper information about the development and behavior of the children. A few of the important critical ideas that need to be taught are as follows: the key themes of social-emotional development, the role and definition of relationships, recognition of relationships in trouble, and the concept that instruction and learning are directly affected by the social evolution (Pianta, 1999).

Given the impact of a positive teacher-students relationship, it is essential for programs to be provided to the teachers to teach strategies and how to implement the strategies and skills effectively (Garbacz et al., 2014). One example of a research-based program is the My Teaching Partner (MTP). MTP has made improvements in the teacher's knowledge and abilities in interactions by using different training methods such as modeling, video-based feedback, online resources, and coaching. Teachers are more likely to implement new strategies when the professional development is focused on an individual skill or goal and is highly engaging (Garbacz et al., 2014). Considering the statistics on foster youth and their academic success, the question becomes how teachers can influence the trajectory for foster students using teacher-student relationships? The section above reiterates the statement of the problem in the study, and

the definite need for professional development to instruct educators on identifying and building teacher-student relationships.

Teacher-Child Interaction Training (TCIT). Teacher-Child Interaction Training is a program that provides training for teachers in foundational relationship skills. TCIT was created using the model Parent-Child Interaction Therapy that is used for parents of children with behavior concerns. TCIT focuses on positive reinforcement through praise, teacher modeling, and classroom management strategies to decrease negative behavior. Garbacz et al. (2014) conducted a study on the impact of TCIT on teachers' ability to implement the strategies and the impact of students' behavior. The findings of the study indicated an increase in teacher skills lead to improvement of students' overall behavior and social-emotional functioning.

Banking Time. Another program that is used to improve teacher-student interactions is Banking Time. Banking time allows teachers to interact with students one-on-one. It is critical for these sessions to occur regularly and at the same location. Throughout these sessions, teachers observe the student's actions and verbally label the student's emotions and feelings. This process allows teachers to develop strong relationships with all students but especially at-risk students (Driscoll et al., 2011).

Social-Emotional Intelligence

Children learn primarily at school, which can be defined as a social setting. Therefore, for students to be successful in school one must be able to navigate through social situations (Schonfeld et al., 2015). A child's ability to understand relationships and conflicts will affect the academic achievement as well as the social-emotional intelligence (Hoffman, 2009; Lantieri & Nambiar, 2012; Schonfeld et al., 2015). Literature uses the term social-emotional intelligence,

however, it is defined and divided into two components; social intelligence and emotional intelligence.

Social Intelligence

Social intelligence (SQ) is the ability to understand people to form positive relationships (Arghode, 2013; Kumar et al., 2008). Social intelligence is comprised of interpersonal and intrapersonal aspects. Interpersonal aspects are the ability to read non-verbal cues, understand feelings of others, and respond wisely. Intrapersonal aspects are the capacity to understand oneself and interpret social information (Kumar et al., 2008). In a school social setting, the mastery of both interpersonal and intrapersonal skills are paramount to the success of the child. If a child cannot interact socially because of the lack of social intelligence, the ability to form or maintain meaningful relationships will raise the likelihood of academic struggles. Due to the school mobility of foster children building and maintaining relationships with peers and adults is often challenging and distracts from academics (Pears et al., 2015).

Social and Emotional Learning

Weissberg (2016) proposed, "Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) provides a foundation for safe and positive learning, and enhances students' ability to succeed in school, careers, and life" (p. 1). SEL can increase student engagement in school and decrease stress and depression in students (Lantieri & Nambiar, 2012). School is where students learn the majority of social and emotional skills. When schools concentrate on developing social-emotional intelligence through SEL, there are both short and long-term benefits for the students. Some of the advantages include: (a) improved academic success, (b) decreased emotional distress, (c) reduced behavior problems, (d) increase in positive social behaviors and relationships with peers

and adults, (e) a sense of purpose, (f) involvement and commitment to school, and (g) positive

attitude to oneself (Weissberg, 2016).

For students to learn social and emotional skills teachers must design lessons to address

those specific skills and allocate time for the skills to be practiced in a variety of situations. A

teacher-student interaction is a natural way for teachers to model skills for students and promote

student engagement (Weissberg, 2016).

Although teachers interact with students on a daily basis, it is essential for the leaders of

the school to help create an environment that promotes social and emotional learning. Leaders

that create a climate that focuses on safety and positivity will influence students' academic,

behavior and mental health. Schools need to create discipline policies that are fair and equitable

and focus on prevention programs rather than reward or punishment policies. Because students

are unique and bring different background experiences, SEL programs must contain varying

levels for various types of support or interventions (Weissberg, 2016).

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Programs

SEL programs are designed to teach children how to identify, label, and understand the

emotions that motivate their behavior, have empathy and understand the needs of others,

positively resolve conflict, and use the social-emotional skills to form lasting relationships

(Schonfeld et al., 2015). Brackett et al. (2012) stated that SEL programs need to focus on the

quantity and quality of teacher training, quality of implementation, teacher attitudes toward the

training, and the quantity of lessons taught.

Responsive Classroom Approach. Programs have been developed for schools to

implement that help teach children social and emotional skills to ensure all students achieve

success not only in academics but also in society (Hagelskamp et al., 2013; Lantieri & Nambiar,

2012; Rimm-Kaufman & Chiu, 2007; Schonfeld et al., 2015. The Responsive Classroom (RC) Approach and the RULER Approach are two researched based programs that districts have implemented and seen positive outcomes.

The RC Approach was designed by uniting two different perspectives, the Bioecological Model described by Bronfenbrenner and Morris and the General Systems Theory described by Robert Pianta. The Bioecological Model examines how children grow and develop through interactions with the environment and people (Hong, Algood, Chiu, & Lee, 2011). The General Systems Theory explained that teachers' relationships with students are critical to a child's development, and they regulate the behavior of students in the classroom (Pianta, 1999). The Northeast Foundation for Children created the RC Approach. This program focuses on a caring classroom environment and combines social and academic learning. The RC Approach is designed for seven different aspects: (a) equal focus on social and educational curriculum, (b) centered on how children learn as well as what they learn, (c) social interaction creates cognitive growth, and (d) concentrate on cooperation, responsibility, empathy, assertion, and self-control as essential social skills for children to learn. The remaining aspects are (e) teachers' understanding of children's individual, cultural, and developmental characteristics, (f) understanding of children's families and (g) focus on how faculty works together. The study indicated a modest correlation between using the RC Approach and improvement in students' learning. On the other hand, there was no correlation between using the RC Approach and decreasing the achievement gap of students designated at risk. Teachers that implemented the RC Approach recorded developing closer relationships with students. Students also showed an increase in social skill development (Rimm-Kaufman & Chiu, 2007). The implementation of the RC Approach had a positive impact on students and teachers.

RULER Approach. **A**nother highly effective researched based SEL program that has been studied is the RULER Approach. Hagelskamp et al. (2013) stated that "The RULER Approach to Social and Emotional Learning is designed to improve the quality of classroom interactions through professional development and classroom curricula that infuse emotional literacy instruction into teaching-learning interactions" p. 530). Teachers that create a climate of respect, support, positive interactions, and understand students' needs help facilitate social and emotional learning (Schonfeld, 2015; Weissberg, 2016).

The RULER program focuses on four emotion skills: (a) recognizing emotions in oneself and others, (b) understanding the reasons and consequences of emotions, (c) identifying emotions with an accurate and diverse vocabulary, and (d) expressing and regulating emotions in socially appropriate ways. These skills produce the acronym for RULER (Hagelskamp et al., 2013; Tominey et al., 2017). For programs to be effective teachers, need the necessary support through professional development. RULER trains and coaches teachers in SEL skills and the Feeling Words curriculum to provide students with optimal chances of improvement in social and academic development. The Feeling Words curriculum supports educators and students to analyze emotional aspects of not only personal experiences but also in the core curriculum material (Hagelskamp et al., 2013).

Hagelskamp et al. (2013) conducted a study to identify if classrooms implementing the RULER Approach indicated an increase in emotional and instructional support and an increase in classroom organization. At the conclusion of the study, it was evident that using the RULER Approach improved the quality of the classrooms by allowing students to practice social interactions and create lessons that encourage creativity and collaboration. Collaboration and

communication are two essential skills identified by the Common Core State Standards that are critical for students to be college and career ready.

Social and Emotional learning is one aspect that is often missing from school improvement efforts (Lantieri & Nambiar, 2012). Districts that want to focus on all aspects of student programs that improve the quality of academic, social, and emotional learning need to be implemented with fidelity (Reyes et al., 2012).

Emotions

Emotions are an integral part of what makes human beings unique and diverse. However, understanding emotions can be a challenging task for people to face. Emotions are impulses to respond to different situations that occur on a daily basis (Goleman, 1995). For most people emotions express knowledge about one's relationship with their surroundings (Mayer & Salovey, 1996). How people react to certain situations is defined, not only by the emotions they experience but also by the culmination of every experience, they have endeavored (Goleman, 1995).

Sociobiologists concluded that emotions are just as essential as the brain. Emotions can help guide people through decisions and act as an alerting system (Mayer & Salovey, 1996) on those decisions that are too important to leave entirely up to the brain (Goleman, 1995). Over the past decade, there has been more scientific research and public attention brought to the forefront to understand how some of the essential social processes like compassion and empathy can operate in a world filled with extreme obstacles such as poverty, abuse, and violence (Quas et al., 2017).

Emotional learning begins at infancy. Children develop their emotional outlook and capabilities from all the different exchanges between the parent and child. A parent that fails to

attune to the child's emotional needs will create a negative view of relationships for the child (Goleman, 1995). In addition, the child will lack the ability to recognize emotions. Instead, they develop a sensitivity to emotions that are critical to their daily lives. For some of these children anger becomes the primary emotion and they learn to identify anger in other's to ensure survival (Quas et al., 2017).

A child's brain reaches two-thirds of its size in the first three to four years of life (Goleman, 1995). Therefore, a child who encountered severe stress has altered brain development and as a result struggled emotionally as well as intellectually. Quas et al. (2017) conducted a study to examine children who experienced extreme adversity and compared the child's ability to understand one's emotions. The study concluded that children who experienced prolonged adversity demonstrated different patterns of emotion recognition then peers that had not experienced adversity. Additionally the children identified more images with anger than their peers did.

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence (EQ) is the ability to understand and recognize emotions in oneself and others and to use the awareness to manage relationships and behaviors (Arghode, 2013). According to Bradberry and Greaves (2009), "Emotional awareness and understanding are not taught in school" (p. 14). The school focuses on the fundamental skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic, but very little is taught on how to identify and manage emotions. Emotional Intelligence has a direct effect on how people manage behavior, maneuver through social situations, and make personal decisions. EQ is different from IQ because IQ is a fixed number, but EQ is a skill that can be developed (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009).

Impact of Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence is critical to a plethora of skills one does on a daily basis. Bradberry and Greaves (2009) argued that "EQ is so critical to success that it accounts for 58 percent of performance in all types of jobs" (p. 20). EQ can lead to leadership opportunities and personal excellence. In a study conducted by Bradberry and Greaves (2009), they found 90% of productive employees were also high in emotional Intelligence; however, only 20% of the unproductive employees were ranked high in emotional Intelligence. A correlation has been found between increases in salaries to high EQ's. The ability to understand and utilize emotional Intelligence can directly influence the overall personal achievement. Also, students with a greater amount of emotional intelligence behave better in school, have positive relationships, and are more engaged in school (Tominey et al., 2017).

Four Skills of Emotional Intelligence

There are four skills and two competencies in one's EQ. Personal competence is divided into self-awareness and self-management skills, and social competence is divided into social awareness and relationship management skills.

Self-awareness. Self-awareness allows one to understand their emotions and understand how one reacts to a given situation (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009) while also knowing one's strengths and limitations (Lantieri & Nambiar, 2012). One who is self-aware can focus not only the positive emotions but also on the negative ones. Emotions are there for a reason, and understanding why they are present creates a deeper self-awareness. Self-awareness is critical to developing all the EQ skills (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009; Weissberg, 2016).

Self-management. Self-management is your reaction to situations. During this process, one is using the awareness of emotions to stay positive and direct the behavior to positivity.

Self-management requires patience to understand fully the situation that leads to the appropriate reaction (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009; Weissbeg, 2016). Lantieri and Nambiar (2012) stated that it involves managing stress, motivating oneself, persevering, controlling impulses, and delaying gratification.

Social awareness. Social awareness is the foundational skill for social competencies. Whereas personal-awareness is the understanding of one's emotions, social awareness is the understanding of the people around you. Listening and observing are the two fundamental ways to hone in on someone's emotions and what they are thinking (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009; Lantieri & Nambiar, 2012; Weissberg, 2016).

Relationship management. The final skill is relationship management. Relationship management refers to the ability to use personal and social awareness to interact with others effectively. Relationships are a treasure and are formed by how one is treated, the understanding of people, and the experiences and history one shares. "The difference between an interaction and a relationship is a matter of frequency" (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009, p. 44). Building and managing relationships are often challenging during periods of stress (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009; Weissberg, 2016). Foster youth can experience a tremendous amount of pressure over a constant period that prohibits children from being able to learn how to maintain relationships. Therefore, it is critical to improving one's relationship management ability to have the necessary skills to navigate through stressful situations (Lantieri & Nambiar, 2012).

Lantieri and Nambiar (2012) include one more competence that contributes to students successfully adjusting and performing academically. The researchers included responsible decision-making. Responsible decision-making allows the student to make positive decisions

about their behavior, social interactions, and school oriented choices such as safety and ethical standards.

California's Foster Youth

California has approximately 60,000 children (48% female and 52% male) in the foster care system. The average age of foster youth is 10. California foster youth spend an average of 1.8 years in the system and 4,000 foster students age out of the program annually (Illac, 2016). Figure 3 is a graphic representation on the breakdown of foster youth by ethnicity in the state of California.
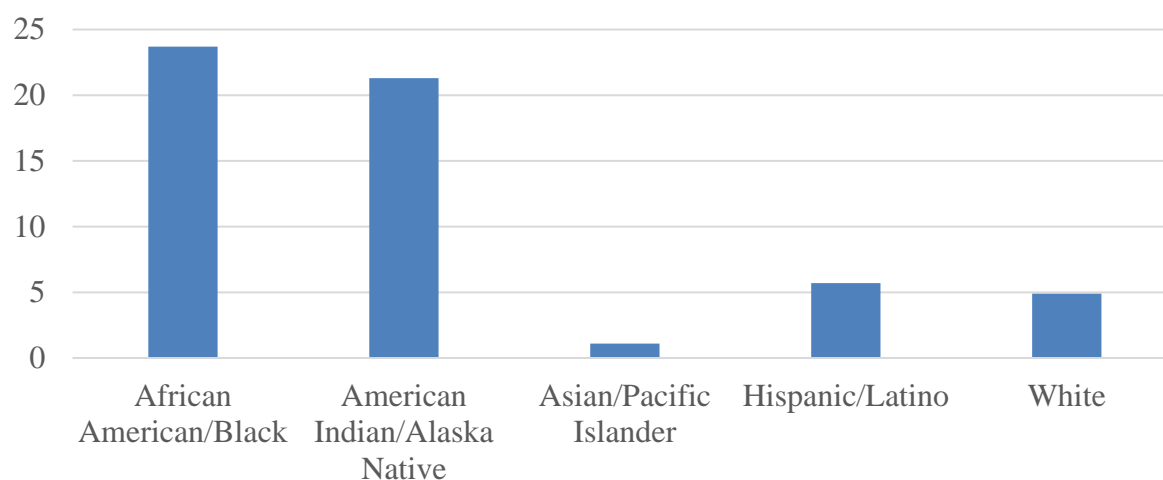
Figure 3. California's Foster Youth Ethnic Breakdown (retrieved 2017 from kidsdata.org).

Until the implementation of the LCAP foster youth was not a specified subgroup like English language learners (ELLs) or low-socio economic students, but now federal, state, and local education agencies are required to support foster youth and put forth interventions that will help close the achievement gap (California Department of Education, 2016). California is the first state in the nation to monitor the academic progress and success of the foster youth community. Communication amongst the different agencies and the schools regarding the foster student is the main struggle (Hahnel & Van Zile, 2012).

With the emphasis on closing the achievement gap in education, districts are faced with the dilemma on designing or implementing programs to decrease the existing gap. While the reasons for the gaps are still being debated, there is no argument for the existence or the urgency to close the gap (Rich, 2011). Forty-five percent of foster students in 2010 graduated from high school compared to 79% of the general population. Additionally, foster students have the highest high school dropout rate of those students who have disabilities or are considered at-risk due to low-socioeconomic status (Illac, 2016).   The implementation of the LCAP requires districts and other education agencies to identify specific goals and intervention programs that are being implemented to close the achievement gap (California Department of Education, 2016).

A county located in Southern California supports the third largest population of foster children (approximately 4,360). The district located in southern afore mentioned county hosted a Foster Youth and Homeless Summit where the model of "Partnering to Build an Educational Pathway for Foster Youth" was announced. The district is the largest district in the county supporting approximately 500 foster children. Figure 4 and Figure 5 were presented at the summit to outline the percentage of the foster youth in each of the different grade-level schools as well as the racial profile within the district (Illac, 2016).
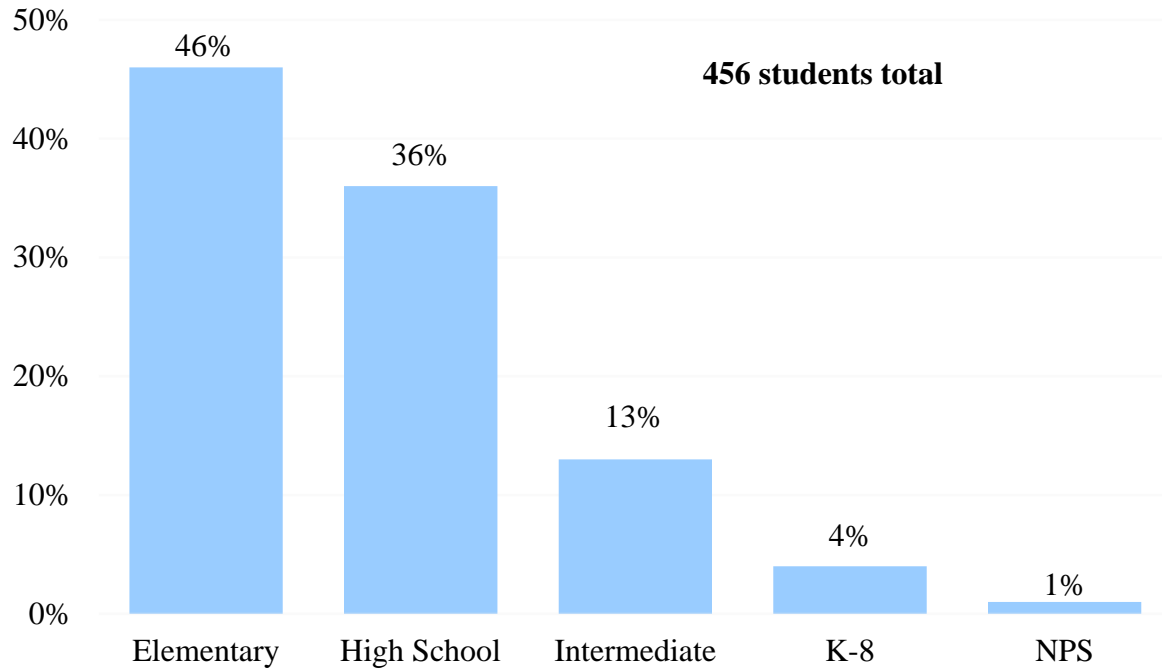
Figure 4. Foster Youth Percentages (Illac, 2016).
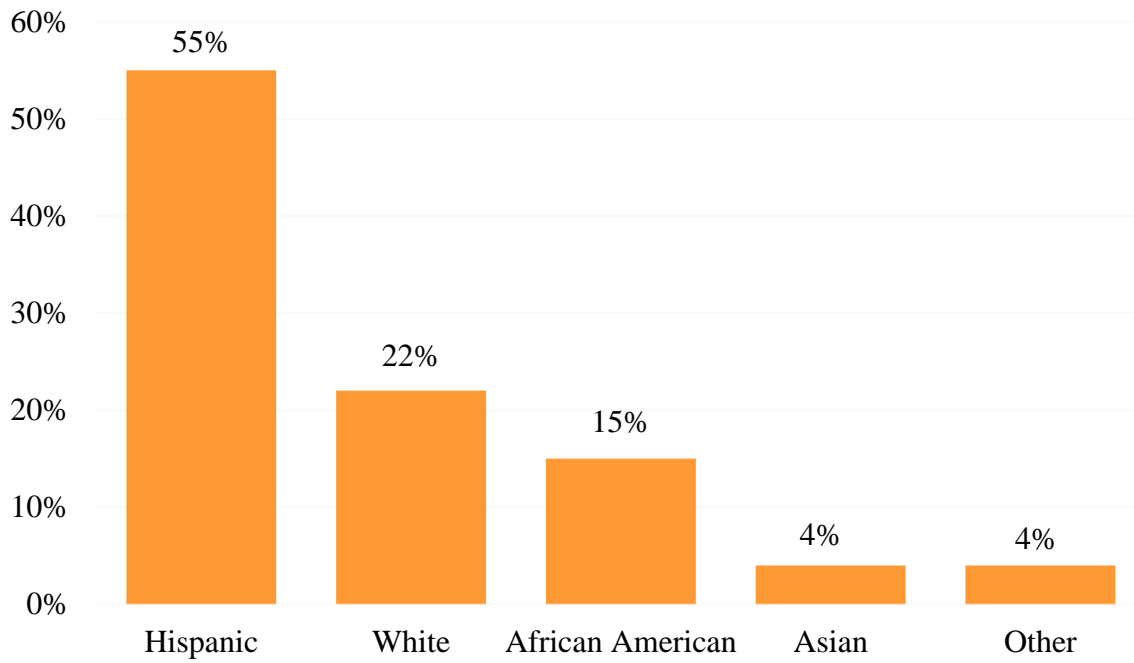
Figure 5. Racial Profile of Foster Youth (Illac, 2016).

Summary

According to the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (2016), there are approximately 427,910 children in the foster care system in 2015. Neiheiser (2015) proposed that foster children are 44% less likely to graduate high school, and many leave the system without the knowledge and skills to live independently and maintain a career. Currently, under the LCFF, districts are now receiving funding to support foster students; therefore, districts are now focusing on interventions and strategies that can be implemented to support the foster youth (California Department of Education, 2016). Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs establishes the framework needed to prioritize interventions and strategies that will help promote academic and social success for the foster youth.

According to Pianta and Sabol (2012) for the past two decades, a variety of research based theoretical and empirical work on the importance and impact of teacher-student interactions has been conducted. Although many studies have found correlations between positive teacher-student relationships and an increase in academic and social achievement, there are still many different areas that need further research. The effects or impact of the teacher-student relationship on students that are designated at-risk because of family dynamics is an area of research that is greatly needed. For districts to increase the academic success of all their students, they must have a clear understanding of the effects of positive teacher interactions not only with the average student but also with those students with lower social intelligence. As previously, discussed, foster children without strong positive teacher interaction are less likely to develop social intelligence. Therefore, foster children in this scenario are less liable to obtain academic success. With that being said, "By and large, the field has made significant progress in understanding the complex role of teacher-child relationships" (Sabol & Pianta, 2012, p. 227).

The Teacher-student Interaction Theory was built around the framework of Attachment Theory. The Attachment Theory originated from John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth back in the late 1920s. Research has shown that a child's attachment to the mother figure impacts a child's social development and how one builds relationships. The primary research focused on how mothers respond to the needs of infants and children and how that correlates with the child's development of attachment (Bowlby, 1988; Bretherton, 1992). Melinder et al. (2013) researched the effect of children being removed from the home and how it affected the attachment. The study indicated that children were separated at an early age remembered less and therefore were able to build attachments, but the opposite was true with children entering puberty. According to Sabol and Pianta (2012), an effective and positive teacher-student relationship can counteract a negative attachment schema. Therefore, the need for further research on how attachments are developed and how districts and schools can facilitate healthy attachments with foster students through positive relationships is necessary.

School is a setting that students have to be able to navigate to achieve academic and social success. However, schools have spent the majority of focus over the past couple of decades on academic success and neglecting the social and emotional feature. Recently districts are recognizing that social-emotional intelligence is essential for all students. Research indicates that social-emotional intelligence is a greater predictor of life long happiness and career success than someone's IQ (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009). Students that exhibit pro-social skills are more engaged in school and become part of the school community. The goal of providing students with the tools needed to be successful in college and career means that education needs to focus on the whole child. Therefore, it is essential for further research on how districts can support all students but especially foster children in developing social-emotional intelligence.

It is evident and necessary that further research is conducted on foster youth and the struggles they face. By having a deeper understanding of foster youth, districts can establish interventions and strategies to support academic and social achievement. Interacting with teachers and peers are two of the most predominate factors students encounter on a daily basis. Having a greater knowledge of how teacher-student interactions and Attachment Theory affects all students can help the development of social-emotional intelligence throughout the districts.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The focus of this Grounded theory study was to formulate a theory by testing the research questions relating to social-emotional intelligence in foster youth and teacher-student relationships as stated in Chapter I. The methodology and instruments used to test the research questions are discussed in this chapter. The chapter is organized in seven different sections: (a) setting and participants, (b) sampling procedures, (c) instrumentation and measures, (d.) grounded theory, (d) plan of data collection, (e) plan of data analysis, and (f) ethical issues.

Setting and Participants

A southern California school district consists of 31 elementary schools, eight intermediate schools, five comprehensive high schools, a middle college high school, and three alternative high schools which span approximately 45 miles. The district serves over 55,000 students representing a diverse population.

The district currently services 503 foster students (242 female and 261 male). The sample of this study consisted of 54 foster students from a single high school, the foster parents of the students, teachers, the school counselor in charge of the foster youth, and the site principal. The school that was selected is located in middle-class neighborhoods, but those enrolled represented a diverse population.

Sampling Procedures

The southern California school district serves approximately 55,000 students including 503 foster students. Due to the vast number of foster students, the researcher only used a sample of the population to conduct the study. The research focused on criterion sampling. Criterion sampling is used to select participants based on a predetermined criterion (Lunenburg & Irby,

2008). The researcher's criteria were defined as school personnel that directly interacted and

supported foster children. The researcher focused on the school that supported the greatest

number of foster students living in single residential homes.
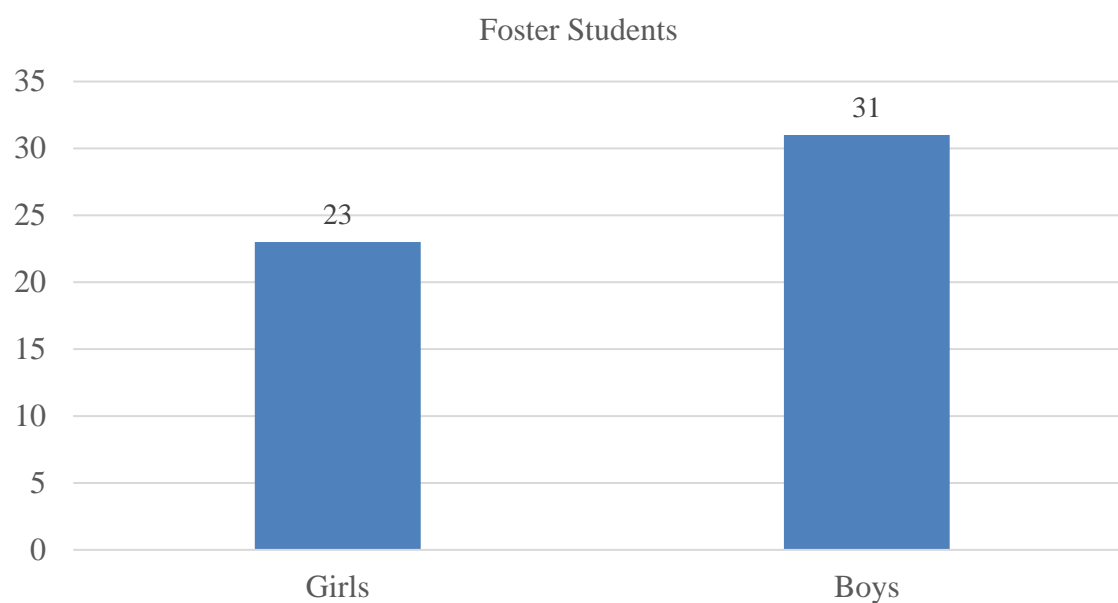
Foster Students

Figure 6. Foster Students attending the High School (Krcmar, 2018)

Foster Students by Grade
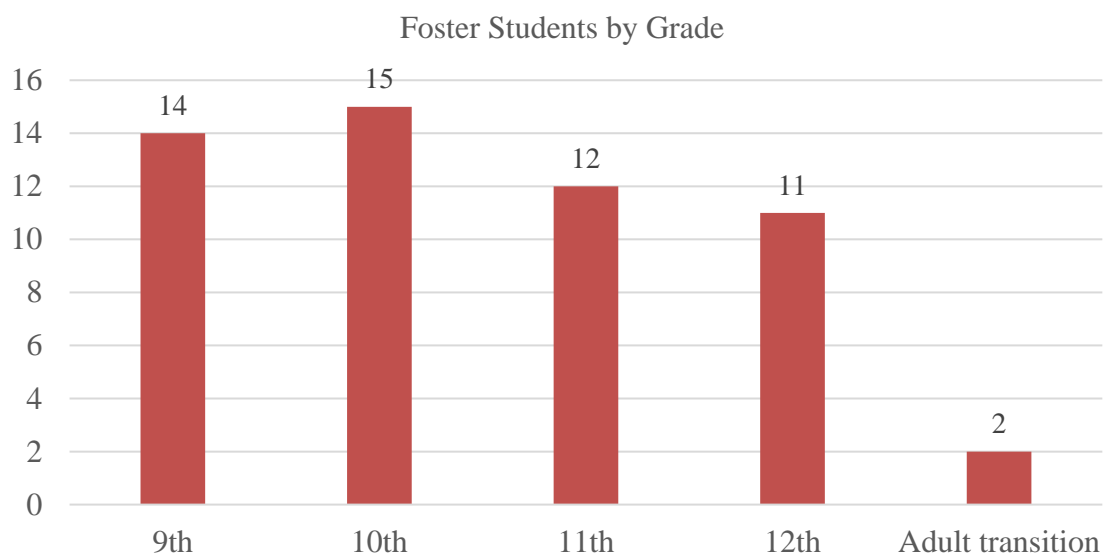
Figure 7. Foster Students by Grade Attending the High School (Krcmar, 2018)

The researcher began by having a one-on-one conversation with the Assistant Superintendent, to obtain approval and in doing so gained support from the Student Service Department. During the fall of 2017, permission was granted from the university's Internal Review Board to conduct the study.

In August, the researcher contacted the Director of Student Services to gather the data regarding the numbers of foster youth in the district and to establish the protocols for contacting the foster parents and teachers. At the conclusion of the meeting, it was determined that a meeting with the high school counselor would be essential in assuring confidentiality for the foster parents; therefore, a meeting was scheduled for the beginning of October.

The Director of Student Services, the high school counselor, and the researcher met at the district office to collaborate on the protocol for administering the foster parent consent letters (see Appendix A) and surveys. The team decided the researcher was to compose a cover letter (see Appendix B) explaining the research to the foster parents along with the explanation, that participating in the study is on a volunteer basis and that the individual data collected by the researcher would not be shared with the school. The findings though would contribute to improving support for the foster students. In addition to the cover letter, the foster parents were given the consent letter as well as the survey. The foster parents were informed that the survey pertained to one foster child so if the parents had multiple foster children they could complete multiple surveys. At the conclusion of the consent letters parents were asked if they would be willing to complete the Foster Student Interaction and Social-Emotional Intelligence (FSI&ESI) survey (see Appendix C), participate in an interview (see Appendix D for interview protocol), and complete a journal (see Appendix E for journal protocol). After the researcher composed the email, it was emailed to the high school counselor to email to the foster parents to ensure the

parents' identity remained confidential. When the researcher received confirmation of participants being willing to either be interviewed or journal, the researcher contacted them directly to schedule an interview or send the protocols for the journal process.

The researcher emailed the site administrator in October and discussed the purpose, the procedures of the research being conducted, and the best way to contact the teachers at the site. The administrator requested for the researcher to compose a cover letter (see Appendix F) in similar fashion as the foster parent letter, but the administrator would send the email directly to the staff. Attached to the email was the consent letter (see Appendix G) and the FSI&ESI. The teachers were informed that the survey pertained to one foster child so if the teachers had multiple foster children they could complete multiple surveys. Two weeks later the site administrator resent the email as well as had the secretary print both the consent letter and survey and place them in the teacher boxes. The teachers were given the option to turn the survey into the secretary or scan and email them to the researcher. Another email was sent out to the teachers two weeks later. At the conclusion of the consent letters teachers were asked if they would be willing to complete the FSI&ESI (see Appendix H), participate in an interview (see Appendix I for interview protocol), and complete a journal (see Appendix J for journal protocol). Because all contact was by email all participants would return consent letters, surveys, and journals electronically to the researcher's email. After the researcher received the consent letters the participants were contacted to either schedule an interview or be sent the journal protocols.

Communication was a critical aspect of the study; therefore, emails were utilized when contacting the foster parents. All foster parents in the target group received an email in November 2017 informing them of the study in the form of a consent letter. The original email

was sent two weeks later to increase parent participation. After the second email attempt the researcher was given permission from the site administrator to place the consent letters and surveys in sealed envelopes and the counselor distributed them directly to the foster students. Each month the counselor and the Excel teacher met with all the foster students in the school and discussed upcoming events. The counselor distributed the parent surveys during the December meeting. The researcher provided the counselor with a box for the students to turn in the completed surveys. Due to the diversity of the district, the consent letter and the survey/worksheet was provided in English and Spanish. In addition, the cover letter communicated that parents could email the researcher their willingness to participate in the study if they did not have access or the ability to scan the consent letter back. At the conclusion of the consent letter, the parents were asked if they were willing to take a survey including a foster parent worksheet regarding their foster child and their outlook on school and relationships. Also, the parents were able to indicate if they would be willing to participate in an interview and complete an electronic journal. The purpose of the journal is to document conversations between the parent and the child regarding school, relationships with the teachers, relationships with peers, and relationships with the family. At the end of the study, January 2018, journals were returned by email back to the district to reduce the amount of personal contact with the parents. The foster parents were asked to either scan and return the signed consent letter or email the researcher of their willingness to participate in the study. The researcher printed the surveys and then kept the documents in a locked briefcase.

Foster parent, teacher, counselor (see Appendix L), and administrator (see Appendix M) interviews were conducted by phone at the participants convenience. The interviews were conducted from December through January. The interview(s) lasted between 30-120 minutes

and consisted of seven to 10 open-ended questions. The foster parent interview(s) were

conducted, in January 2018, by a phone conference to help maintain the participants' privacy and

confidentiality. Prior to the interview and at the interview participants were informed that the

conversation was going to be recorded.

The time line was dictated by the holidays. Because of the extra responsibilities and

stress the holidays create for both the teachers and foster parents, there was a lack of

participation. If the research was to be duplicated it is recommended to conduct the study during

either early fall or spring to avoid the major holidays and increase participation. The figure

below illustrates the timeline for the procedure depicted in the above paragraphs.
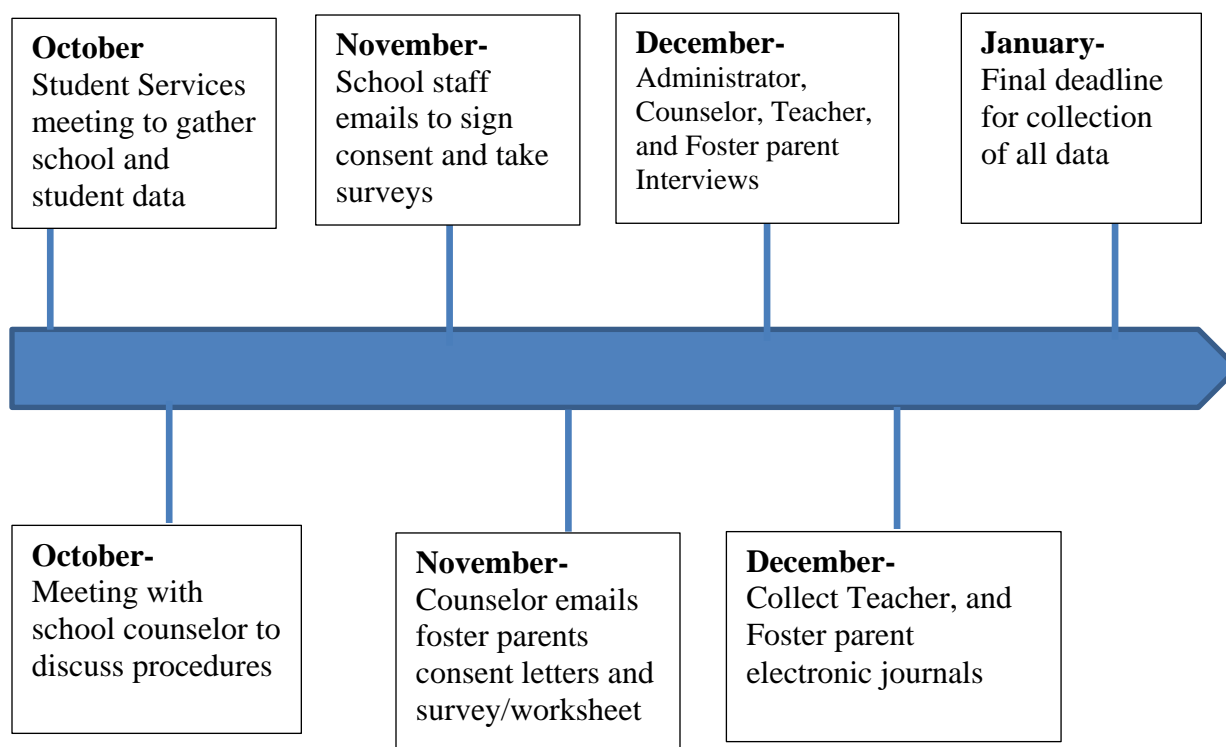
Figure 8. Timeline for Procedures (Krcmar, 2017)

Instrumentation and Measures

The first instrument used in the mixed method study was a custom survey, Foster Student Interaction and Social-Emotional Intelligence (FSI&SEI), created by the researcher and validated through peer review. The survey consisted of 15 questions, five demographic questions (age, gender, years of experience, grade level, and ethnicity), nine Likert scale questions (ranging from 1 to 4; 1=never and 4=always), and three open-ended questions to elicit more in-depth responses from the participants. An example of the open-ended questions for both the teachers and parents is: Describe your relationship with the student. (see Appendix C and H for complete surveys). The survey was created to discover themes around the research question of social-emotional intelligence (How does the teacher-student relationship influence the foster youth's social-emotional intelligence?). Nine teachers and three foster parents completed the survey. Also, foster parents were asked to complete a worksheet on their foster student that consisted of three open-ended questions. Each survey was identical in content except the level of vocabulary and point of view (Liu, 2013). For example, the teachers rated the statements (ranging from 1 to 4; 1=never and 4=always), "I have conversations with the student about academics. The student initiates conversations with their peers." and the parents were asked, "I have conversations with my foster child about academics. My foster child interacts with peers outside of school" (see Appendix C and H for complete surveys).

The second instrument used in the study was face-to-face interviews with foster parents, teachers, the administrator, and the counselor. The interview was semi structured (Creswell, 2013) which allowed themes to naturally present themselves. The interviews were recorded using Audacity and the researcher transcribed the interview. Due to the sensitive manner of the interviews, all of the recordings were deleted after the information was transcribed

(Ramezankhani, Heydarabadi, Ghaffari, Mehrabi, & Kazemi, 2016). The process was used with two foster parents, four teachers, one administrator, and one counselor. All of the interview questions were designed around the research questions asked in the study.

1. How does the teacher-student relationship influence the foster youth's social-emotional intelligence?

2. How does the teacher-student relationship help foster children develop attachments?

3. How does the teacher-student relationship impact the foster parent and child relationship?

Different interview questions were developed for the categories of participants: (a) foster parents, (b) teacher, (c) administrator, and (d) counselor (see Appendices D, I, L, and M for interview questions).

Journaling was the final instrument utilized in the study. The participants willing to journal were given the hypothesis of the study, the teacher-student relationship will influence the foster youth's Social- Emotional Intelligence, to provide direction in the expectation of journaling, while still leaving it open ended to allow for honest themes to develop. The participants wrote in an electronic journal every day Monday through Friday for two weeks. Below is a graphic outlining the research questions and the instruments used to gather data to answer the questions.

Research Questions	Instrumentation
How does the teacher-student relationship influence the foster youth's social-emotional intelligence?	• Teacher survey, journal, and interview • Parent survey, worksheet, journal, and interview • Counselor interview
How does the teacher-student relationship help foster children develop attachments?	• Teacher survey, journal, and interview • Parent survey and interview • Counselor interview
How does the teacher-student relationship impact the foster parent and child relationship?	• Parent survey, journal, and interview • Counselor interview

Figure 9. Data Instrumentation (Krcmar, 2017)

Validity

Throughout the mixed methods study the researcher made a conscious effort in creating validity. The term validity in a qualitative study refers to the establishment of the truth. Lochmiller and Lester (2017) argued that truth depends on the "Degree to which your data collection, analysis, and presentation of findings are presented in a thorough and verifiable manner" (p 180).

The researcher used multiple strategies to develop validity within the study. The first approach used was a triangulation of the data. Triangulation allowed the researcher to use various forms of data to build a solid and strong theory (Lochmiller & Lester, 2017). The implementation of the surveys, interviews, and journals allowed the researcher to find the common categories in all three different instruments. By using the three different instruments, the researcher can reduce the possibility of bias of a single instrument and gain a reliable and secure understanding of the research (Maxwell, 2013).

To assist in creating validity, the researcher piloted the foster parent and teacher interviews to determine the length of time. The foster parent interview was conducted with a

foster parent outside the district and was done in the same format used in the study. The interview took 30 minutes to complete. The teacher interview was conducted with a high school teacher outside the district that works with foster students. The interview mirrored the process used in the study. The interview lasted for 35 minutes. While the semi-structured open-ended questions were used to provide consistency, the structure allowed the researcher to be flexible with the questions to ensure the participants were able to articulate and depict a full story regarding the foster student(s). The pilot study indicated the minimum amount of time to conduct the interview however, the maximum amount of time was not indicated. In addition, the researcher used member checking to ensure accuracy. After each interview, the researcher sent the transcribed interview to the participant to validate what was discussed in the interview. At this point, the participant was able to correct any mistakes or eliminate any comments.

One of the most important decisions that can affect the study is whether the researcher is going to examine the whole population or a smaller sample size that represents the community (Lochmiller & Lester, 2017). Choosing a sample size that represents the population is a critical component to creating validity. For this particular study, the researcher has a population of 503 foster students. Due to the transient nature of foster students, (Pears et al., 2015) the researcher's sample size consisted of 100 foster students.

Producing a quality survey is another way the researcher was able to ensure validity. A quality survey is defined by the quality of the instrument and the survey sample (Lochmiller & Lester, 2017). Teachers, foster parents, and foster students were given a survey to complete; each survey was developed with the age, experience, and the responsibility of the different participant samples in mind. The researcher used peer debriefing in creating the surveys given to the foster parents as well as the teachers. Peer debriefing allowed for a fellow researcher to

examine the surveys for discrepancies amongst the questions or ideas, along with questions that might be unclear to the participant (Lochmiller & Lester, 2017). The fellow researcher also completed the survey to ensure the competition time was approximately ten minutes. At the conclusion, suggestions were made to increase the quality of the surveys. A well-designed survey establishes the opportunity for the participants to answer the questions honestly while allowing the researcher to gather relevant data for the study (Blaire, Czaja, & Blair, 2014). Finally, the researcher had an expert in the research field validate the themes found throughout the data.

Reliability

When performing a research study, it is crucial that the instruments are reliable. Reliability is reached when the instruments are consistent (Lochmiller & Lester, 2017). All the participants received the initial survey via email and mail. To increase the number of completed responses the survey was sent out for a second time to all those involved in the same format as the original process to ensure consistency and privacy.

The researcher established consistency with the process of interviews. During the phase of interviews, the researcher asked each group of participants the same questions and in the same sequence. Finally, each interview was conducted in a similar manner and similar environments.

Grounded Theory

The researcher used a Grounded theory qualitative approach in analyzing the data. This form of analysis allowed the researcher to evaluate human action, interaction, and the multiple perspectives of the participants. The qualitative approach focuses on human interaction and social research (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). Creswell (2013) stated that Grounded theory is developed by examining the data in the field. This method is centered on the idea that the theory

develops during the study through analysis and data collection (Strauss & Corbin, 1994).

Grounded theory researchers use interviews as the main form of data collection (Creswell, 2013).

Some grounded theorists have combined qualitative and quantitative techniques to generate the

social theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). This approach allowed the researcher to analyze the

patterns and relationships between the participants.

To analyze the data the researcher used coding. There are three phases on coding: open

coding, axial coding, and selective coding. The coding process begins with the broad stage of

open coding where categories are developed by the data. During the axial coding process themes

are defined by the data, and finally, during the selective coding process the theme that brings it

all together is developed (Creswell, 2013). One common form of data collection are interviews

with multiple participants. The researcher used surveys with open-ended questions as well as

journals to discover themes throughout the study.

By constant comparisons, interpretations, and perspectives of the participants the

researcher's goal was to develop theories that are conceptually dense (Strauss & Corbin, 1994).

The first step taken by the researcher to achieve the goal was to read all of the transcripts and

open-ended questions. Then the preliminary and interpretive categories were determined. From

there the researcher examined the preliminary codes to identify relationships and determine

patterns and codes. Examining pattern clusters lead to identifying emergent themes. The

researcher then examined those themes across interviews and open-ended questions to explicate

the emerging themes. Below is a graphic representation of the framework used to identify a

theory between teacher-student interaction and foster youth's social-emotional intelligence.
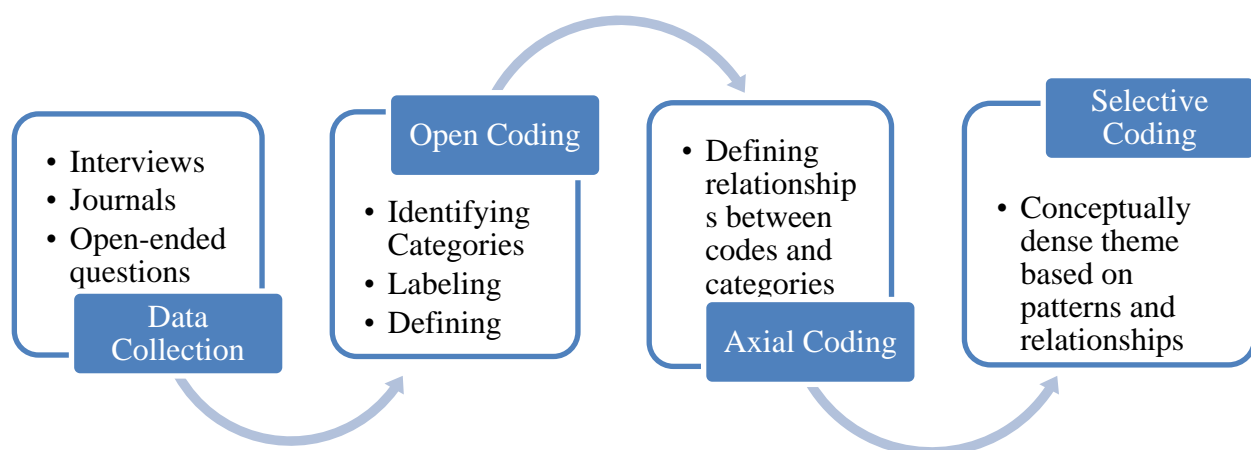
Figure 10. Grounded Theory Framework (Source: Creswell, 2013; Strauss & Corbin, 1994. Graphic created by Krcmar, 2017)

Plan of Data Collection

The study was conducted using multiple sources of documentation: administrator, counselor, foster parent, and teacher surveys and in-depth face-to-face interviews with the participants as mentioned above. This mixed method quasi-experimental study used multiple forms of data collection to support the researcher's analysis of the impact that the teacher-student relationship had on the social-emotional intelligence of the foster youth. Before the beginning of the study, the researcher obtained written consent from the foster parents for students to participate. Two phases of data collection were included as part of the study.

The first phase of data collection included the foster parents, foster students and teachers receiving the FSI&ESI survey. The survey consisted of five demographic questions, eight Likert scale questions, and three open-ended questions. Teachers and parents received the survey by email. At the end of the survey, teachers and foster parents were asked if they would be willing to be interviewed and journal during the study. Volunteers were given the hypothesis of the study to help guide the participants in what to document in the journal.

The second phase of data collection included face-to-face interviews of foster parents and teachers. As part of the consent letter, parents were asked if they would be willing to be interviewed. A sample of foster parents were interviewed. This consisted of ten open-ended questions for the parent. The researcher developed specific questions but kept them broad enough to allow themes to develop naturally. The first question was designed to allow the participants to feel comfortable about expressing personal feelings. As the interview progressed, the questions became more focused creating opportunities for deeper conversations (Nassrin, Soroor, & Soodabeh, 2012). The researcher interviewed each participant only once due to the amount of information given by the participants and the emotional reactions the participants displayed. At the conclusion of each interview the researcher gained permission to contact the participants again if any further questions arose.

As part of the teacher survey, teachers were asked if they would give consent to be interviewed. A similar sampling of teachers was used to ensure validity. Teachers were asked nine open ended questions concentrating on the teacher-student relationship. The teachers were instructed before the interview not to use the students' names.

The final phase was an interview with the counselor and administrator at the school site. The counselor and the administrator were asked nine open ended questions concentrating on the student's social-emotional intelligence and their interaction with the teacher. Throughout the data collection, the students' anonymity was protected. Below is a graphic representation of the data collection process.
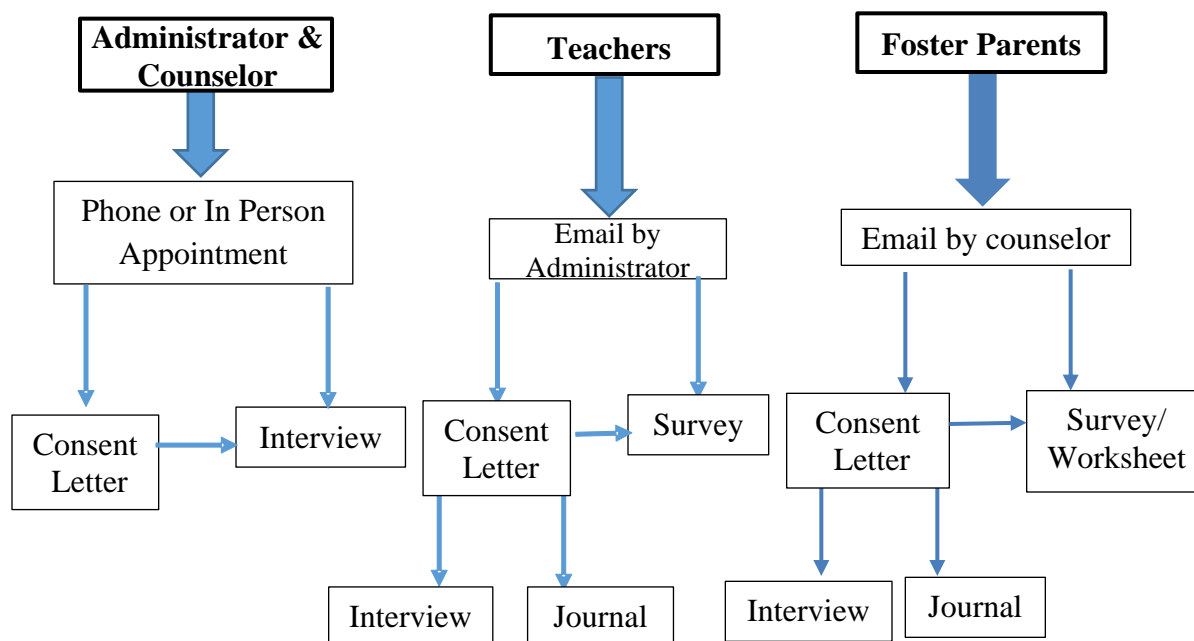
Figure 11. Data Collection Procedures (Krcmar, 2017)

Plan of Data Analysis

The purpose of this concurrent quasi-experimental design study is to identify a grounded theory by using both quantitative and qualitative data. This method, Likert scale questions, and demographic data will be used to determine a correlation between teacher student interactions and the foster youth attachments. Concurrently, the influence on foster's youth social-emotional intelligence was investigated using open-ended questions, interviews, and journals.

The quantitative analysis of this study was centered on the demographic data and the responses to the eight Likert scale questions in the FSI&SEI survey. The analysis conducted helped to formulate an answer to both of the quantitative research questions: (a.) To what extent do teachers that have positive relationships associate with foster children's improvement of social-emotional intelligence? and (b.) Is there an association between positive teacher-student relationships and foster children developing attachments?

The main ideas of grounded theory were used in conducting the data analysis of the study (Creswell, 2013). Due to the vast number of interviews, the researcher used software to record and transcribe the answers to ensure all information was collected. The researcher began the process by using open coding of the interviews, the journals, and the open-ended questions from the survey. Open coding allowed the researcher to read what the transcripts said without reading into it (Creswell, 2013). Throughout the coding, the researcher found different categories within the data and labeled it.

After the open coding process was done, the researcher found the constant category that was represented throughout all the different instruments, this category became the central phenomenon and drove the remainder of the coding process. Axial coding was the next step where the researcher went back into the data and discovered categories that relate or explain the central phenomenon (Creswell, 2013).

The researcher analyzed the likert scale portion of the FSI&SEI for quantitative data. This portion focused on how foster students develop social-emotioanl intelligence as well as how they form attachments. The researcher utlilized a four-point scale to ensure a non-neutral response. In the case of two numbers being circled the researcher used the greater value response.

The second part of the FSI&SEI survey included three open-ended questions. The questions focused on relationships. The final part of the triangulation process was the one-on-one interviews. The interviews focused on social-emotional intelligence, teacher-student relationships, and attachments.

The researcher began the trinagulation process with the analysis of the individual interview responses from the administrator and the counselor. The foster parents and school

personnel completed the FSI&SEI survey and the reponses were coded. The researcher

recognized patterns in the data between the likert scale portion and the open-ended questionarre

amongst all the participants. The final component were the interviews. While the researcher had

developed questions the path of the interview was guided by the responses given from the

participant. At the conclusion of the interviews the researcher examined the transcript for

patterns and trianguletd the findings with the open-ended questionaires. The findings lead to the

development of the qualtiative themes. A single outlier of the study was determined by the

length of time the foster student lived with the family. This outlier was identified during the

triangulation process. The figure below is a graphic organizer on the triangulation process that

was used to analyze the data gathered in the study.
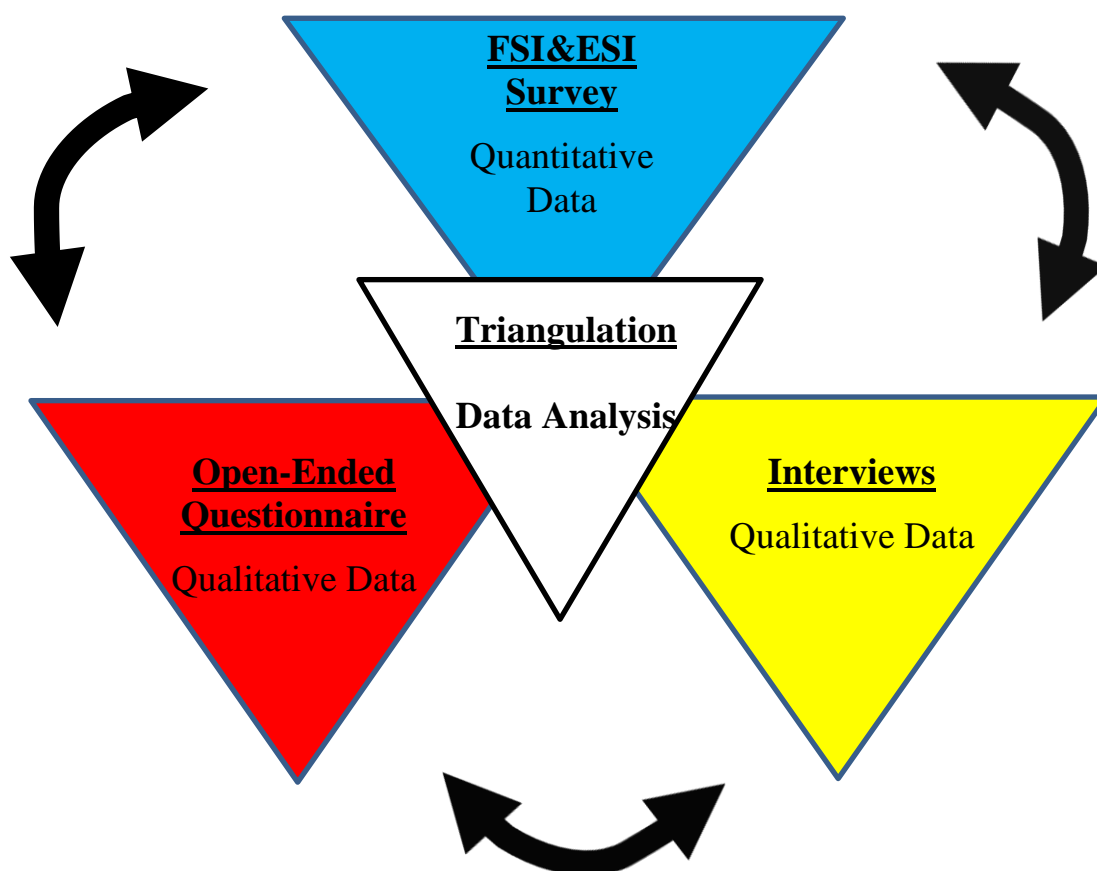
Figure 12. Plan of Data Analysis (Krcmar, 2017)

Ethical Issues

Qualitative research can bring to surface different ethical issues within the researcher (Creswell, 2013). The researcher has direct access and knowledge, of the district, principals, and teachers, therefore, it is necessary to ensure the participants and district administration that the information gathered is to support foster students and not to evaluate teachers or administrators.

The researcher is passionate about creating positive relationships with all children and going the extra mile to do what is needed to ensure all of the students feel loved, safe, and confident in themselves. The researcher believes that every educator should strive for creating these positive relationships with all their students, but the need for those relationships in every at risk child such as the foster youth are the most important for greater scholastic achievement.

Summary

This chapter further defined the purpose of the research and restated the research questions. The participants were selected through a cluster and criterion sample of foster youth and teachers in the southern California district. Additionally, the instruments used in the study were discussed as well as the aspects of validity and reliability. The chapter stated the process of data collection and outlined how the data was analyzed. Finally, possible ethical issues were addressed.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Introduction

The intent of this study was to investigate the impact of the teacher-student relationship on foster youth and their social-emotional intelligence. Quantitative and qualitative data was utilized in the analysis of the study. Teacher and parent Likert scale surveys, an open-ended questionnaire, and in-depth interviews with an administrator, a counselor, teachers, and parents achieved the purpose of this study. The results of the data analysis are presented within this chapter: results from the Foster Student Interaction and Social-Emotional Intelligence survey (FSI&SEI) for parents and teachers and results from the interviews and open-ended questions.

Demographics

The study included a total of 15 participants, including site administrator, counselor, teachers, and foster parents. The school site personnel included six male and six female (50% male and 50% female). More than half are between the ages of 31-40 (7 out of 12 or 58.3%), three (25%) are between the ages of 41-50, and two (16.7%) are from the ages of 51-60. Almost half of the participants are Caucasian, five out of 12 (41.7%), two (16.7%) are African American, one (8.3%) is Caucasian Portuguese, two (16.7%) are Hispanic, one (8.3%) is Mexican American, and one (8.3%) did not indicate an ethnicity (see Table 1).

Table 1

School Personnel Demographics

Participant Demographics			
		Teachers	
Demographic		Count	%
Gender	Male	6	50.0%
	Female	6	50.0%
Age	21-30	0	0.0%
	31-40	7	58.3%
	41-50	3	25.0%
	51-60	2	16.7%
	Over 60	0	0.0%
Ethnicity	African American	2	16.7%
	Caucasian	5	41.7%
	Caucasian/ Portuguese	1	8.3%
	Hispanic	2	16.7%
	Mexican American	1	8.3%
	No Response	1	8.3%

The participants in the study represented different grade levels within the high school, five (41.7%) taught ninth, one (8.3%) taught 10th, 0% of the participants either taught 11th or 12th, three (25%) taught ninth-12th, and three (25%) did not teach a grade level. The number of years taught ranged from four to 31, with one (8.3%) ranging from one-five years, five (41.7%) ranging from six-10 years, five (41.7%) ranging from 11-15 years, zero (0%) ranging from 15-20 years, zero (0%) ranging from 21-25 years, zero (0%) ranging from 26-30, and one (8.3%) ranging from 31-35 years of teaching (see Table 2).

Table 2

School Personnel Education Demographics

Participant Demographics			
		Teachers	
Demographic		Count	%
Grade Level Taught	9th	5	41.7%
	10th	1	8.3%
	11th	0	0.0%
	12th	0	0.0%
	9th-12th	3	25.0%
	N/A	3	25.0%
Years of Teaching	1-5	1	8.3%
	6-10	5	41.7%
	11-15	5	41.7%
	15-20	0	0.0%
	21-25	0	0.0%
	26-30	0	0.0%
	31-35	1	8.3%

The foster parent participants were 100% female (three participants). One participant (33.3%) ranged from the ages of 31-40, while two participants (66.7%) did not indicate an age (see Table 3).

Table 3

Foster Parent Demographics

Participant Demographics

Demographic		Foster Parents	
---	---	Count	%
Gender	Male	0	0.00%
	Female	3	100.00%
Age	21-30	0	0.00%
	31-40	1	33.30%
	41-50	0	0.00%
	51-60	0	0.00%
	No response	2	66.70%

All of the participants in the study are foster parents in a single residential home. The participants indicated that 66.7% (two participants) have been a foster parent between one-five years, and 33.3% (one participant) has been a foster parent for 10 years. Two of the participants (66.7%) have had the foster child between three-four years and one participant (33.3%) has had the foster child for a year or less (see Table 4).

Table 4

Foster Parent Demographics

Participant Demographics		Foster Parents	
Demographic		Count	%
Home Setting	Single Residence	3	100.00%
	Group Home	0	0.00%
How long have you been a foster parent?	1-5 years	2	66.70%
	6-10 years	1	33.30%
	11-15 years	0	0.00%
How long has the foster child lived with you?	0 -1 year	1	33.30%
	2-3 years	0	0.00%
	4-5 years	2	66.70%
	6-7 years	0	0.00%

Foster Student Interaction and Social-Emotional Intelligence Survey Results

In total 12 surveys were included in the analysis: nine were completed by teachers and three were completed by foster parents. The Likert scale survey completed by teachers consisted of nine statements that were centered on social-emotional intelligence. The survey completed by the parents consisted of eight statements. All statements were provided a 4-point Likert Scale response: Never (1), Seldom (2), Often (3), Always (4). In the case of two numbers being circled for one response, the researcher recorded the higher number.

In response to the question, I have conversations with the student about academics, 55.6% (five participants) reported often and 44.4% (four participants) reported always. Therefore, no participants reported either never or seldom (see figure 13).

I have conversations with the student about academics.
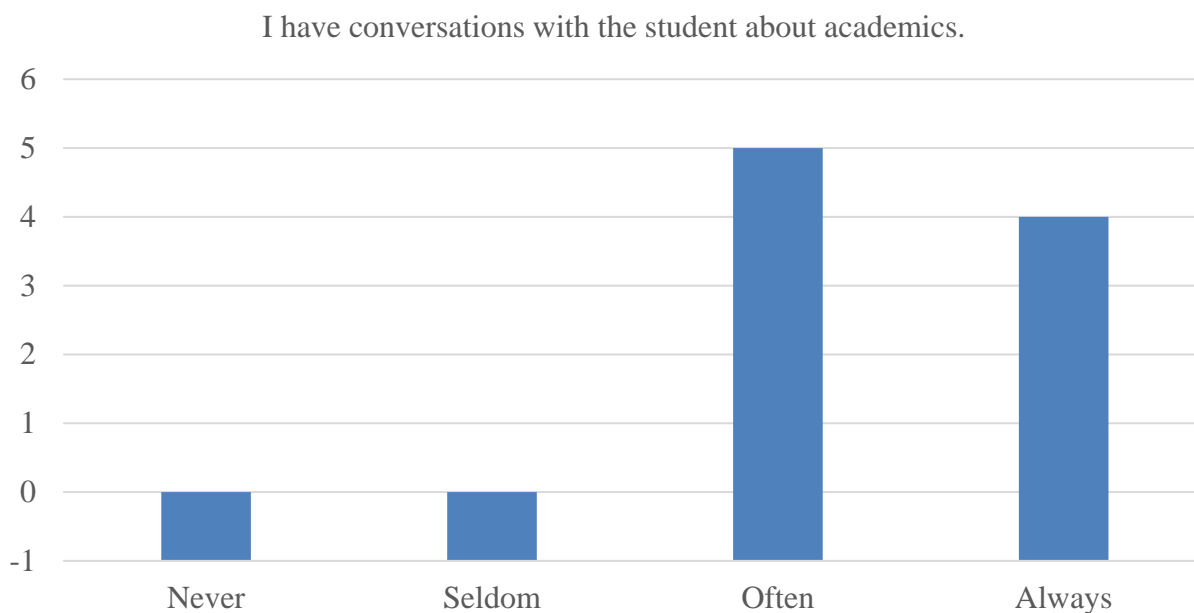
Figure 13. Conversations Regarding Academics with Teachers.

The reported question, I have conversations with the student about academics, 33.3% (one participant) reported seldom and 66.7% (two participants) reported always. Therefore, no participants reported either never or often (see figure 14).

I have conversations with my foster child about academics.
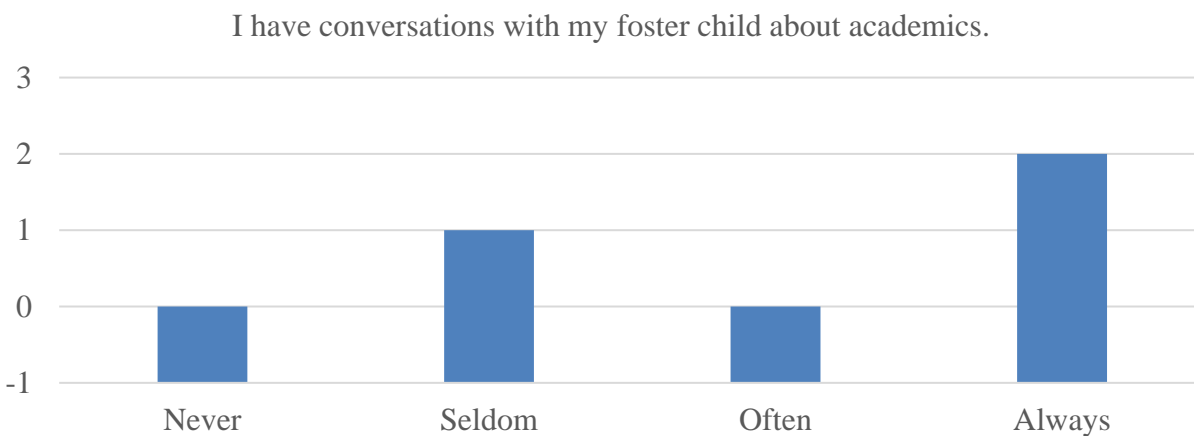
Figure 14. Conversations about Academics with Foster Parents

In reply to the question, I have conversations with the student about their personal life, 11.1% (one participant) of the respondents reported seldom, 66.7% (six participants) of the respondents reported often, and 22.2% (two participants) of the respondents reported always. None or 0% of the respondents reported never (see figure 15).

I have conversations with the student about their personal life.
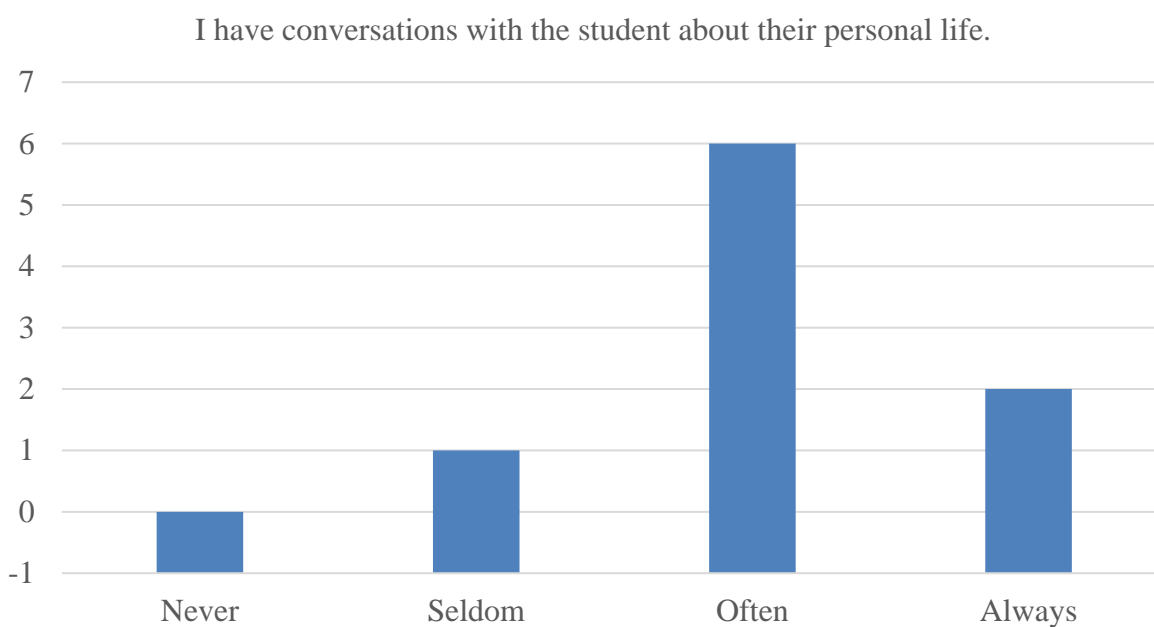
Figure 15. Conversations about Personal Life with Teachers

The participants answered the question, I have conversations with my foster child about their personal life, 66.7% (two participants) of the respondents reported seldom, 33.3% (one participant) of the respondents reported often. None or 0% of the respondents reported never or always (see figure 16).

I have conversations with my foster child about their personal life.
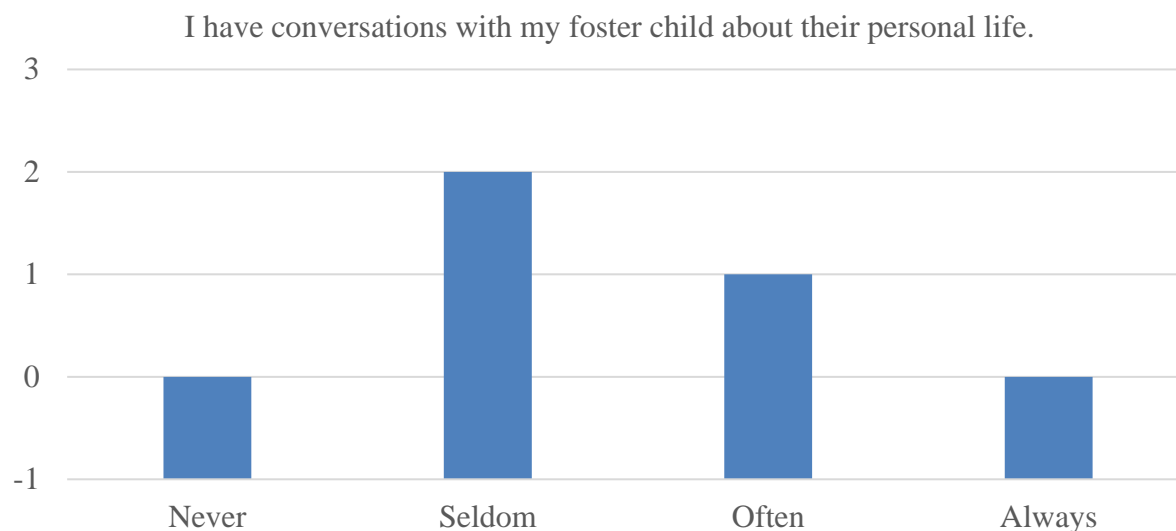
Figure 16. Conversations about Personal Life with Foster Parents

The reported question, the student initiates conversations with their peers, 66.7% (six participants) of the respondents reported often and 33.3% (three participants) reported always. None (0%) of the respondents reported never or seldom (see figure 17).

The student initiates conversations with their peers.
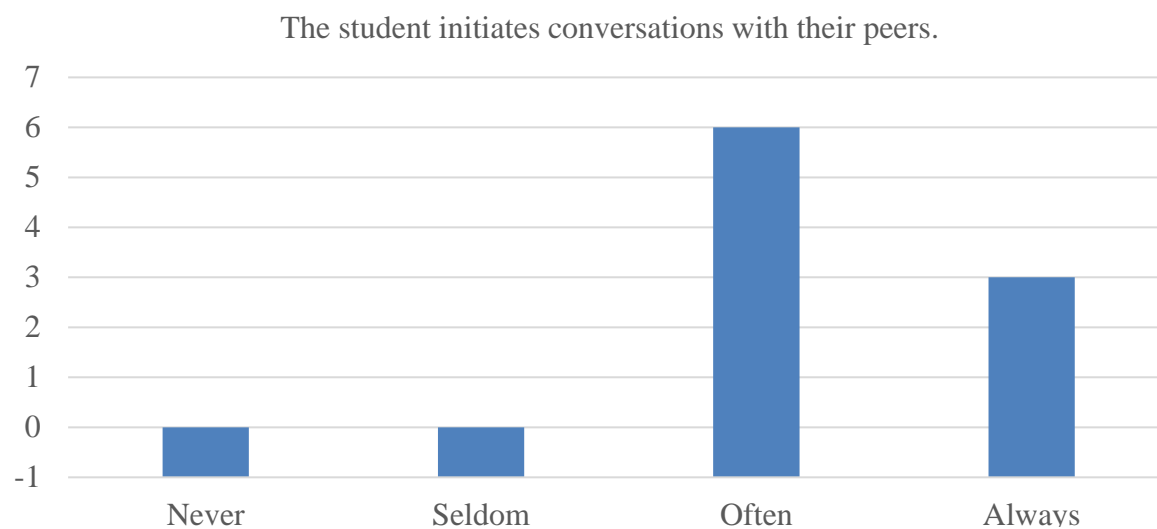
Figure 17. Initiates Conversations with Peers

In reply to the question, my foster child interacts with their peers outside of school, 33.3% (one participant) of the respondents reported seldom and 66.7% (two participants) reported always. None (0%) of the respondents reported never or often (see figure 18).

My foster child interacts with their peers outside of school.
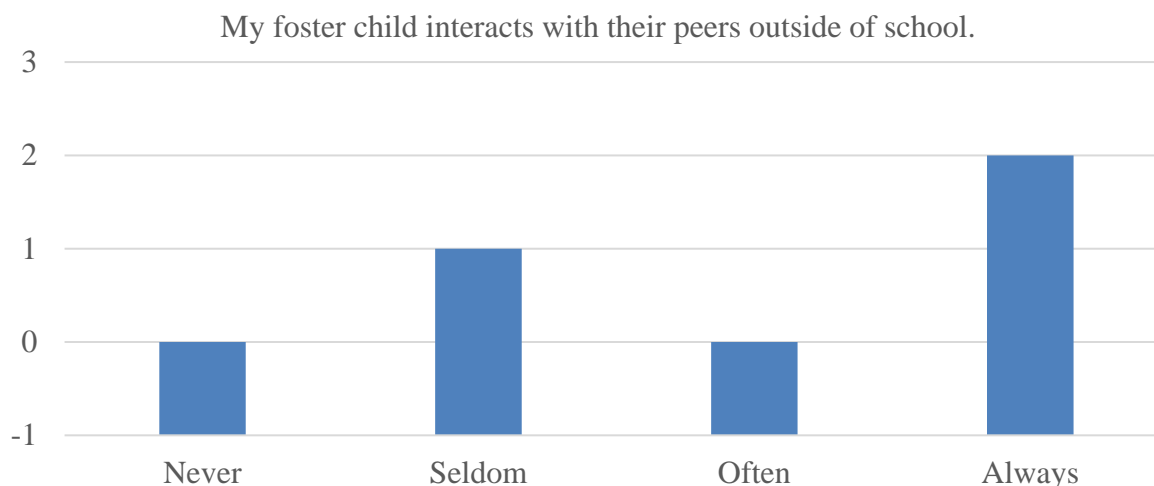
Figure 18. Interacts with Peers Outside of School

The following question, the student initiates conversations with me, 44.4% (four

participants) of the respondents reported often and 55.6% (five of the participants) of the

respondents reported always. None (0%) of the respondents reported never or seldom (see figure

19).

The student initiates conversations with me.
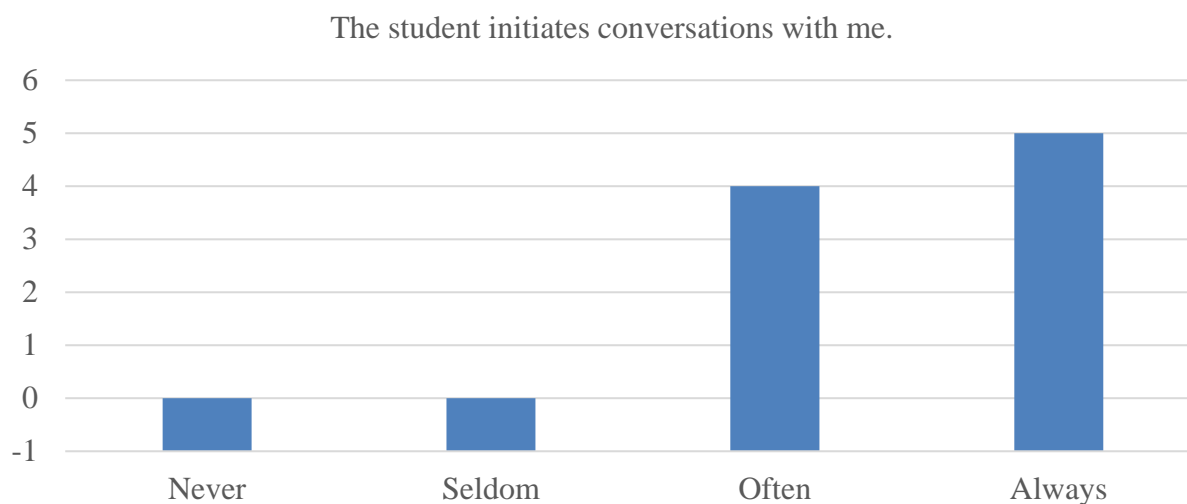
Figure 19. Initiates Conversations

In reply to the question, my foster child initiates conversations with me, 66.7% (two

participants) of the respondents reported often and 33.3% (one participant) of the respondents

reported seldom. None (0%) of the respondents reported never or always (see figure 20).

My foster child initiates conversations with me.
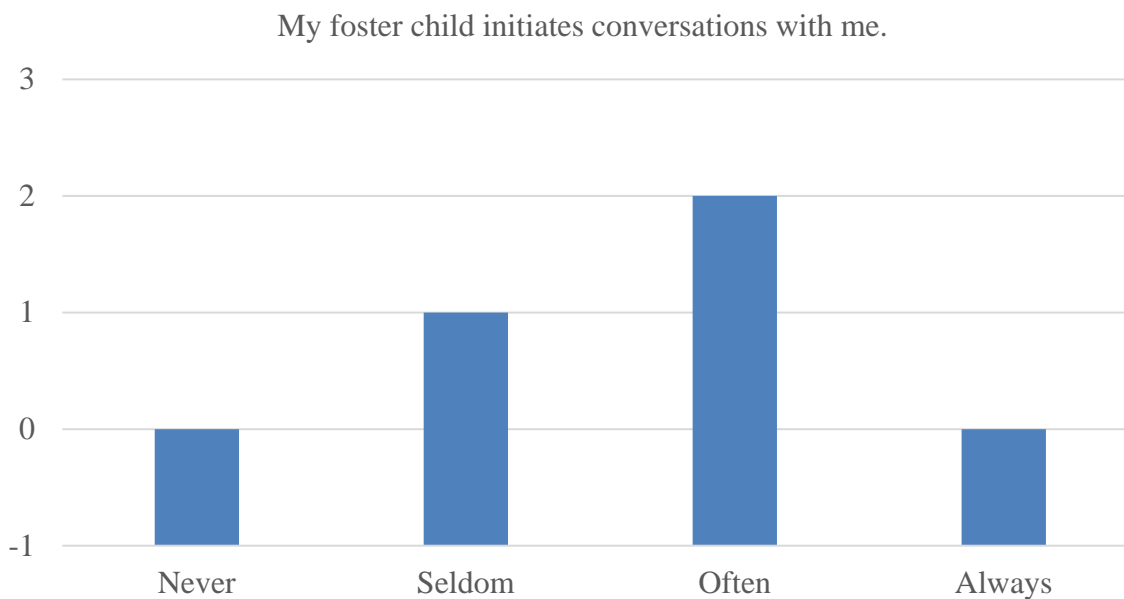
Figure 20. Initiates Conversations with Foster Parents

The reported question, the student works well with others, 22.2% (two participants) of the respondents reported seldom, 44.4% (four participants) of the respondents reported often, and 33.3% (three participants) of the respondents reported always. None (0%) of the respondents reported never or seldom (see figure 21).

The students works well with others.
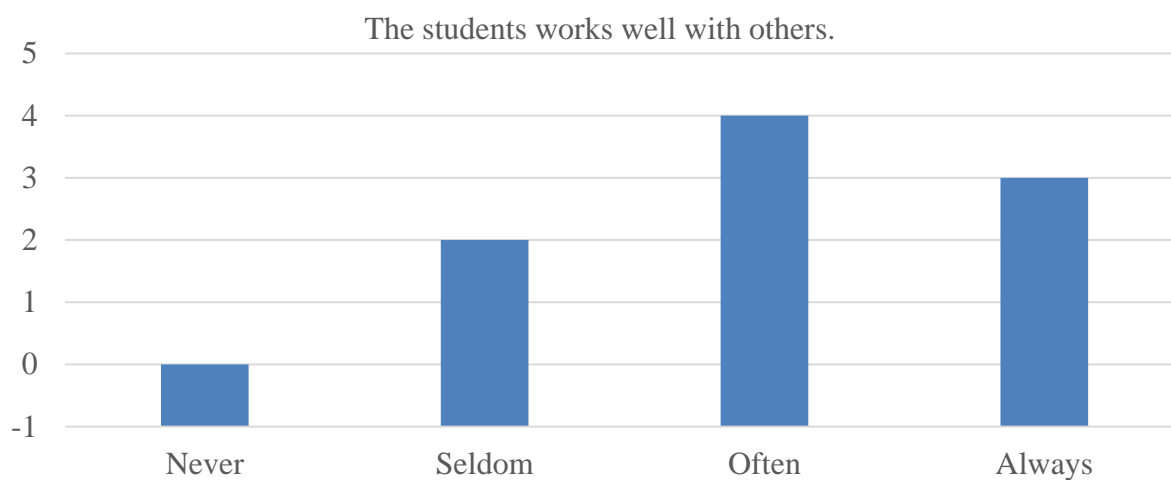
Figure 21. Student Works with Others

In response to the question, my foster child interacts with the family, 33.3% (one participant) of the respondents reported often, and 66.7% (two participants) of the respondents reported always. None (0%) of the respondents reported never or seldom (see figure 22).

My foster child interacts with the family.
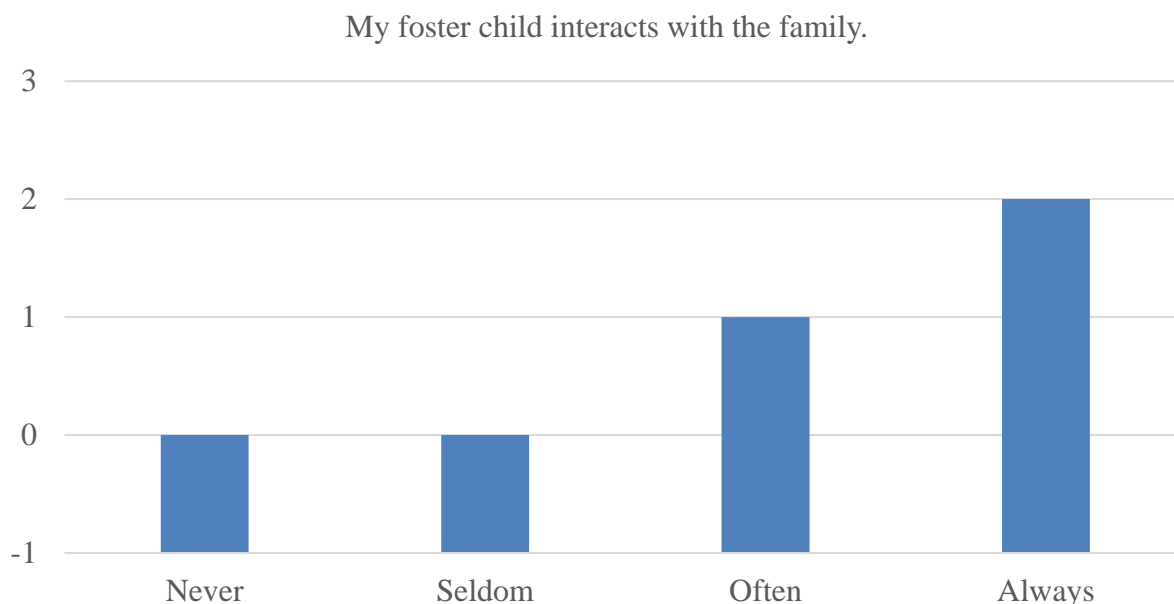
Figure 22. Interacts with Family

Forty-four and four tenths percent (four participants) of the respondents reported seldom, to the question the student asks for help. While 33.3% (three participants) of the respondents reported often, and 33.3% (three participants) of the respondents reported always. None (0%) of the respondents reported never (see figure 23).

The student asks for help.
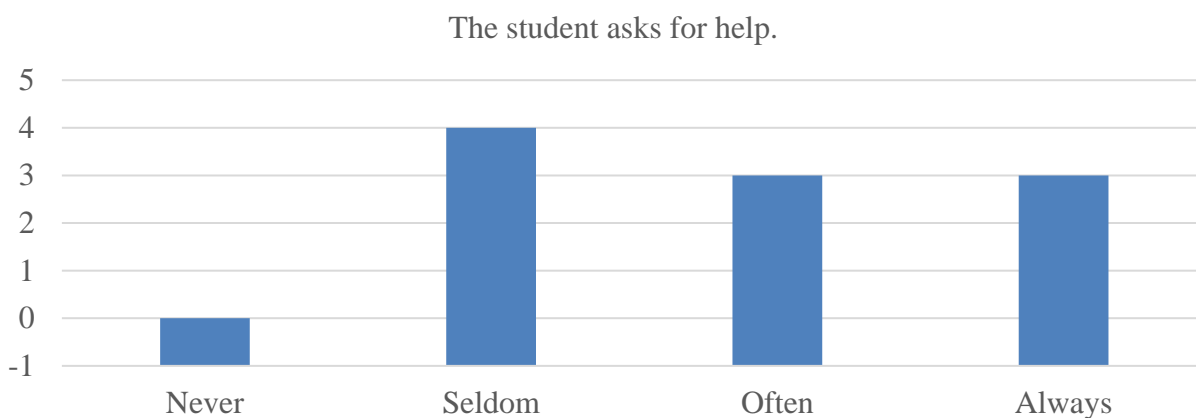
Figure 23. Asks for Help

In response to the question, the student gets into arguments with their peers, 33.3% (three participants) of the respondents reported never, 44.4% (four participants) of the respondents reported seldom, and 22.2% (two participants) of the respondents reported often. None (0%) of the respondents reported always (see figure 24).

The student gets into arguments with their peers.
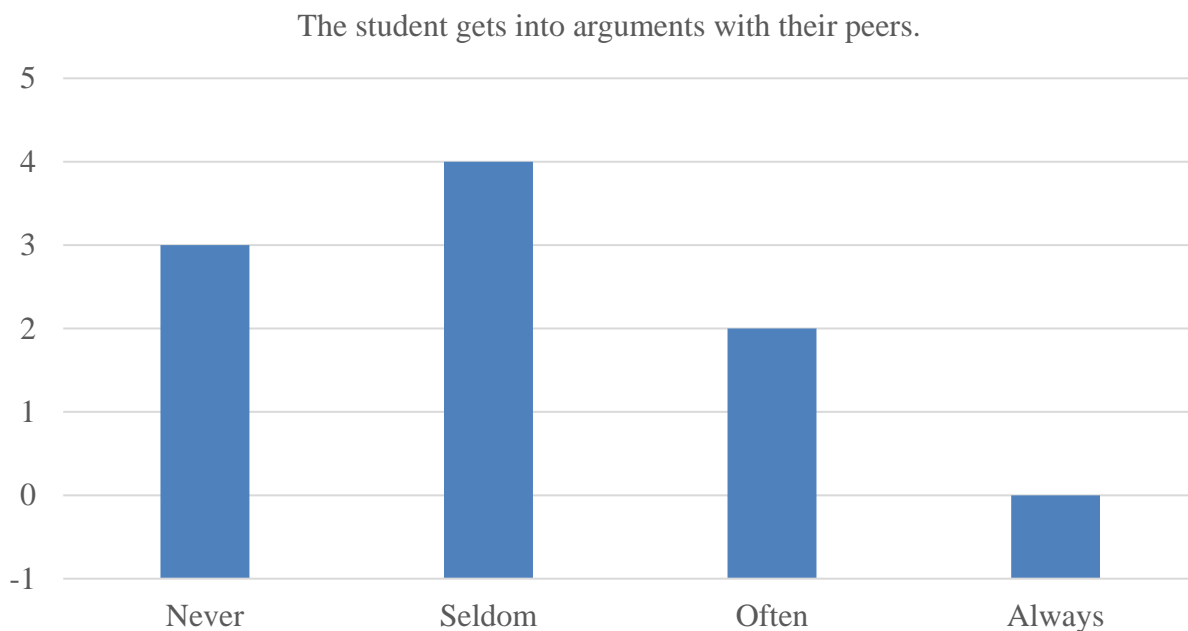
Figure 24. Arguments with Peers

In reply to the question, my foster child gets into arguments, 100% (three participants) of the respondents reported never, none (0%) of the respondents reported always, seldom (see figure 25).
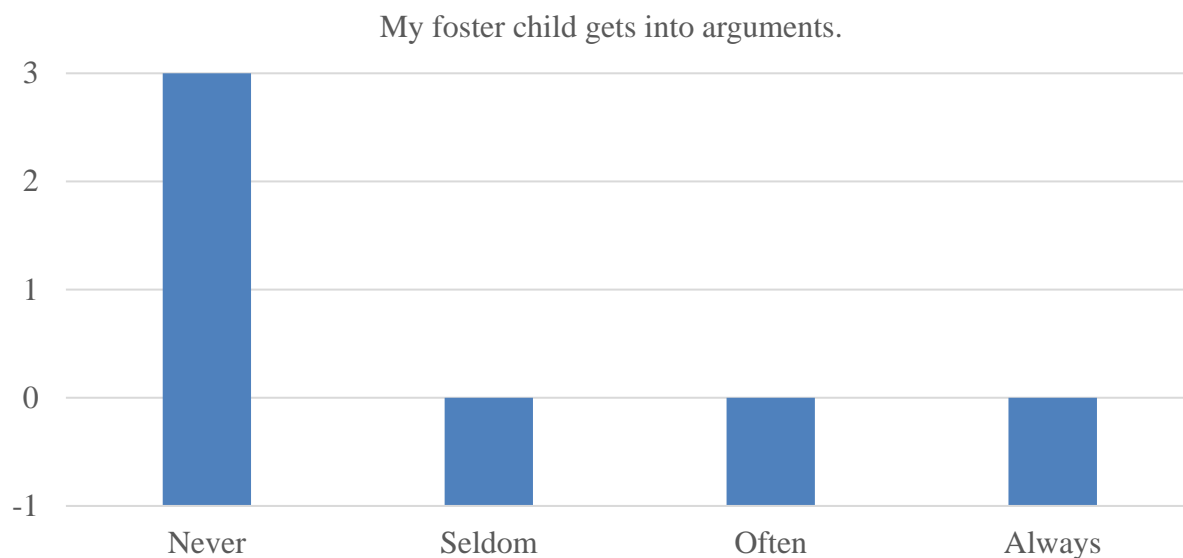
Figure 25. Gets into Arguments (Foster Parents)

The reported question, the student is able to control their emotions, 33.3% (three participants) of the respondents reported seldom, 55.6% (five participants) of the respondents reported often, and 11.1% (one participant) of the respondents reported always. None (0%) of the respondents reported never (see figure 26).
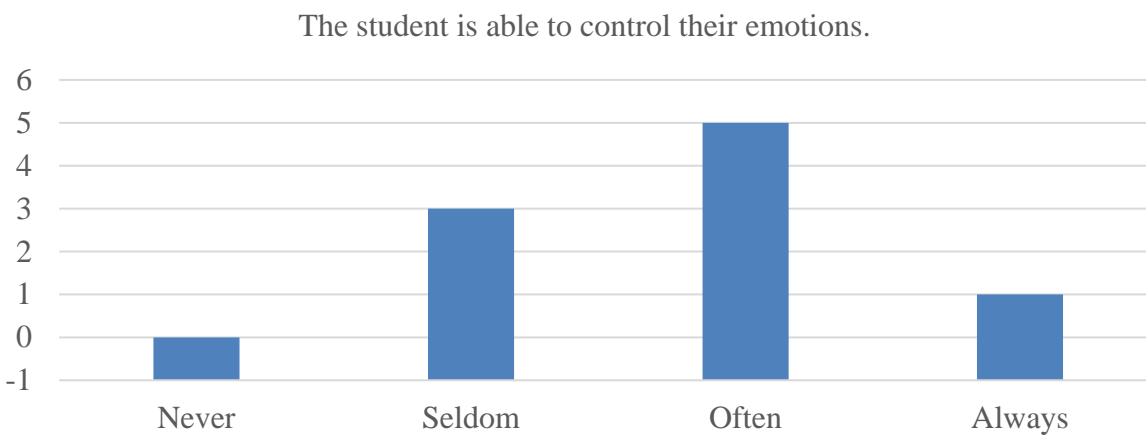
Figure 26. Control Emotions

The following question, my foster child is able to control their emotions, 33.3% (one participant) of the respondents reported seldom and 66.7% (two participants) of the respondents reported always. None (0%) of the respondents reported never or often (see figure 27).

My foster child is able to control their emotions.
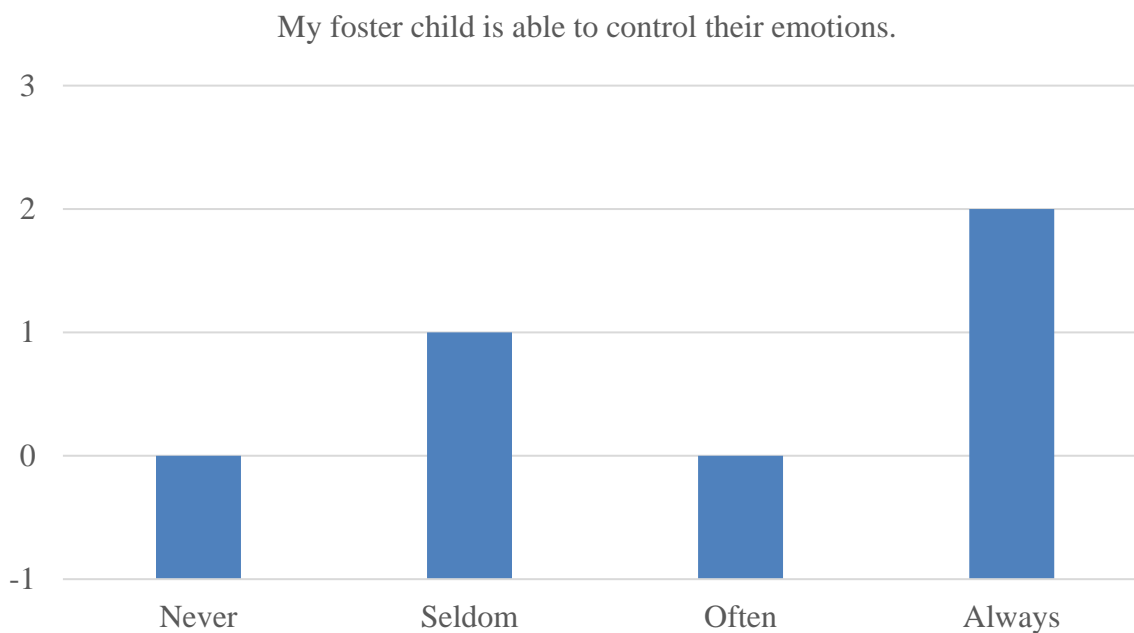
Figure 27. Control Emotions (Foster Parents)

In response to the question, the student is able to understand other people's emotions, 88.9% (eights participants) of the respondents reported often and 11.1% (one participant) of the respondents reported seldom. None (0%) of the respondents reported never or always (see figure 28).

The student is able to understand other people's emotions.
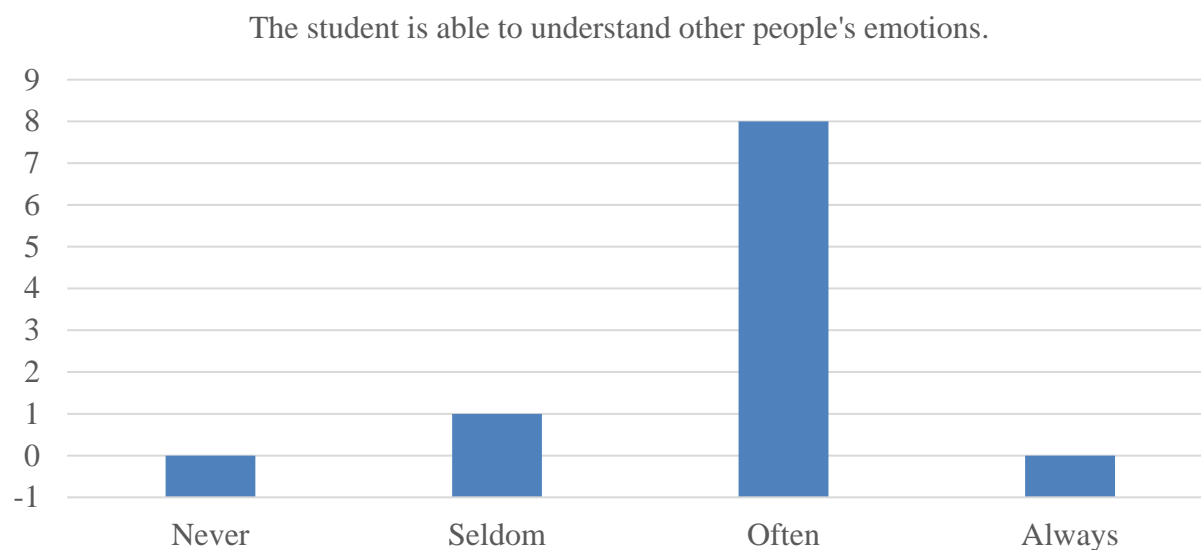
Figure 28. Understand Other's Emotions

In reply to the question, my foster child is able to understand other people's emotions, 66.7% (two participants) of the respondents reported always and 11.1% (one participant) of the respondents reported often. None (0%) of the respondents reported never or seldom (see figure 29).

My foster child is able to understand other people's emotions.
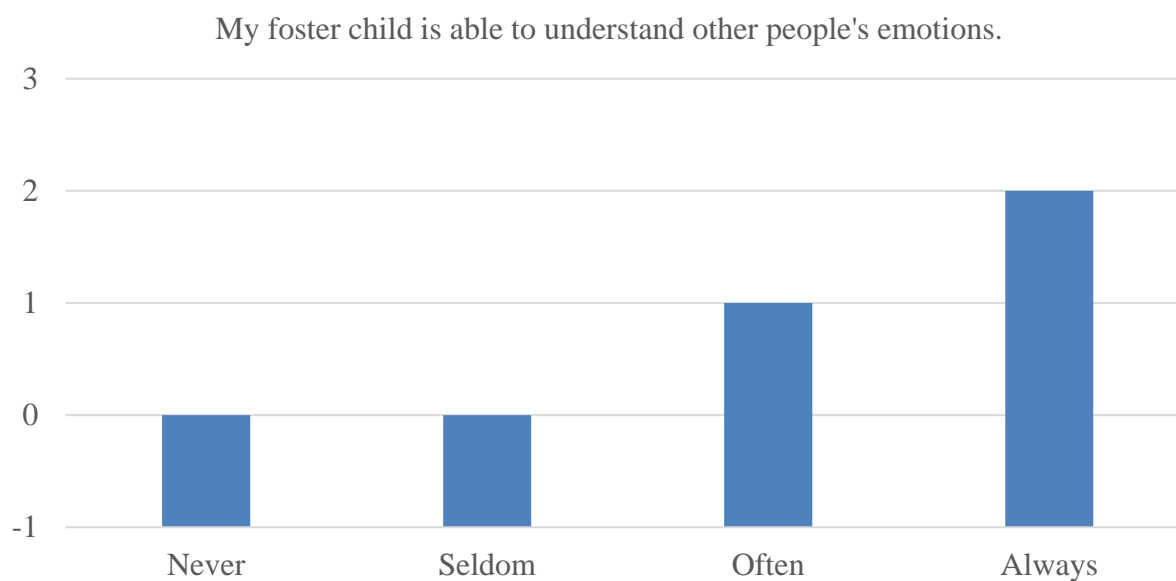
Figure 29. Understand Other's Emotions (Foster Parents)

Interview and Open-Ended Questionnaire Results

In addition to the survey, seven participants took part in a one-to-one in depth interview. Participants were given the option to complete a journal; however, no participant was able to complete a journal. Therefore, the researcher used the interviews and the open-ended questionnaire for qualitative analysis. The identity of participants was excluded to ensure confidentiality. Through the coding process of the interviews (indicated with an I) and the open-ended questions (indicated with a S) nine themes emerged: (a) LCAP, (b) Teacher-Student Relationships, (c) Awareness, (d) Mentor, (e) Social-Emotional, (f) Teacher-Foster relationship, (g) Communicating with the Foster Parent, (h) Interaction with Peers and, (i) Attachment (see Figure 30).
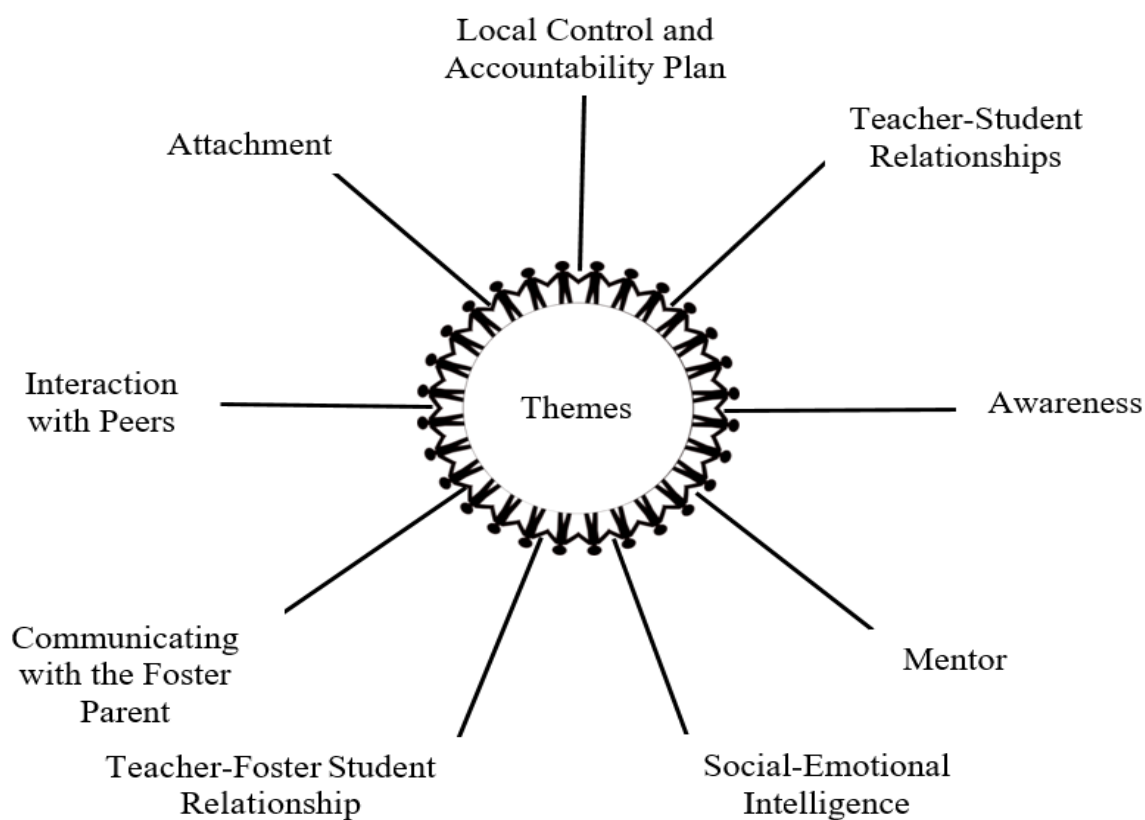
Figure 30. Qualitative Themes (Krcmar, 2018)

These following statements were grouped together because of the underlying theme of the LCAP and how it triggered a need or supported the foster youth. Although only two participants discussed the LCAP the researcher decided it laid the foundation for the study (see Table 5).

Table 5

Local Control and Accountability Plan

The Influence of The Local Control and Accountability Plan

Participant	Question	Answer
P1I	How has the LCAP impacted your school's ability to support foster youth?	"I think it triggered the need here to support students that we already knew were coming into our schools so it was really almost a reminder that it was a group that we should be focusing on and had been focusing on, but a reminder that we need to put resources towards that."
P1I	So did you receive extra funding for the foster youth?	"No we did not. When it came down to it because it was an area of focus I decided that even though we were not receiving extra funds our LCAP money needed to go towards supporting the foster youth in some fashion."
P1I	Describe the journey your school took to meet the needs of your foster youth.	"So with the LCAP and the focus group one of the things I continue to see is when we look at the data we look at all our students' district wide we have such a huge percentage of our foster youth district wide. We had over three times amount of students the next closest high school had and so we should definitely do something different here and since that wasn't coming in the form of additional funds we said what can we do here."

P2I	Was the program developed because of the LCAP?	"No. The original counselor who started it was a former foster student himself so he was just super passionate about the group and we have always had a bigger number…So this has been going on for ten years so this was way before LCAP funding."

The theme of Teacher-Student Relationship was discussed in all of the interviews. Some of the participants mentioned it in the open-ended questionnaire part of the FSI&ESI (see table 6).

Table 6

Teacher-Student Relationship

Teacher-Student Relationship

Participant	Question	Answer
P1I	As the site administrator, do you feel that the student would open up to you as much as they would with a teacher?	"As an administrator in general my experience either at the principal or assistant principal I was amazed about how much students did open up and sometimes more than in the classroom. The classroom is really so packed with the curriculum that sometimes we don't see the needs our students have it might manifest academically but their social-emotional needs might not be in the forefront."
P1I	In what ways have you seen these programs impact your school?	"I think more than that is the relationship piece that you can't measure with some of these students. You can see the examples of kids that weren't interested in school and now they are. They have dreams to go to college and they are getting good grades and they are doing so much more. I think that is what is really powerful."

P1I	Do you ever give any generic training on the impact of teacher-student relationships?	"So it is touched upon, but there is no specific training, but the mentors get trained in the beginning before we pair anybody up. They are taught with how to deal with some of the issues that might come up and how to work with that population, and expectations and guidelines."
P2I	So now how did you go about developing that type of relationship with them where they felt comfortable coming in and talking about what is going on in their foster home?	"Well I have been around in the program for so long so most of them who have been around in the program for a while know who I am. …And I think it is more because of the connection piece meeting once a month and they are with a teacher some of them probably 10% of the groups is in the Excel class."
P3I	How do you develop relationships with your students?	"I don't really have a name for it because I think I was doing it automatically but if I had to put a name to it I would say restorative practice strategies. Doing circles and groups and bring a lot of growth mindset, get to you know you stuff. …I have them fill out surveys to tell me about themselves, what they like; I try to incorporate those things into what I am doing. ...But just simple things standing at the door. That little stuff that you do but it all adds up, greeting them every day."
P4I	How do you develop relationships with your students?	"I think its real simple. It's about caring about them and caring who they are as people and truly caring. It's not about the work…it was about the kid first and putting the kid first and you are a human who may not have had breakfast and got yelled at on their way to school by their parents and are just having a bad day. I truly listen to kids."
P4I		"I start by always letting the kids know about my life….Showing that I care about them is

	How did you go about showing that you care for the students?	reciprocating when they want to share their story with me. Listening to a kid who comes in at lunch and says do you have a second, it's always pull up a chair and yeah let's talk."
P5I	How do you develop relationships with your students?	"I think I am kind of strict, but in a way that they know that I care about them….But I think building a good rapport with them, and just trying to be positive with them."
P5I	How do your students become comfortable talking to you?	"I think number one is that I listen."
P6I	How do you develop relationships with your students?	"Relationships are the number one. I run my classroom by developing trusting relationships where I give kids space to be who they are and not be judged…I'm real open and transparent and I share with them my life and how things impacted me, and how I choose every day to make my life what it is. ...By holding their space I allow them to be who they are and we work on how to be a better person through that and how to use that. As far as not judging I'm a real believer in allowing people to experience what they have experienced and what they do experience, and not putting my own stuff on them."
P1S	Would you say you have a similar relationship with the foster student as you do with your other students? Why or why not?	"I feel strongly about connecting with students. Consistent concern and accountability is so vital."

Throughout the interview process, the concept of awareness became a constant theme. Many of the participants spoke about either awareness of who the foster students are, the

struggles and obstacles foster students face, the awareness between the students, and the

awareness of the foster care system. The opportunity to identify who the foster students are and

learn about obstacles and struggles they face as well as the system help build the awareness.

Awareness between the students involved the students being able to interact with other foster

students at the school site (see table 7).

Table 7

Awareness

Awareness		
Participant	Question	Answer
P1I	Do you provide your staff with any specific training on the importance of teacher-student relationships?	"So we have a young man who runs a foster nonprofit that comes in and talked about his journey as well as some of the resources he has. …I believe it was bringing awareness. I think teachers in general know how to care and support kids; however, they may not identify the need to."
P1I	Describe your philosophy on supporting the foster youth.	"It is a group of our students by and large have needs that surpass the typical student and it is our job to serve the needs of all students, so as we identify their needs it is kind of our obligation to support them. Also knowing a lot of the data regarding foster youth and their struggles in the adult world and the adolescent world really it becomes even more important that we do everything we can to support our students."
P1I	Describe the journey your school took to meet the needs of your foster youth.	"We had over three times the amount of students the next closest high school had and so we should definitely be doing something different here and since that wasn't coming in the form of additional

funds we said then what can we do here. …And so with those groups plus a couple of administrators who are passionate about the kids it became that we now had a program rather than just an individual...taking on this huge burden. Through those folks as well as the mentor program it really just became the village approach to supporting the kids rather than just saying hey we are going to meet once and hope we take care of all their needs, it is to vast for that."

P2I	What intervention strategies have you implemented for the foster youth and why did you implement them?	"So I think the connecting piece is huge. …So it was more just connecting them with others and learning about others who were in that similar situation and then it just became building rapport with them. And several years ago we were having major issues with discipline and academics and a lot of the problems going into the office were All Stars. It was a big group of foster students and so we decided to really make that intervention and start focusing on them. So we created the Excel class. She has just about 10 to 15 All Stars and we use the ones that are the most at risk, needed the credit recovery, or they just weren't doing well or showing up to school..."
P1I	In what ways have you seen these programs impact your school?	"And I think there is greater awareness. We brought in an outside person from the foundation to speak with our whole staff about foster youth as well. And so I think there is just a greater level of awareness. So when a kid comes into your class any teachers class and they are foster the teacher has a better idea of what that means and they might pay better attention, or check in more often, or just that awareness might be the difference of giving the kid a break, or knowing today might not be the best day, or they got their head down because yesterday they were in court and it didn't

go well. Those are things about the kid you wouldn't know if you didn't take the time to identify them as foster and have a framework of what does that mean."

P3I	What is your knowledge and understanding of the foster youth?	"My first interaction was based on my caseload because my numbers kept changing….either moving or they are foster and then they get displaced, or they get kicked out of their home, or they get into trouble, or there is a legal battle and somebody gets custody."
P3I	Prior to teaching, did you have any knowledge or understanding of foster youth?	"Yeah a little bit…my sister's kids were taken away from her twice and they were put into the foster care system. And for a short period of time my mom got custody of them for about a year before my sister got custody back."
P3I	Can you talk about the field trip you took with the foster youth?	"Emotionally exhausting but well worth it. I think every person should have an opportunity to do something like that. To put it into perspective I saw some of the adults change to. Some of the ones that aren't as opened to the story of the child and how and why their behavior may not have anything to do with the adult, but have to do with themselves, break down their own walls."
P4I	What is your knowledge and understanding of the foster youth?	"I had no knowledge of the foster system. …There was a lot I didn't know and I think that's why I was successful and have been successful with this population is that on day one I told them that you are the experts in this class. You know the foster system and I want you to teach me. I want to know everything about it, I don't know anything. I don't know beyond foster system. I don't know any of the vocabulary. So from day one I just told them I don't know anything I want you to teach me. And I think that built a really big bridge because I never acted like the expert and I will

never ever say I understand what they are going through."

P5I	What is your knowledge and understanding of the foster youth?	"In tenth grade the students do a Take a Stand project and one of the girls during summer school a few years ago, she was a foster student, she could present her project to the class to bring more awareness to the foster care and the system, and it was heartbreaking. So I myself was adopted as a baby. So I understand maybe some of the struggles they might have or questions."
P5I	Prior to teaching did you have any knowledge of the foster youth?	"Only that my godparents were foster parents. They always had different kids that they were taking care of. My godparents did adopt a few of their kids so they are my cousins now. I don't know a lot about their backgrounds but I was aware of it at a young age."
P5I	Can you talk about your experience at the Foster youth camp?	"It was heartbreaking to see such neat kids that have had to experience the things they've experienced in life that they had no control over. …I guess it just builds my compassion for these students and want to help, and understand them, and help them with challenges and understand that there might be times when they are not having a good day."
P6I	What is your knowledge and understanding of the foster youth?	"Prior to teaching high school I wasn't aware of the foster youth. I might have at the elementary school, there were some kids that I took under my wing that seemed to have bad situations. But at that time, many years ago, I didn't hear about foster kids, they weren't designated."
P9S	Would you say you have a similar relationship	"…knowing this students background and the challenges they have faced make my

with the foster student as you do with your other students? Why or why not?		conversations with him difficult. I am more careful with the topic and questions so that I don't bring up sensitive issues."

Another theme that became visible through the interviews and the open-ended questions was the idea of being a mentor. All of the participants interviewed were mentors to a foster student (see table 8).

Table 8

Mentor

Mentor		
Participant	Question	Answer
P2I	What is the responsibility as a mentor?	"At minimum we ask them to meet with them twice a month and go over different things and that the kids know that this is a person on campus. But everything else they go above and beyond and buy them birthday gifts…"
P2I	Do you ever give any generic training on the impact of teacher-student relationship?	"…the mentors get trained in the beginning before we pair anybody up. They are taught how to deal with some of the issues that might come up and how to work with the population, and expectations and guidelines."
P2I	Do you do anything else to ensure the foster youth receive the support to succeed in school that are not in the Excel class?	"We do college visits so that is pushing them for college. …They just had camp. All students were open to camp to go and really connect with each other and it was only for the foster youth in the district. The district does their own events. And every student who wants one, if you are in the Excel class you have to have one but if you're not in the Excel class and you would like one which is pretty much everybody they are given a

mentor so they have a connection on campus."

P1I	Can you talk about being a mentor?	"I thought it was important for our staff to see that everyone should be making time to support students extra. So it was great to see that you have security, clerical, administrators, and teachers and that it doesn't matter who you are what matters is that you are an adult on campus that cares about a student and wants to help them and have a better life. ...the ability to have someone to focus on and make sure that they are okay has helped me as well as help him."
P3I	Can you talk about being a mentor?	"They have you fill out a survey about yourself so they can try to match you up and they ask you if you already know kids, if you have a relationship with them, and if you had a particular kid. So I listed all the kids I knew in foster and I said not to give me them because I would service them because they are already coming around and it wouldn't be anything different. So I asked for somebody new."
P4I	Are you a mentor?	"No. …I wanted to be available for kids to come and be honest with me, also I didn't want to over commit…When I see myself as a mentor to all of the kids, and I didn't want to have favorites. I want them to know that they can all come to me just like the mentor. And also I wanted them to have as many, having me as a mentor closes a door to meeting another adult. They already have me, I'm already here, so let's open the door for someone else on campus and create more of a village for you."
P4I	What would you like to see next year?	"I would love to have some of our kids once they start graduating come back and help me. I would love to see them be guest speakers,

		and an off campus mentor. Part of my philosophy is you give back what you get."
P8S	Would you say you have a similar relationship with the foster student as you do with your other students? Why or why not?	"I have gotten an opportunity to learn more about this student and their story, all the different moving parts in their life and the supports or lack of supports that they have. I think all students should have an assigned mentor."

The development of social-emotional intelligence and the part it plays on a student's

academic and social success was a reoccurring theme throughout the interviews (see table 9).

Table 9

Social-Emotional

Social-Emotional

Participant	Question	Answer
P1I	Do you provide your staff with any specific training on the importance of teacher-student relationships?	"So I think what we try to do is continually come back to the need to support our students socially-emotionally and that is something we talk about at our staff meeting, our leadership team meetings, when we do our S days at the beginning of the year we always talk about the need to support our students not necessarily just foster youth but all students socially-emotionally."
P1I	Do you provide your staff with any specific training on the importance of teacher-student relationships?	"We have done school wide book reads where anyone who would like to opt in can read. And we have read books like How Children Succeed, and I think we read Growth Mindset. But I think those are all opportunities to learn how to best support kids socially-emotionally. I don't know if any of them are trainings but they all build into the framework..."

P1	What changes have you seen in your staff since you have implemented these book reads and built awareness about social-emotional?	"I think what you see is you really start hearing the language and the actions. When we talk about growth mindset as a staff and we read about it and we have book clubs to discuss it you see and hear teachers talking about it with students. And then you hear students talking about those things and using examples in the classroom. ...We talk about grit and perseverance these noncognitive skills are part of the language of our school culture."
P1I	Describe your school's philosophy on student achievement concerning at-risk youth.	"The school is founded on the idea that we need to support all students. …Our homeroom, which is 40 minutes a week that is intended to support our students socially-emotionally and to teach them about things that wouldn't be covered in the curriculum from issues to equity to anything that wouldn't necessarily be covered in curriculum of classroom content. And I make it continuous the idea that students' academics is of great importance but also their social-emotional well-being is tied to that."
P2I	How do you support the foster youth's social-emotional intelligence?	"That happens if they are in the excel class part of that is built in. So the first part is social-emotional so they get together in a circle and have circle time basically like a family group and talk about any issues going on any problems and problem solve together and talk about what each person is going through... Some of the events that we do, camp is a lot of social-emotional, we do team building things, like we are going to go to UCR's rope course, and that is all team building… So events that we do promote that, but then knowing they have a designated person campus if they need to go to is usually enough."

P3I	How does the foster child interact with their peers?	"…He has been in group counseling, individual counseling, and family counseling. So he tells people now I don't process this well so when you tell me something I need it written, or a picture of it, or I need you to repeat it, and if you could do it on my right side. He has been a little more empowered by it..."
P4I	Can you describe a typical Excel class period?	"We have two hour blocks and so the kids know that they come in every day, and we start every day in a circle time, which is lack of a better term it's a lot like therapy. So they just come in and set up their circle of chairs nothing in the middle. Usually the first thing we do is check in "Where are you at today?"...And then we'll usually go around a couple of times with off the wall questions, and I try to have the questions lead into whatever we are going to be working on that day. So the question today was, "Would you rather be rich, famous, or happy? And why?" So everybody in the circle goes around and answers. ...Sometimes kids will give little snippets of their life. ...They just all get it. So these moments I'll let go forever but usually it's 45 minutes to an hour of circle time."
P4I	How do you support their social-emotional intelligence?	"Well I guess it's really that piece about circle time and sharing and understanding that each of us is human, and what we have all been through, and understanding each other. Empathy for an easy term would be having empathy, and in this room to understand each other and what they have been through and yet these were the kids fighting each other years ago...I don't know it feels a little incestuous at times, because many of them have lived in houses together and they have relationships. I think that social-emotional piece comes from working through that, and understanding them as people and humans and

getting to know each other. It's funny the academics will then come, because they suddenly do want to care...."

P4I	Can you talk about the Foster Camp?	"Last year we went into camp with the mentality of having fun so we played a lot of games, and really did have a lot of fun. …This year we took tiny steps to make it more serious. …But in the evening we did a 30 minutes yoga session with deep breathing and also did a mindfulness session about getting through your anger and handle your emotions. And also did a deeper getting to know you activity with building houses out of cards and how did they feel, and who they are as a person. We had 60 spots open and could only get 34 kids to go. ...They were from all the schools so we had some kids who were not from our school."
P8S	Describe your relationship with the student.	"We're discussing how the choices we make have consequences - some positive and some negative. I'm trying to help the young man think more about his future and think ahead."
P7I	How did you teach him to deal with his anger?	"We had to teach him that you can't always run from your problems. You have to sit down and you have to talk about them. When he came back and we didn't yell at him. We are still standing here. We are still coming back home."

All of the participants throughout the interview and the open-ended questions discussed their relationship with the foster student and how the relationship developed. The theme became apparent that the Foster Student-Teacher relationship is not always the same as Teacher-Student

relationship. Many of the participants spoke about the deliberate actions they take to support and

build the relationship with their foster students (see table 10).

Table 10

Teacher-Foster Student Relationship

Teacher-Foster Student Relationship		
Participant	Question	Answer
P1I	In what ways have you seen these programs impact your school?	"...because some of our foster youth are the ones constantly in trouble and now the fact that they have relationships with people on campus its severely reduced that, that's good for the kid but it is good for the campus environment as well."
P2I	So now how did you go about developing that type of relationship with them where they felt comfortable coming in and talking about what is going on in their foster home?	"Well I have been around in the program for so long so most of them who have been around in the program for a while know who I am. …And I think it is more because of the connection piece meeting once a month and they are with a teacher some of them probably 10% of the groups is in the Excel class."
P3I	Describe your relationship with your foster student.	"This particular student I am thinking of I have a positive relationship with them. I would say it is almost like a mother-child relationship…I think trusting. I am definitely a go to person…"
P3I	How did you build that relationship with that foster student?	"My approach to asking a kid who is putting their head down, or acting out, or being disrespectful because I try to keep lots of systems in place. So in the beginning there usually is that honeymoon period where they are feeling me out and deciding where they can push boundaries. ...I might pull them aside and say, "Hey I noticed that your acting a little bit different today are you still tired?" and I might probe. And then they say, "This is how I

act once I get comfortable or I'm foster, or I don't have parents, or whatever their baggage is they might open up or they might not they might shut down. ...I will have kids come in and I will have no idea who they are and they will ask me for granola bars if I have anything or their friend will."

P4I	Can you describe a single relationship?	"There are 62 foster kids and I would say they all know they can come by and talk to me about anything. I've got kids whose lunch accounts will pause, not even sure what happens, but they will have a day or two where they can't get lunch, so they come in here and they know that I'll get them something."
P4I	How do you go about showing that you care for these students?	"It's about going out of my way. But I'll often call or email their teachers and they're like, "You are like our mom." I just realized those kids didn't have a mom. They don't have somebody…"
P5I	Describe your relationship with your foster student.	"The senior, I had back when he was in junior high school…And since he was a freshman we have built a relationship and he has told me his whole story. I have gone to his wrestling matches to support him. So him and I have built a pretty good relationship where he has told me everything, and he feels comfortable enough to come talk to me if he is having certain challenges."
P6I	How did you develop the relationship?	"I was just consistent. When he came to see me I didn't pry. …My job was to help him so I've been there for him. Maybe consistency is the best way to say it. I call the teachers to make sure he's gotten to class…He just knows that somebody is there checking on him, concerned."

P1S	Describe your relationship with the student.	"He is open and feels support from a few of his teachers. He trusts I will hold him accountable."
P2S	Describe your relationship with the student.	"We connected early on and it is evident that I am one of four adults that he is comfortable speaking to about anything."
P2S	Would you say you have a similar relationship with the foster student as you do with your other students? Why or why not?	"My relationship with foster students is almost always more intentional and involved…"
P3S	Describe your relationship with the student.	"Talk about academics and personal life but not in great, deep detail, but enough to get to know the student. I hope the student knows I support them and want them to be successful."
P4S	Would you say you have a similar relationship with the foster student as you do with your other students? Why or why not?	"I treat him like he is a regular kid. I hold him accountable, show him that I care, and I ask him questions about his life."
P6S	Would you say you have a similar relationship with the foster student as you do with your other students? Why or why not?	"It is difficult to create a positive relationship with some students because of when they enroll in school or how often they have moved."
P7S	Would you say you have a similar relationship with the foster student as you do with your other students? Why or why not?	"Maybe better relationship because she is very open and communicates more easily than many of my other students."

While not all the participants brought up the relationship they had with foster parents, many of them indicated that this was an area that needed to be addressed (see table 11).

Table 11

Foster Parent Interaction

Foster Parent

Participant	Question	Answer
P2I	How do you go about supporting the foster student relationship with their foster parents?	"That is one of the things we want to work on. …I have a relationship with some of them…Having a night like a foster parent/guardian night and really letting them know what the program is, so when they get permission slips and they get these things they understand the value of it and will let them go or they know who they can contact at school. ..."
P3I	Describe your relationship with the foster parent.	"This is one that I have known for four years. He has been with this foster parent for seven years. I have a positive relationship with her. However, it is difficult because she is Spanish speaking, so when we have conversations I have to have them interpreted. ..."
P4I	Describe your relationship with the foster parent.	"I don't have one. In the last two years I have met two or three of them on neutral terms…It's hard because I know their grades aren't great and you walk that fine line of calling that foster parent…There are amazing foster parents out there who really do care, and then there are a lot who would remove a from a phone call like that."
P5I	Describe your relationship with the foster parent.	"We have spoken on the phone. I met them when they dropped him off at camp. I've seen them at the soccer game…so I sat with him and his parents and just had some small talk."

| P6I | Describe your relationship with the foster parent. | "…The home and hospital, the leaders have my cell phone and I have theirs and we communicate a couple times a week. I have not reached out to my mentees foster mom…" |
| P7I | Describe your relationship with your foster child's teacher. | I have communicated with his teacher as far as work and stuff like that but so far this year I have been kind of on the back burner just monitoring his parent portal as far as his grades." |

The theme of foster student interaction was discussed in the interviews. Through the coding process, a difference in interaction between foster student and foster student and foster student and non-foster student became visible (see table 12).

Table 12

Foster-Student Interaction

Foster Student Interaction

Participant	Question	Answer
P3I	How does the foster child interact with their peers?	"He is definitely dominating. He is the alpha when he walks into the room. He likes people to know he is important. …"
P4I	How does the foster child interact with their peers?	"We had a whole group from Central America, so they spoke very little English so they would all sit together, and other clicks, and outsiders, it was just awkward. So I just started to bring activities where kids had to get up and be uncomfortable…There isn't anybody who sits by themselves they all know each other. It's awesome. I think with foster kids it's pretty incredible."
P5I	How does the foster child	"There is another foster student…that is a little more quiet, they don't interact as much, and the one's that I am talking about are in Special Education. I don't know

	interact with their peers?	specifically if their lack of communication and outwardness is due to their disability, them being shy, because it kind of varies, it's not like they are all shy. We also have kids that have a mom and dad that are also shy."
P6I	How does the foster child interact with their peers?	"…they don't initiate relationships. They are more to themselves. I see more of depression and quiet with the foster kids I experience…"
P7I	How does the foster child interact with their peers?	"He is very sociable and interacts with everybody. He doesn't really care what people think about him which is very different from most kids. …Because people just like him for his personality more so than trying to please them. …He is just generally nice."

The final theme, attachment, was not found in all interviews or open-ended questions, but with implications attachment has on the ability to form relationships, the researcher concluded it was vital to the research (see table 13).

Table 13

Attachment

Attachments

Participant	Question	Answer
P3I	How does the foster child form attachments with their peers?	"He becomes codependent a lot. There are a few small close net friends and that's it. "
P3I		

	How often does the foster child turn to you for comfort? And when they do are they noticeably comforted?	"I see him a few times a week and a lot of times I think his comfort is knowing that I am there for him and sometimes it's just to say hi or tell me what happened over the weekend or sometimes he will bring a girl around. …I think just when he is talking and being receptive to me and pretty honest, like I am still upset but I know I need to get over it. Part of it is teaching him that there is always going to be some sort of struggle and it's how we prepare to deal with it are the only things we have control over..."
P4I	How often does the foster child turn to you for comfort? And when they do are they noticeably comforted?	"Definitely all the time. …They know that they've got a group of people that are here for them. You can text kids through remind, they can contact you. Sometimes I'll get a message if I'm off campus "Nobodies here. I need to talk to someone. Where can I go?" ...Like any person you can see it on their face. Their entire emotions have changes, they'll take a sigh of relief, they'll take some food."
P5I	How does the foster child form attachments with their peers?	"I know he has extensive counseling, but for the most part people like him. …His mentor is a teacher on campus and he was her if she would take him…and sees her as a mother figure."
P5I	How often does the foster child turn to you for comfort? And when they do are they noticeably comforted?	"They are both boys. The senior came to me once last year. So in the four years that I've known him he has only come to me once for comfort…I was encouraging him, but the issue at hand was still weighing on him…"
P6I	How does the foster child form attachments with their peers?	"I think it is a little more reserved and not as forthcoming, more suspicious maybe. …in my class they sit with the same person every day so they learn how to be supportive of one particular person. ... They knew their buddy was going to sit next to them every day, they knew that person was going to

be there for them. I think that does help in my class when they know that they were going to have someone consistently next to them every day."

P6I	How often does the foster child turn to you for comfort? And when they do are they noticeably comforted?	"My mentee is not as much as my kids in my class. I think that is because I see my kids every other day for two hours. …I am thinking about a female that was in my class last year and she would act out and disrupt the class. We would talk, not then, but by ourselves... and reassure her that somebody was there for her and that I was not going anywhere. Probably the best thing is that they would come back by just to say hi. I think a lot of it is almost like popping in to see if you are there. I'm always here. And I think for some of my foster kids they are almost surprised that I am here."
P7I	How does the foster child form attachments with their peers?	"I would say talking and affection is a big thing for him. Being out of his circle or bubble is a big thing for him. It's even a big step even for them to want to spend time with the family and not for them to be in their own shell all the time. He shows that he is committed to the family...As far as his friends he is always on the phone with them or wanting to go hang out or do something or go play sports."
P7I	How often does the foster child turn to you for comfort? And when they do are they noticeably comforted?	"Daily. We pretty much talk every day. He gives hugs a lot."

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to understand the impact the teacher-student relationship had on foster youth and their social-emotional intelligence. This chapter will provide discussion, implications and conclusions of the study. The research focused on one high school located in Southern California. The chosen school implemented different programs at their site that support students building relationships with teachers, as well as support the student's social-emotional intelligence.

Summary of the Study

A total of 130 teachers and approximately 50 foster parents were invited to participate in the study. Participants had the option to complete the FSI&SEL, complete a journal, and be interviewed. At the conclusion of the study, there were nine teachers and three foster parents that completed the survey, four teachers, and one parent along with the site administrator and a counselor that were willing to be interviewed, and unfortunately, no one completed the journal. The following questions were used in conducting the research:

1. How does the teacher-student relationship influence the foster youth's social-emotional intelligence?

2. How does the teacher-student relationship help foster children develop attachments?

3. How does the teacher-student relationship impact the foster parent and child relationship?

Foster Interaction and Social-Emotional Intelligence Survey Results

The first question participants answered in the survey stated, "I have conversations with the student about academics." The question was designed to gain an understanding of how the foster student interacts with adults on a fundamental level. All participants at the school site

responded with the ranking of either often or always, indicating that the foster student(s) has a relationship with the participant. In addition, the foster student understands who to speak to about academic concerns as well as shows interest in their academic performance. The parents' response to the question was similar, 66.7% (2 participants) responded that they always have conversations with their foster student, while 33.3% (1 participant) seldom talks to the foster student about academics. This ranking could be due to the level of responsibility parents place on their children in high school to be in charge of their learning.

The second question participants answered in the survey stated, "I have conversations with the student about their personal life." The purpose of this question was to understand the depth of the relationship between the adult and the foster student and the foster student's ability to have relationship management. As stated above relationship management refers to the ability to use personal and social awareness to interact with others effectively (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009). Almost all of the participants responded with often or always (88.9%) indicating that the foster students trust the adults to share aspects of their personal life. To have trust, one must have a positive relationship with the adult, indicating that foster students can form positive, trusting relationships given the right circumstances. The idea that foster students are communicating with adults about their personal life indicates the knowledge and understanding of relationship management because the students can communicate their ideas and feelings effectively in an appropriate manner with an adult. However, when foster parents completed the FSI&ESI 66.7% (two participants) responded that they seldom have conversations with their foster children about their personal life, while 33.3% (one participant) responded with an often ranking. These results could be due to the amount of time the foster student has lived with them, or the amount of time spent at home versus school.

The third question the participants responded to was, "The student initiates conversation with their peers." The purpose of this question was to gain insight as to how foster students interact with their peers. Social and Emotional Intelligence are both essential in the ability for one to interact with peers. Majority of the participants (66.7%) responded with often, while three (33.7%) responded with always, none of the participants responded with never or seldom. These results indicated that foster students are able to establish a level of relationship with peers. However, it does not indicate the level of trust between the foster student and the peer. The foster parents were asked, "My student interacts with peers outside of school." Majority of the respondents (66.7%) responded always indicating that foster students can develop friendships with their peers.

The fourth question the participants responded to was, "The student initiates conversations with me." Majority of the participants (55.6%) responded with always, and four participants (44.4%) responded with often. The foster parents responded 66.7% (2 participants) with often and 33.3% (one participant) responded seldom. These results show that foster students are more comfortable initiating conversations with adults at the school site rather than their peers or parents. This statement correlates with the statement that foster students talk to adults about their personal life. Therefore, the adult-student relationship is a positive and trusting relationship with the student. The data also indicates that the student might see the adult as a role model or parent figure.

The foster parents were asked to respond to, "My foster student interacts with the family." This identifies the desire and ability to be part of a family. The majority of the respondents 66.7% (two participants) responded with always, and 33.3% (one participant)

responded often. Due to these results, foster students can interact with the family. However, the foster students are not as likely to talk about their personal life or initiate conversations.

The fifth question the participants responded to was, "The student works well with others." The respondents' answers had span three out of the four possible rankings (22.2% seldom, 44.4% often, and 33.3% always). The variation amongst the answers may be caused due to different situations. The environment may not be structured to allow students the opportunity to work together on a consistent basis, allowing for structures and expectations to be formed. In addition, trust is an element that is earned, and foster students have a harder time building the trust due to background experiences. Finally, students might face academic obstacles that make working with others challenging and possibly embarrassing.

The sixth question the participants responded to was, "The student asks for help." The respondents' answers were evenly spread out amongst seldom, often, and always. The percentage of seldom responses (44.4%) is significantly higher than expected it is important to note that the percentage of often and always (66.6%) represents more than half. However, the percentage of students able to initiate conversations with adults (100%), and the percentage of students that talk about their personal life with adults (88.9%) makes the above response an outlier.

The seventh question both sets of participants responded to was, "The student gets into arguments with their peers." This statement was designed to understand both the student's social and emotional intelligence. This was the only statement where the participants responded with never. Due to the nature of the question, a response of never (33.3% teachers and 100% parents) indicates a positive response. None of the participants responded with always, which would mean a negative response. These results indicated that foster students are able to control their

emotions and communicate effectively with their peers to prevent an argument. However, 22.2% (2 participants) indicated the foster student often gets into arguments with their peers; therefore, some of the foster students are still developing both social and emotional intelligence skills.

The eighth question the participants responded to was, "The student is able to control their emotions." This statement allowed the researcher to understand the student's emotional intelligence. The majority of the participants (55.6% teachers) responded indicating often, and (66.7%) responded indicating always. These results coincide with the previous statement because one would need to control one's emotions to prevent from getting into an argument. Being able to control their feelings means, the students have self-awareness and self-management skills.

The final question the participants responded to was, "The student is able to understand other people's emotions." Almost all of the participants (88.9% teachers) responded with often and (66.7% foster parents) and (11.1% teachers) responded with seldom, also indicating that the foster students have social-emotional intelligence on different levels.

The cumulative results of the survey indicate that the foster students have social-emotional intelligence. In addition, one can conclude that the students have a positive relationship with the teachers, foster parents, and with their peers, but are able to communicate more effectively with the teachers rather than their foster parents, and peers.

Interview and Open-Ended Questions Results

Although no participants were able to complete the journal the researcher believed it is vital to discuss the different obstacles that could have prevented the participants from completing the journal. The data collection of the study was conducted from November through January, during this time teachers had district level report cards, holidays, and the unfortunate passing of a

colleague. All of these obstacles including those unknown to the researcher could have played a factor in the teachers' inability to complete the journal. As far as the foster parents, the ability to get in contact with the parents was a significant obstacle in of itself. Therefore having no foster parents able to complete a journal is representative of the participant involvement in the study.

Through the coding process, the following themes emerged from the interviews and open-ended questions: (a) Local Control and Accountability Plan, (b) Teacher-Student Relationships, (c) Awareness, (d) Mentor, (e) Social-Emotional, (f) Teacher-Foster Student Relationship, (g) Foster Parent, (h) Foster Student Interaction, and (i) Attachments. The researcher intentionally did not mention participants' names or titles to ensure confidentiality.

Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP)

The initial impact of the LCAP triggered the need to support foster youth in all ways, academically, behaviorally, socially and emotionally, and to help build self-confidence within the foster youth. The participants recognized a great need within the school site after they analyzed the data and noticed that their school had the highest percentage of foster youth in the district. For example, when asked about how the LCAP impacted the school's ability to support foster youth**,** Participant 1 stated, "…it was really almost a reminder that it was a group that we should be focusing on…"

When analyzing the data, the school site leadership team realized not only did they have the highest percentage of foster youth in the district but also the site had over three times the amount of the next closest high school. Therefore, it was a group of students that needed support. For example, when asked about the journey the school took to meet the needs of your foster youth, Participant 1 stated, "…we should definitely do something different here…we said what can we do here."

Teacher-Student Relationships

Relationships are a piece that cannot be measured. They begin with recognizing that the students have needs that surpass just academic needs. Participants understand that students are human beings and come to school every day with experiences and needs that may not always be visible. For example, when asked about how the school personnel develop relationships with their students, Participant 4 stated, "…putting the kid first and you are a human who may not have had breakfast and got yelled at on their way to school by their parents and are just having a bad day."

The act of genuinely caring for students is another way to form positive relationships. Teachers show that they care by taking time to get to know the students on an individual basis whether it is through surveys, conversations, or greeting them at the door every day. For example, when asked about how the school personnel develop relationships with their students, Participant 3 stated, "…But just simple things standing at the door. That little stuff that you do but it all adds up…" Participants also learned that being consistent and holding the students accountable helped form caring relationships.

When asked, to describe how students become comfortable talking to you, Participant 5 stated, "I think number one is that I listen." The participants recognized that listening to students is essential in forming relationships. Many of the participants begin by sharing and being transparent with their own lives and stories and then taking the time to listen to a student who wants to share their story. For example, when asked to describe the process of how the school personnel develop relationships with their students, Participant 6 stated, "I share with them my life and how things impacted me, and how I choose every day to make my life what it is…"

Finally, the participants realize that the class time is filled with content so taking time for a student who wants to come in at lunch and talk, and truly listen to them.

Awareness

The participants recognized throughout the study the importance of awareness, the awareness of the foster needs, the awareness of others, and their awareness. Through understanding, these different components the participants were able to understand and begin to meet the needs of their foster students.

Several years ago, the school site was facing significant concerns with discipline and academic concerns, so they took the time to look at the data to understand the issue. Looking at the data, they realized that foster students caused the majority of the concerns. The school site became aware of the concern and therefore took steps to not only resolve the problem but also improve the lives of the foster students. The site determined that the need was too great for a single individual to handle, so they found people who were passionate about supporting foster students to be part of the team. For example, when asked about the journey the school took to meet the needs of their foster youth. Participant 1 stated, "…it really just became the village approach to supporting the kids…"

After the participants identified the need to act and support foster students, the next step was to bring awareness to the entire staff about the needs of foster youth. The site brought in an outside person to speak to the staff about foster youth and some struggles they face to help in this support. If a teacher understands what it means to be foster, or has a greater level of awareness of what foster students face, or who their foster students are it might change the way they support or talk to their students. For example, when asked about the experiences at the foster youth camp, Participant 5 stated, "I guess it just built my compassion for these students and want to

help, and understand them, and help them with challenges and understand that there might be times when they are not having a good day." The participants recognized the need to know who their foster students are in their classes in order to support them.

The school site determined that due to the vast number of foster students it was essential for the foster students to be aware of others like them. For example, when asked about the intervention strategies they have implemented for the foster youth, Participant 2 stated, "I think the connecting piece is huge…it was more just connecting them with others who were in that similar situation." Therefore, the All Star Program and the Excel class was created. The All Star Program includes all foster students at the site, and they all meet once a month and do different activities together. The Excel class was created for the students who are considered most` at risk. Both of these programs allow the students to become aware of other students who are similar to them allowing them not to feel alone.

The final piece of awareness was the awareness of one's own belief and knowledge of the foster youth. Some of the participants made a personal connection with the foster care system because of either having family members placed in foster care or being foster parents. For example, when asked about any their prior knowledge of foster youth, Participant 5 stated, "My godparents were foster parents. They always had different kids that they were taking care of." While some of the participants in the study had no knowledge of the foster care system. For example when asked about any knowledge or understanding of the foster youth, Participant 4 stated, "From day one I told them I don't know anything and I want you to teach me. And I think that built a bridge because I never acted like the expert…" The participants have noticed that the more the staff becomes aware, the more they see walls come down. For example, when asked about the experiences at the foster camp, Participant 3 stated, "Emotionally

exhausting…Some of the ones that weren't as opened to the story of the child and how and why their behavior may not have anything to do with the adult but have to do with themselves, break down their own walls."

Mentor

When the site looked at the data regarding the foster youth and was creating action steps to support the students, they decided to create a mentor program (see Appendix N and O for Mentor Surveys). The program was designed to create connections on campus for foster students. For example, when asked if they were a mentor, Participant 4 stated, "I'm already here, so let's open the door for someone else on campus and create more of a village for you." All students in the Excel class were mandated to have a mentor, but any foster student could have a mentor if they wanted one.

The site believed in the program, and so all adults not just teachers became mentors. For example, when asked about being a mentor, Participant 1 stated, "…It doesn't matter who you are what matters is that you are an adult on campus that cares about a student and wants to help them have a better life." The mentors are to meet with their mentees on a consistent basis at least twice a month, but the participants indicated that they meet with their mentees more often than the required time.

Social-Emotional

This site makes a constant effort to talk about the Social-Emotional well-being of all the students. The staff addresses this issue at staff meetings, leadership team meetings, and Staff development days at the beginning of the year. The site also takes part in book reads to learn about how to support the whole child. When asked to describe the school's philosophy on

student achievement concerning at-risk youth, Participant 1 stated, "…student's academics is of great importance, but also their social-emotional well-being is tied to that."

In addition, the site is intentional in providing all students with the opportunity to develop their social-emotional intelligence. All students on campus are assigned a Home Room that they attend once a week, during this time they focus on social-emotional development as well as other topics that are not addressed in content such as equity. Foster students are given a variety of opportunities to develop their social-emotional intelligence from camps, UCR ropes course, and their Excel class.

Several participants described the Excel class as a "little family" that focuses on social-emotional development during circle time. During this time, the students are able to begin to understand each other and see one another as humans and therefore develop empathy. For example, when asked about supporting a student's social-emotional intelligence, Participant 4 stated, "…Understanding them as people and humans and getting to know each other. It's funny the academics will then come because they suddenly do want to care…"

Teacher-Foster Student Relationship

When asked in the survey, Would you say you have a similar relationship with the foster student as you do with your other students? Why or why not? Participant 5 stated, "My relationship with foster students is almost always more intentional and involved." Participants indicated the need to show genuine concern for their foster students. The concern was demonstrated in a variety of ways, from noticing different behavior and asking questions, to calling teachers and making sure they made it to class, emailing teachers to check on grades, providing food, or buying lunches when the student has no money. Some of the participants related the relationship with the foster student as a mother-child relationship. For example, when

asked about how you show the students you care, Participant 4 stated, "It's about going out of my way…and they're like, "Your like our mom.""

Showing support is another aspect of building relationships with foster students. The participants saw a need to support foster students by attending the student's sporting event or talking about academics. For example, when asked in the survey, Describe your relationship with the student. Participant 3 stated, "I hope the student knows I support them and want them to be successful."

Finally, the participants have realized that longevity plays a part in supporting the foster youth. As the participants gain a reputation at the school site from the foster students as someone, who has been part of either the All Star program or the mentor program, the more likely they are to come to you. For example, when asked about building a relationship with a foster student, Participant 3 stated, "I will have kids come in and I will have no idea who they are, and they will ask me for granola bars…"

Communicating with the Foster Parents

Neiheiser (2015) stated that communication between the school and the foster parents is vital to ensure the foster student is being supported. The participants stated that this is an area that has been a challenge for our site. One of the difficulties is the home language. Some of the foster parents only speak Spanish. Therefore, conversations and notes have to be translated which brings in a third party to the relationship. Additionally, some of the participants are concerned about the consequences of a call home; therefore, they do not reach out to the parents.

When asked about supporting the foster student relationship with their foster parents, Participant 2 stated, "That is one of the things we want to work on…" Looking at the data regarding foster students who turn in permission slips to go on field trips or camp, the site

recognized the need to get foster parents on board. The participants hope to have a Parent/Guardian Night to inform the foster parents about the program and all the opportunities provided to their foster child, in order to increase attendance and participation.

Interaction with Peers

While some foster students are able to initiate and interact with peers, others struggle according to the participants responses on the FSI&SEI survey. Participants indicated that the foster students are comfortable interacting with other foster students and that no one sits by himself or herself. However, non-foster peer interaction is a struggle. Some of the participants indicated that the foster students do not initiate relationships and are shy. However many of the foster students are designated Special Education, and therefore one cannot conclude if their behavior is due to their background, disability or personality. For example, when asked about how the foster students interact with their peers, Participant 5 stated, "…it's not like they are all shy. We also have kids that have a mom and dad that are also shy."

Attachments

The participants recognized for students to form an attachment there needed to be consistency in the interactions. When participant(s) would only see a foster student once, every couple of weeks the ability to develop an attachment became difficult. However, when participants saw foster students every week attachments could be formed. Foster students knowing that person would be there for them brought them comfort according to the participants. For example, when asked about comforting the foster students, Participant 6 stated, "…and reassure her that somebody was there for her and that I was not going anywhere."

Dialogues

Throughout the summary above the researcher was intentional about leaving names or titles off to ensure confidentiality. However, there were many positive takeaways from the different interviews that the researcher wanted to bring to the forefront. All statements were member checked to ensure accuracy. The researcher emailed the individual participants with the proposed quote and asked permission to use the quote as well as accuracy of the transcription. All of the participants responded to the email and gave consent.

The first take away came from the researcher's interview with the site principal. The question posed to the principal was, In what ways have you seen these programs impact your school?

I think more than that is the relationship piece that you cannot measure with some

of these students. You can see the examples of kids that were not interested in

school and now they are. They have dreams to go to college, they are getting

good grades, and they are doing so much more. I think that is what is really

powerful.

Another positive take away came from the teacher that teaches the Excel Class. The question posed to her was, What would you like to see next year?

I would love to have some of our kids once they start graduating come back and

help me. I would love to see them be guest speakers and an off-campus mentor.

One my favorite life philosophies is that you get back what you give.

When the researcher asked this teacher Describe your relationship with your foster student, this was her response.

I have kids who failed a lot of their classes last semester, but I want them to know

that I won't stop. I am not the one who is going to give up; I will call their

teacher, I will get extra assignments, I will print it for them, I will sit and work

with them. It is that they know that I am not going to give up on them no matter

what. They can push back, they can be rude, and be teenagers to me, and that is

not going to affect me.

The counselor that supports the foster youth communicated another positive take away.

The question posed to her was, Do you provide them with mental support or is it more school

needs and connecting them?

It is all of it. …So if they are having problems at home with their guardians, if

they have questions about their rights, something happened in their foster home,

they will come talk to me about it or just stuff that's going on with them

personally. So there are also some kids who don't' share that kind of stuff. But

will come in because they know I have candy, water, and snacks because they

didn't eat breakfast or they need a folder for class...So it is all of the needs and

wherever there at and whatever their needs are they know they can come in here.

A general education teacher gave a positive take away when asked, How do you develop

relationships with your students?

I hold the space. And what I mean by that is I don't assume anything, and I know

that every kid that walks in has their own story and what he or she knows to be

their own reality, and it's not always mine. By holding their space, I allow them

to be who they are and we work on how to be a better person through that and

how to use that.

Research Questions

Question one asked, How does the teacher-student relationship influence the foster youth's social-emotional intelligence? Davis (2003) argued that teachers who understand and respond to student's needs have the chance to lay the foundation for students to learn about their social environment. As indicated above the school has made social-emotional intelligence a priority by doing book studies, discussing it at all staff meetings, and creating classes that allow the teachers and all students to focus on aspects of social-emotional intelligence. The foster students, in addition, had their Excel class, mentors, and the different activities hosted by the district to develop their social-emotional intelligence. Due to the intentionality of the activities, it gave the foster students the opportunity to learn how to understand relationships and how to handle conflicts, which can affect not only academic achievement but also their social-emotional intelligence (Hoffman, 2009; Lantieri & Nambiar, 2012; Schonfeld et al., 2015).

As indicated above the majority of the foster students feel comfortable talking to teachers about their personal life, and because they are able to communicate with the teachers, the foster students are not getting into arguments with their peers. Many of the participants spoke about the importance of taking the time to listen to their students. Mowat (2010) stated, "…the extent which young people are listened to and are enabled to communicate with a safe environment and trust is established are all key to success" (p.176). In addition as participant one stated, "You can see the examples of kids that weren't interested in school and now they are they have dreams to go to college…"

The influence of foster to foster relationship was another component that affected the student's social-emotional intelligence. The opportunity the students have to connect with other students who have similar backgrounds and experiences allows them the ability to process and

work through obstacles with a person that understands and relates. While also learning that they are first human beings and that while their background and experiences impact who they are it is not what defines them as a person. The school site having an awareness of whom the students are and what it means to be in foster allows the site to support the foster student's social-emotional intelligence. The study conducted by Levy et al. (2014) also concluded that teachers who had identified the foster students and understood the obstacles they faced were able to support the students effectively.

Question two asked, How does the teacher-student relationship help foster children develop attachments? Hamre & Pianta (2006) argued that even though high school students spend less time with their teachers, the relationships they develop with the adults are a vital indicator of success. As indicated above foster students demonstrate a comfort level with talking to teachers about school and personal life. Through these conversations, the teachers and mentors were able to support students in all aspects of life. Teachers are able to support and develop positive relationships developed from the awareness of the obstacles or struggles these foster students face. Because foster students have the potential to live with multiple families throughout a year, a teacher is the only constant adult in their life (Leve et al., 2012; Pears et al., 2015). As previously stated in the interviews, the relationships with the foster students are built through the teachers listening and being physically present when needed. Mason et al. (2017) stated that behavioral and academic success is created by positive sustained teacher-student relationships based on a sense of belonging. As the trust built, then the relationship was able to develop, and attachments were formed.   For example, one of the participant's mentee brings their girlfriend to meet his mentor, as a son would do with his mother.

Question three asked, How does the teacher-student relationship impact the foster parent and child relationship? According to the results from the FSI&SEI survey, foster students are more comfortable talking about academics and personal life situations with teachers than parents. As indicated above these finding could be related to the amount of time the foster student spends with the teacher versus the time spent with the family. Another explanation for the difference in comfort level could be contributed to the length of time the foster student has lived with the current family and the dynamics of the family. For example, one foster student was on respite because the family went on vacation and did not want to take her, and another student expressed the feelings of not being loved by the foster mom. Although both of these instances, the foster students voiced their concerns and feelings with their mentor. Due to the relationship between the teacher and student, the foster student can have an opportunity to process their home life. While there may be no direct correlation, O'Connor & McCartney, 2006; Verschueren, & Doumen, (2011) stated that through a teacher's behavior and a relationship they could change a student's ability to form positive attachments.

As a result, of the research questions Figure 31 was created to depict how awareness builds the capacity for a foster student to develop attachments as well as develop social-emotional intelligence. Through the analysis of the research, awareness became the central theme to understanding foster students. While the researcher expected the awareness of knowing who the foster students were and the struggles they faced to play a part in supporting the foster youth, the unexpected factor was the awareness of foster students knowing other foster students. The combination of all the awareness factors: (a) who the foster students are, (b) struggles and obstacles foster students face, (c) one's own knowledge of foster care, and (d) other foster

students provide foster students the opportunity to develop positive teacher-student relationships, help develop social-emotional intelligence, and form positive attachments.

The participants were able to form positive relationships with their foster students because the school was intentional about identifying who the foster students were as well as providing insight into struggles and obstacles foster students face. Because teachers have the awareness they had the insight in understanding why a student might have their head down, or why they might be acting out, or why they are not turning in assignments. Without the awareness, the teachers may not understand the "why."

The awareness of other students played a vital role in the student developing their social-emotional intelligence. The ability to connect with another student that understands all the components of the foster care system allowed the students the opportunity to discuss their feelings in a trusting environment. Through the support of a teacher the foster students were able to learn how to problem solve and communicate with their peers.

The final piece is attachments. Teachers and educators who are aware of the foster care system and the obstacles and struggles foster students face understand that forming attachments can be a struggle. Many of the participants spoke about the importance of being physically present for their students forming the trust and the reliability of being true to their word. Because the teachers and educators are aware they became intentional in how they spoke with foster students and how they interacted with them.

Therefore, while all awareness factors play a vital part in foster students developing teacher-student relationships, social-emotional intelligence, and attachments, the research did not discover a hierarchy of how they are developed.
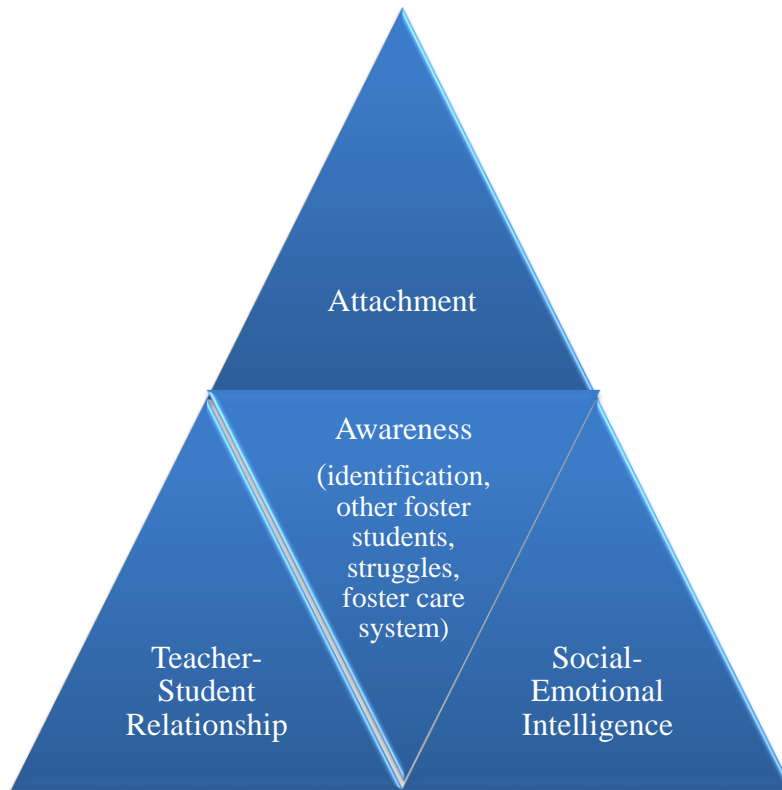
Figure 31. Process of Supporting Foster Students (Krcmar, 2018)

Stories

Throughout the study, the researcher had the opportunity to hear stories of students who faced multiple obstacles and found the strength, will, and love to overcome them and are now on a path towards a future. These stories were told from the participants during the interviews. To bring a face to the importance of not only understanding, foster youth and the system, but also the importance of taking time to build relationships with all students, but especially those deemed at risk, the researcher decided to provide readers the following story. The researcher compiled this story from multiple stories heard from the participants throughout the study to maintain confidentiality.

Table 14

_____

The Life of a Foster Care Child

_____

It happened when I was six. I was told that we were going to McDonald's, every kid's dream. When we got there, all I saw were cops. They were there to take me away from my family. Now I am in foster care.

The first thing I received was a blue bag with a red pocket inside; it was filled with a blanket, toothbrush, and toothpaste. I was the last of my siblings to be placed in foster care. My mom was a drug addict, and my father was in prison. I grew up knowing that I had siblings out there, but I never saw them, and they never took me in.

In middle school, I got mad at one of my teachers, so I decided to run. However, I was really mad because my older siblings would not take me in. So I ran for 15 miles. I had the cops chasing me and helicopters were circling me. When I finally stopped, running the cops took me back to my foster parents, and they greeted me with open arms and did not even yell at me. Instead, they told me that this was my home and it was not going away.

At school, my teachers believed in me, they took time to meet with me at lunch, helped me with my homework, gave me their sweatshirt off their back, and ultimately never gave up on me. They even got me a bike for Christmas and gift cards for clothes. Now I am a senior, and I am slated to graduate.

Compiled from participant interview data

When interviewing the teachers, it came to the researcher's attention that all four became

teachers as a second career. The following story is one example of how a teacher made the

realization that teaching was what they were meant to be.

My educational background did not start until I got my Bachelor of Science

degree in Psychology Biology, and a minor in art. I was going to go to medical

school, and after my third year of my Bachelor of Science at Loma Linda

University, I decided to take a year off and serve. So I went to the Marshall

Islands and taught fourth grade. Now I never ever, ever thought I would be a

teacher that is something that I never considered, but I went out, and 16 of us

went and ran a school. We did a lottery system, I got fourth grade, and actually, I

fell in love with my students. I just really loved my interactions with the kids. So

when I came back from 11 months on the island I finished my degree, and I was

ready to go to medical school, and I just did some soul searching and said I can't.

So I applied to Ohio States master's teaching accelerated program and got

accepted. Five quarters later, I had my master's and teaching credential.

Growth Mindset

The idea of growth mindset is a philosophy that not only school but the school district

believes in. As stated above the site participated in a voluntary book study of *Mindset* by Carol

Dweck. Participants in the study articulated the idea that foster students are now caring about

school and their future. Dweck (2006) states that students with a growth mindset believe in the

possibilities. When they face the possibility of failing their classes, they ask for help,

"…adolescence is a time of opportunity; a time to learn new subjects, a time to find out what

they like and what they want to be in the future" (p. 59).

The participants throughout the study continued to state the importance of not giving up

on foster students and communicating that to the foster students. They expressed how they will

email and call their teachers and talk to them during lunch, do whatever it takes to support them.

One of the premises of a growth mindset is that failure is not the end. Learning from our

mistakes is how one grows. In a fixed mindset, failure or making a mistake is permanent, and

nothing can be done to change it or improve it (Dweck, 2006). Although there may be some

foster students that have fixed mindsets, through the participants' actions a growth mindset is the

goal for all students.

Implications for Future Research

Supporting the foster students in academics and social-emotional intelligence is important to ensure all students in the district are successful. The study brought to light not only the importance of teacher-student relationships, but also the foster students building relationships with each other. In order to influence all 500 foster students the researcher is going to present the findings to the Research and School Improvement Department and to the Education Services department. During the presentation, the following recommendations are going to be made: (a) identification of foster students, (b) awareness training for teachers, and (c) restructuring of the STEPS program.

The identification of individual foster students allowed the school personnel to be intentional in their interactions and expectations of the students. While FERPA limits a district from being able to provide a detailed list of foster students to teachers, some school districts are listing the identification of foster students in their LCAP. Further research needs to be conducted by the district to understand all facets of identification of the students.

School personnel are asked on a yearly basis to implement new strategies or programs without the proper training or the explanation of the purpose. Therefore, when considering the process needed to support foster students it is critical that both training and time is considered. Currently the district offers the STEPS program. STEPS is a program that is focused on relationships and social-emotional intelligence. Presently schools are structuring based on grade level and foster students are given priority in the program. Elementary schools can use this structure to connect foster students amongst the grade levels that will allow the opportunity to create a support group and provide students in the upper grades to be leaders.

In an effort to understand how to support the needs of foster youth, it is recommended that further research be done in the following areas: identification of foster youth, awareness of foster youth needs, foster parent involvement, and the distribution of LCFF funds and how the funds are utilized.

Research has identified foster students as a population that has unique behavior, mental, physical, and social-emotional needs. However, due to FERPA districts have not identified a legal avenue that allows them to notify their teachers who their foster students are. English language learners, Special Education students, Speech students, are all subgroups identified as needing extra services and support from educators, and teachers are provided a list identifying the students that match one or more of the subgroups, but foster students are not on the list. In order to best meet the needs of the students, we first need to identify who they are. A comparison needs to be conducted on identifying the foster students and the teacher's ability to meet their needs, and teachers who were not provided a list and the effectiveness to meet the needs of the foster students.

Foster youth identification is effective when educators know how to support the students. Research has been conducted on teacher-student relationship and what professional development does to enhance the relationship, but very little research has been done on how to support teachers working with foster youth. This research needs to focus on these different aspects: how the professional development is given and what specific type of training is used, and finally who gives the training.

One of the obstacles when conducting the research was getting in touch with the foster parents. Originally the researcher was going to get support from the Student Services department, but then through discussion, it was determined that the department legally did not

have the right to contact the foster parent. This forced the researcher to change the population from elementary through high school to just high school. It was determined that the high school counselor in charge of the foster youth had the legal right to contact the parents and therefore the researcher was able to include the foster parents in the study. Throughout the study, it became clear that foster parent involvement was an area that needed further understanding. Research has shown that although foster parents play an important role in support of the foster youth, it takes the entire village to support their needs fully. Further research is needed to determine how educators communicate with the foster parents, what are the foster parent's legal rights regarding educational decisions, and how to get the foster parents engaged in the child's education.

With the implementation of the LCFF and LCAP, foster youth is now a designated population in the education system. Extra funds are provided to the education agencies to support foster youth and their academic success. Each district determines how the funds will be spent based on the needs of their students. The plan is described in the LCAP along with the cost of each intervention. The Southern California district utilizes the funds to provide the foster students' experiences as well as school supplies. To understand how to use the LCFF funds to improve academic success research needs to done on how different school districts distribute the funds, how the money is being spent, and quantify the effectiveness of the current plan.

Summary and Conclusion

The findings of this study correlated with the research presented in this study. This study brought to light the importance of awareness on multiple levels to support foster students with their social-emotional intelligence as well as their ability in forming relationships.

A significant finding of the study was the importance of foster students being aware of other foster students. This awareness provided students with a sense of belonging and support in

a large high school environment. Foster students had the opportunity to connect with other foster students who relate with struggles and obstacles they face on a daily basis. However, the foster students faced the challenge of seeing one another as a human being and not just as a foster student. Through the Excel class and the All Star monthly meetings foster students worked through emotions and questions to gain a deeper understanding of each other as a person and some took on a leadership role to support the foster students in the entire district. One of the main leadership opportunities was the All Star (foster) students conducted a clothing drive and all donations were open to the foster students in the district. This event provided the students an opportunity to connect with other foster students, develop leadership and organizational skills, and the ability to make a difference for all the 500 foster students.

The nine themes: teacher-student relationships, awareness, mentor, social-emotional intelligence, teacher-foster student relationships, communicating with foster parents, interaction with peers, and attachments discovered in the study lead to the final overarching theme of awareness. The ability to be aware of who your foster students are, be aware of struggles they encounter, being aware of the foster system and being aware of how a teacher can support a student are all necessary components in developing the teacher-student relationship that ultimately can empower a student to believe in themselves. As Josh Shipp (March 12, 2018, retrieved from https://joshshipp.com/one-caring-adult/) stated, "Every kid is one caring adult away from being a success story".

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Foster Parent Consent Letter

TEACHER-STUDENT INTERACTION, THE IMPACT IT HAS ON FOSTER YOUTH AND THEIR SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

The study in which you are being asked to participate is designed to investigate how the teacher-student interaction impacts the foster youth's social-emotional intelligence. Patricia Krcmar, a doctoral student, under the supervision of Dr. Belinda Karge, is conducting this study. The Institutional Review Board, Concordia University Irvine, in Irvine, CA, has approved this study.

The purpose of this study is to begin to develop an understanding of how a teacher can influence the foster youth by the relationship and interactions they have with the students. The hypothesis of the study is that teachers who have a healthy teacher-student relationship with their foster students can impact not only the child's social-emotional intelligence but also affect the student's ability to form attachments. As a participant, you will be asked to complete a 12-question survey that should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. Additionally you will be given the opportunity to volunteer to be interviewed and complete a journal.

Participation in this study is voluntary, refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits and at any time you do not feel comfortable you may leave the study.

The data collected throughout the study will remain confidential. Only Patricia Krcmar and Dr. Karge will have access to the data. All the documents will be emailed directly to the researcher. The researcher will be the only one with access to the email to ensure confidentiality as well as using a password-protected computer. For accuracy purposes, the interview portion will be recorded but at the completion of the study, all recordings will be deleted. Any anecdotal data or quotes will be accompanied with pseudonym names.

Participating in this study will provide you the opportunity to reflect on how your foster child interacts with others. You will be able to give a crucial insight into the role that education has on the success of foster youth.

The study will begin December 1, 2017 and be completed by May 2018. Per IRB requirements, all documents are kept for three years and then properly destroyed.

If you choose to access the final research dissertation that will include the results, the paper will be located in the Concordia University in Irvine library.

If you have, any questions please feel free to contact Patricia Krcmar at 951-443-7246 or email at patricia.krcmar@eagles.cui.edu, or Dr. Belinda Karge at 949-214-3333 or email at belinda.karge@cui.edu.

CONFIRMATION STATEMENT:
☐ I have read the information above and agree to participate in your study.
☐ I am willing to complete the survey and the parent worksheet.
☐ I am willing to be interviewed.
☐ I am willing to complete a journal.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

INTERACCIÓN PROFESOR-ESTUDIANTE, EL IMPACTO QUE TIENE EN LA JUVENTUD *FOSTER* Y SU INTELIGENCIA SOCIAL-EMOCIONAL

El estudio en el que se le pide que participe está diseñado para investigar cómo la interacción profesor-alumno afecta la inteligencia socio-emocional de la juventud *foster*. Patricia Krcmar, estudiante de doctorado, bajo la supervisión de Dr. Belinda Karge, está realizando este estudio. La Junta de Revisión Institucional, Concordia University Irvine, en Irvine, CA, ha aprobado este estudio.

El propósito de este estudio es comenzar a desarrollar una comprensión de cómo un maestro puede influenciar a los jóvenes de crianza temporal por la relación y las interacciones que tienen con los estudiantes. La hipótesis del estudio es que los maestros que tienen una relación saludable de maestro-alumno con sus estudiantes de crianza puede impactar no sólo en la inteligencia social-emocional del niño, sino también en la capacidad del estudiante de formar apegos. Como participante, se le pedirá que complete una encuesta de 12 preguntas que debe tomar aproximadamente 10 minutos para completar. Además, se le dará la oportunidad de ser voluntario para ser entrevistado y completar un diario.

La participación en este estudio es voluntaria, negando en participar no implicará ninguna penalidad ni pérdida de beneficios y si en cualquier momento no se siente cómodo puede dejar el estudio.

Los datos colectados durante el estudio permanecerán confidenciales. Only Patricia Krcmar and Dr. Karge will have access to the data. Todos los documentos serán enviados directamente al investigador. El investigador será el único con acceso al correo electrónico para garantizar la confidencialidad, así como el uso de una computadora protegida por contraseña Para el propósito de exactitud, la entrevista se grabará, pero al final del estudio, todas las grabaciones serán borradas. Cualquier dato o cita anecdótica se acompañará con nombres de pseudónimo.

La participación en este estudio le brindará la oportunidad de reflexionar sobre cómo interactúa su hijo de crianza con los demás. Usted será capaz de dar una visión crucial sobre el papel que la educación tiene en el éxito de la juventud de foster.

El estudio comenzará en novembre del 2017 y estará terminado en mayo del 2018. Per IRB requirements, all documents are kept for three years and then properly destroyed.

Si usted elige tener acceso a la disertación final que incluirá los resultados, el artículo se ubicará en la Universidad Concordia en la biblioteca de Irvine.

Si tiene alguna pregunta, por favor comuníquese con Patricia Krcmar al 951-443-7246 o envíe un correo electrónico a patricia.krcmar@eagles.cui.edu, o Dr. Belinda Karge al 949-214-3333 o envíe un correo electrónico a belinda.karge@cui.edu.

DECLARACIÓN DE CONFIRMACIÓN:
☐ He leído la información anterior y estoy de acuerdo en participar en su estudio.

☐ Estoy dispuesto a completar la encuesta y la hoja de trabajo principal.

☐ Estoy dispuesto a ser entrevistado.

☐ Estoy dispuesto a completar un diario.

Firma: _____   Fecha: _____

Nombre en letra: _____

Appendix B: Foster Parent Cover Letter

Dear Parents,

I want to inform you of an opportunity you have to support your student(s). Patricia Krcmar, an educator in our district, is currently working on her doctorate through Concordia University. During her program, she has gained a deep interest into how the district can support foster youth. Her study is going to focus on teacher-student interactions and how those interactions impact the foster student's social-emotional intelligence. Please know and understand that participating in the study is voluntary. Attached to the email is the consent letter outlining specifics of your involvement as well as the survey. If you have any questions please, contact Patricia Krcmar directly.

Contact information for Patricia Krcmar
951-443-7246
patricia.krcmar@eagles.cui.edu

Sincerely,

Appendix C: Foster Student Interaction & Social-Emotional Intelligence Survey

Hello, my name is Patricia Krcmar and I am a Doctoral Candidate at Concordia University. I am researching the impact teacher-student interaction has on the foster youth and their social-emotional intelligence. The information gathered in this survey will only be used for dissertation purposes and will not be shared to the public. This survey applies to one foster child, if you have multiple foster children you may fill out multiple surveys.

	Never	**Seldom**	**Often**	**Always**
1. I have conversations with my foster child about academics.	1	2	3	4
2. I have conversations with my foster child about their personal life.	1	2	3	4
3. My foster child interacts with peers outside of school.	1	2	3	4
4. My foster child initiates conversations with me.	1	2	3	4
5. My foster child interacts with the family.	1	2	3	4
6. My foster child gets into arguments.	1	2	3	4
7. My foster child is able to control their emotions.	1	2	3	4
8. My foster child is able to understand other people's emotions.	1	2	3	4

9. How has the school supported your foster child?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

10. Describe your relationship with your foster child.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

11. How does your foster child handle their emotions?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Are you a guardian in a single resident home or a foster group home? _____

How long have you been a foster parent? _____

How long has the foster child lived with you? _____

Male/Female_____

Age: Under 30   31 – 40   41 – 50   51 – 60   Over 60

Dear Parents,

Below are some questions for you to ask your foster child. Before you begin, please ask your foster student if they are willing to answer the questions. Participating in this study is on a volunteer basis. The answers provided will be used to better understand the relationship between teachers and the foster students and all responses will remain anonymous. Please ask your foster child the following questions and write down the responses in the space provided.

☐ I give my consent.

☐ I do not give my consent.

1. Describe your favorite teacher (Please don't use names.).

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. Think of your closest friend. Why is that person your closest friend?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. How do you feel about school?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. Describe your favorite part of the school day and why.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. In your opinion, is there anything that the school could be doing better to help you achieve your

    scholastic goals?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

6. Name of School _____

7. Grade level _____

8. Age _____

Foster Student Interaction & Social-Emotional Intelligence Survey

Hola, mi nombre es Patricia Krcmar y yo soy una candidata Doctoral en la Universidad Concordia. Yo estoy investigando cómo la interacción profesor-alumno afecta la inteligencia socio-emocional de la juventud *Foster (de crianza)*. La información colectada en esta encuesta será usada solamente para el propósito de la tesis y no será compartido con el público.

	Nunca	Ocasionalmente	Seguido	Siempre
1. Tengo conversaciones con mi hijo de crianza acerca de los estudios.	1	2	3	4
2. Tengo conversaciones con mi hijo de crianza acerca de su familia personal.	1	2	3	4
3. Mi hijo de crianza interactúa con sus compañeros fuera de la escuela.	1	2	3	4
4. Mi hijo de crianza inicia conversaciones conmigo	1	2	3	4
5. Mi hijo de crianza interactúa con la familia	1	2	3	4
6. Mi hijo de crianza entra en discusiones	1	2	3	4
7. Mi hijo de crianza es capaz de controlar sus emociones.	1	2	3	4
8. Mi hijo de crianza es capaz de entender las emociones de otras personas	1	2	3	4

9. ¿Cómo ha apoyado la escuela a su hijo de crianza?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

10. ¿Describe tu relación con tu hijo de crianza?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

11. ¿Cómo controla sus emociones tu hijo de crianza?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

¿Usted es guardián de una residencia singular o de un grupo de crianza?

_____

¿Cuánto tiempo ha sido un padre de crianza? _____

¿Cuánto tiempo ha vivido contigo su hijo de crianza? _____

Hombre / Mujer _____

Edad: Menos de 30   31 – 40   41 – 50   51 – 60   Arriba de 60

Queridos Padres,

Abajo hay unas preguntas para hacerle a sus hijos de crianza. Antes de comenzar, pregúntenle a sus hijos de crianza si están dispuestos a contestar las preguntas. Participar en el estudio es voluntario. Las respuestas proveídas serán usadas para mejor entender las relaciones entre maestros y estudiantes que son de crianza y todas las respuestas permanecerán anónimas. Por favor haz la siguiente pregunta a tu hijo de crianza y escribe la respuesta en el espacio proveído.

☐ Yo doy mi consentimiento

☐ Yo no doy mi consentimiento

1. Describe tu maestra favorita. (Por favor no use nombres)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

9. Piense en tu mejor amigo. ¿Por qué esa persona es tu mejor amigo?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

10. ¿Cómo te sientes sobre la escuela?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Describe tu parte favorita de la escuela y por qué

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

11. En tu opinión, ¿hay algo que la escuela podría estar haciendo mejor para poder ayudarte lograr tus metas escolares?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

12. Nombre de la escuela _____

13. Grado _____

14. Edad _____

Appendix D: Foster Parent Interview Questions

1) Tell me some characteristics about your child.

2) Can you describe a typical day?

3) How does your foster child interact with family?

4) How does your foster child interact with peers?

5) Describe your child's feelings toward school.

6) How does your foster child interact with their teacher?

7) Describe your relationship with your foster child's teacher.

8) Describe your relationship with your foster child.

9) How often does your child turn to you for comfort? And when they do are they noticeably comforted?

10) How does your child form attachments with their peers and family?

Appendix E: Journal Protocol for Parents

Directions: Please write about your foster child in your journal for two weeks. Below are topics to focus on while journaling. Please be descriptive but do not use your child's name (you may give them an alias).
How did my child interact/communicate with me today?

How did I interact/communicate with my child today?

What was discussed in the conversation?

How did the child interact with the family?

What emotions did I see from my child?

How did my child handle their emotions?

Appendix F: Teacher Consent Letter

TEACHER-STUDENT INTERACTION, THE IMPACT IT HAS ON FOSTER YOUTH AND
THEIR SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

The study in which you are being asked to participate is designed to investigate how the teacher-student interaction impacts the foster youth's social-emotional intelligence. Patricia Krcmar, a doctoral student, under the supervision of Dr. Belinda Karge, is conducting this study. The Institutional Review Board, Concordia University Irvine, in Irvine, CA, has approved this study.

The purpose of this study is to begin to develop an understanding of how a teacher can influence the foster youth by the relationship and interactions they have with the students. The hypothesis of the study is that teachers who have a healthy teacher-student relationship with their foster students can impact not only the child's social-emotional intelligence but also affect the student's ability to form attachments. As a participant, you will be asked to complete a 12-question survey that should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. Additionally you will be given the opportunity to volunteer to be interviewed and complete a journal.

Participation in this study is voluntary, refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits and at any time you do not feel comfortable you may leave the study.

The data collected throughout the study will remain confidential. All the documents will be emailed directly to the researcher. The researcher will be the only one with access to the email to ensure confidentiality as well as using a password-protected computer. For accuracy purposes, the interview portion will be recorded but at the completion of the study, all recordings will be deleted. Any anecdotal data or quotes will be accompanied with pseudonym names.

Participating in this study will provide you the opportunity to reflect on your interactions with all your students but especially on the foster youth. However, taking the time to reflect will take some of your planning time.

The study will begin in November 2017 and be completed by May 2018.

If you choose to access the final research dissertation that will include the results, the paper will be located in the Concordia University in Irvine library.

If you have, any questions please feel free to contact Patricia Krcmar at 951-443-7246 or email at patricia.krcmar@eagles.cui.edu.

CONFIRMATION STATEMENT:

☐ I have read the information above and agree to participate in your study.

☐ I am willing to complete the survey.

☐ I am willing to be interviewed.

☐ I am willing to complete a journal.

Signature: _____   Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

Appendix G: Teacher Cover Letter

Dear Teachers,

I want to inform you of an opportunity you have to support your student(s). Patricia Krcmar, an Elementary Instructional Coach in our district, is currently working on her doctorate through Concordia University. During her program, she has gained a deep interest into how the district can support foster youth. Her study is going to focus on teacher-student interactions and how those interactions impact the foster student's social-emotional intelligence. Please know and understand that participating in the study is voluntary. Attached to the email is the consent letter outlining specifics of your involvement as well as the survey. If you have any questions please, contact Patricia Krcmar directly.

Contact information for Patricia Krcmar
951-443-7246
patricia.krcmar@eagles.cui.edu

Sincerely,

Appendix H: Foster Student Interaction & Social-Emotional Intelligence Survey Questions

Hello, my name is Patricia Krcmar and I am a Doctoral Candidate at Concordia University. I am researching the impact teacher-student interaction has on the foster youth and their social-emotional intelligence. The information gathered in this survey will only be used for dissertation purposes and will not be shared to the public. Please take a minute and think about a foster student you have had or have and answer the following questions. If you have multiple foster students, you may fill out multiple surveys.

	Never	**Seldom**	**Often**	**Always**
1. I have conversations with the student about academics.	1	2	3	4
2. I have conversations with the student about their personal life.	1	2	3	4
3. The student initiates conversations with their peers.	1	2	3	4
4. The student initiates conversations with me.	1	2	3	4
5. The student works well with others.	1	2	3	4
6. The student asks for help.	1	2	3	4
7. The student gets into arguments with their peers.	1	2	3	4
8. The student is able to control their emotions.	1	2	3	4
9. The student is able to understand other people's emotions.	1	2	3	4

10. How is the student performing academically?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

11. Describe your relationship with the student.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

12. Would you say you have a similar relationship with the foster student as you do with your other

students? Why or why not?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

13. How long have you been teaching? _____

14. What grade level do you teach? _____

15. Male/Female_____

16. Ethnicity _____

17. Name (only include if willing to be interviewed or complete the journal)

_____

18. Age: 21 – 30   31 – 40   41 – 50   51 – 60   Over 60

Appendix I: Teacher Interview Questions

1) Describe your educational background and experience.

2) How do you develop relationships with your students?

3) What is your knowledge and understanding of the foster youth?

4) Describe your relationship with your foster student.

5) Describe your relationship with the foster parent.

6) How does the foster child interact with their peers?

7) How often does the foster child turn to you for comfort? And when they do are they noticeably comforted?

8) How does the foster child form attachments with their peers?

9) What differences if any do you see between the foster youth and the rest of your class?

Appendix J: Journal Protocol for Teachers

Directions: Please write about your foster student in your journal Monday through Friday for two weeks. Below are topics to focus on while journaling. Please be descriptive but do not use any student's names (you may use an alias for the student or just refer to her/him as student). How did my student interact/communicate with me today?

How did I interact/communicate with the student today?

What was discussed in the conversation?

How did the student interact with their peers?

What emotions did I see from my student?

How did the student handle their emotions?

How did the student respond to peer emotions?

Appendix K: Counselor and Principal Consent Forms

TEACHER-STUDENT INTERACTION, THE IMPACT IT HAS ON FOSTER YOUTH AND THEIR SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

The study in which you are being asked to participate is designed to investigate how the teacher-student interaction impacts the foster youth's social-emotional intelligence. Patricia Krcmar, a doctoral student, under the supervision of Dr. Belinda Karge, is conducting this study. The Institutional Review Board, Concordia University Irvine, in Irvine, CA, has approved this study.

The purpose of this study is to begin to develop an understanding of how a teacher can influence the foster youth by the relationship and interactions they have with the students. The hypothesis of the study is that teachers who have a healthy teacher-student relationship with their foster students can impact not only the child's social-emotional intelligence but also affect the student's ability to form attachments. As a participant, you will be invited to participate in a face-to-face interview. The interview will last approximately 45 minutes. The interview will be reordered for data purposes.

Participation in this study is voluntary, refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits and at any time you do not feel comfortable you may leave the study.

The data collected throughout the study will remain confidential. All the recordings will be deleted at the end of the study. For accuracy purposes, the interview portion will be recorded but at the completion of the study, all recordings will be deleted. Any anecdotal data or quotes will be accompanied with pseudonym names.

Participating in this study will provide you the opportunity to reflect on your knowledge of foster youth as well as how your teachers interact with students. Although there are, no direct risks in participating in the study it will require some of your time.

The study will begin in November 2017 and be completed by May 2018.

If you choose to access the final research dissertation that will include the results, the paper will be located in the Concordia University in Irvine library.

If you have, any questions please feel free to contact Patricia Krcmar at 951-443-7246 or email at patricia.krcmar@eagles.cui.edu

CONFIRMATION STATEMENT:

☐ I am willing to be interviewed.

☐ I have read the information above and agree to participate in your study.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

Appendix L: Counselor Interview Questions

1) Describe your path to becoming a counselor.

2) How do you support foster youth?

3) What intervention strategies have you implemented and why?

4) How do you ensure your foster youth are given the proper support to succeed in school?

5) How do you support the teacher-student relationship?

6) How do you support a foster child's social-emotional intelligence?

7) How do you support the relationship between the foster parent and child?

APPENDIX M

Appendix M: Administrator Interview Questions

1. How has the LCAP impacted your school's ability to support the foster youth?

2. What training does the district provide to support site administrators regarding foster youth, teacher-student interaction, and social-emotional intelligence?

3. Describe your school's culture.

4. Describe your philosophy on supporting the Foster youth.

5. Describe the journey your school took to meet the needs of your foster youth.

6. In what ways have you seen these programs impact your school?

7. What is your belief on social-emotional intelligence? And how do you support your teachers understanding with it?

8. Describe your school's philosophy on student achievement concerning at-risk youth.

Appendix N: Teacher Mentor Survey

Tell us about yourself!

Staff Name: Birthday:

My mentee last year was:

I want to keep my mentee from last year: Yes   No

All Star student(s) you already connect with:

When I'm not at work I like to …

I'm really good at …

Favorite food:

Favorite TV show or movie:

Favorite book or magazine:

Favorite type of music or band:

My dream or goal is to …

Most people don't know this about me but I'm …

Appendix O: Foster Student Mentee Survey

Tell us about yourself!

Student Name: Birthday:

Nickname:

My mentor last year was:

I want to keep my mentor from last year: Yes   No

Staff member(s) I already connect with:

When I'm not at school I like to ...

I'm really good at ...

Favorite food:

Favorite TV show or movie:

Favorite book or magazine:

Favorite type of music or band:

My dream or goal is to ...

Most people don't know this about me but I'm ...

Timeline

| Fall of 2017 | Winter of 2017 | January | March | May of 2018 |

| Complete IRB | Data Collection | Data Analysis | Oral Defense | Graduation |