

Studies related to outcomes for children in the foster care system have repeatedly shown that this population of children has poorer mental health outcomes, more behavioral concerns, and lower educational attainment than other children (Simms, Dubowitz, & Szilagyi, 2000; Barnett, Cleary, Butcher, & Jankowski, 2018; Turney and Wildeman, 2016; Bertram, 2018). Delayed onset of needed services at school children within the foster care system may pose an additional barrier that systematically disenfranchises these children, depriving them of opportunities to make functional gains that would help to level the playing field (Zetlin, 2006). In this study, we will retrospectively examine charts of approximately 200 foster children previously evaluated in a Foster Care HUB associated with a large children's hospital network to determine how commonly this problem results in negative impacts for children within the foster care system. Charts will be reviewed to elucidate information pertaining to seven domains: caregiver type at time of appointment, whether foster parents or biological parents retained educational rights, the presence of special healthcare needs, the impact of any existing medical condition on the child's education, whether the child has an existing IEP, whether the child is served through the Regional Center, as well as including all systems of care involved in the child's case at the time of the appointment. This information will be used in order to help us answer these two questions: Does caregiver type adversely impact access to special education in this vulnerable population? Are foster children's health outcomes adversely impacted when foster caregivers do not obtain educational rights?

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