

# The Scholar-Practitioner

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A publication of R is for Thursday

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## National Conference for Hidden Student Populations

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<https://nchp.okstate.edu>

## Current Hidden College Student Populations

May include those who have foster care histories, justice-involved experiences, who are survivors of sexual violence or sex workers, who are recovering substances addicts, who face housing insecurity, or who are considered Third Culture Kids/Individuals

## NCHP Conference Fellows

Dr. Jennifer Geiger,  
University of Illinois, Chicago

Dr. Royel Johnson,  
University of Southern California

Dr. Kerri Kearney,  
Oklahoma State University

Dr. Megan Piel,  
University of Texas, San Antonio

Dr. Lori Tiller,  
University of Georgia

Dr. Lisa Will,  
Oklahoma State University



**The Scholar-Practitioner** is a monthly publication of invited research summaries that target the research-to-practice gap for U.S. scholar and practitioner advocates for college students with experiences in foster care and other hidden college student populations.

This publication reinforces the work of the **National Conference for Hidden Student Populations (NCHP)** by providing a space to share research applications for practice. NCHP was the first research conference dedicated to this multidisciplinary area of study. The NCHP 4th conference will be held February 28 - March 1, 2024, at University of Texas—San Antonio.

On this occasion, **The Scholar-Practitioner** is presenting a summary about Dr. Brown's dissertation. The summary is divided in two parts. First part is included in this edition and the second part will be published next month.

## Foster Care Student's Knowledge of Campus Support Programs

Brown, N.O. (2017). *An exploratory study: Foster care students' knowledge of college campus support programs* [Doctoral Dissertation, The University of Georgia]. ScholarWorksUGA. Electronic Thesis and Dissertation. <https://guides.libs.uga.edu/scholarlycommunications/scholarlycommunication/ETD>

## Summary by Nathaniel O. Brown and Keenan Eldridge

In reflecting on my personal transition from foster care to undergraduate postsecondary education, I vividly remember the challenges and barriers in balancing my basic needs and pursuing a college degree. It was a difficult path to navigate with little to no support after aging out of foster care.

The purpose of this exploratory study was to determine the knowledge of foster care students participating in college campus support programs and how their interactions and connections with program staff aid in improving postsecondary retention, persistence, and college completion.

## Research Questions

- 1) How does campus connectedness of currently enrolled foster care undergraduate students (as measured by the Campus Connectedness Scale) correlate with engagement in a campus support program to meet their needs (as indicated by the Guardian/Renaissance Scholars Student Survey)?
- 2) What is the relationship between the academic self-efficacy (as measured by the Academic Self-Efficacy Scale) and expectations (as measured by the College Student Expectations Questionnaire) of currently enrolled foster care undergraduate students participating in a campus support program to meet their needs?
- 3) How do college student experiences (as measured by the College Student Experiences Survey) of currently enrolled foster care undergraduate students participating in a campus support program correlate with career self-efficacy (as measured by the Career Search Self-Efficacy Scale)?

## Research Design

Using snowball sampling to recruit college student participants who resided in

foster care between the ages of 14 and 25, the study utilized a cross-sectional survey research design. The 70-question Foster Students College and University Survey is an integrated instrument developed from seven instruments that obtained descriptive statistics of 195 participants, a comparative analysis of demographics, and elicited participant knowledge about participating in a campus support program (Brown, 2017). One-way ANOVAS, independent t-tests, and p-value were used to analyze the data quantitatively.

### Results

This study illustrated that gender identity and institution type (e.g., 4-year college, vocational/technical college) for foster care students had a stronger influence on campus connectedness. This influence can shape college student engagement in campus support programs provided that this student population is aware and receives access to available campus support programs at colleges or universities in the U.S. (Brown, 2017). This population can learn program benefits that support college or university matriculation for program completion. Another salient finding indicated that student classification (e.g., first-year student, senior, graduate) for foster care students influenced career success (Brown, 2017). Additional findings indicated that 48.2% of participants knew about

campus support programs whereas 51.7% of participants did not know about these programs (Brown, 2017). On the other hand, 31.2% of participants knew and participated in the program whereas 68.7% of participants knew about the program but did not participate in the program (Brown, 2017). Descriptive statistics helped to create a picture of a population that has been hidden and hard to access from aging out of foster care to postsecondary institutions.

Findings suggest that foster care students need stronger connections and a social network that can help them become accustomed to the culture of college life. An introduction to role models or significant adult figures, supportive environments, and freedom to express their stories have a positive impact on the experiences of foster care students. Identifying risk factors through campus support programs may help improve retention rates for foster care students. Campus support programs provide foster youth with additional financial, academic, social/emotional, and logistical support that could help increase retention rates at postsecondary institutions (Brown, 2017). Campus support programs bolster learning in the classrooms and apply newfound knowledge (Brown, 2017).

Overall, campus connectedness can improve engagement, academic skills, and commitment to administrative resources (Brown, 2017). Campus support programs increase the likelihood of obtaining internships, scholarships, and other career-advancing opportunities (Brown, 2017).

Stay tuned! Implications to practice in the next issue.

### References

Brown, N.O. (2017). *An exploratory study: Foster care students' knowledge of college campus support programs* [Doctoral Dissertation, The University of Georgia]. ScholarWorksUGA. Electronic Thesis and Dissertation. <https://guides.libs.uga.edu/scholarlycommunications/scholarlycommunication/ETD>

## NCHP

**Save the date! Feb 28—March 1, 2024**

**Call for Proposal NOW OPEN!**

**Team Leader** - Become a team leader of a multidisciplinary research team. September 1, 2023, Deadline (notifications by September 15)

**Research Team Member** - Become a new multidisciplinary research team member. October 13, 2023, Deadline (notifications by October 31)

**Traditional Research Presenter** - Present an original empirical work. October 31, 2023, Deadline (notifications by November 10)

**Arts-Based Research Presenter** - Present an arts-based work. October 31, 2023, Deadline (notifications by November 10)

For more information, go to:

<https://nchp.okstate.edu>



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