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## **The impact of placement instability on emotional and behavioural outcomes among youth in foster care**

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## Review question

What is the impact of placement instability on emotional and behavioural outcomes in youths in foster care?

## Searches

A systematic literature search will be conducted using the following databases:-

- PsycINFO (1806-present)
- Scopus
- Web of Science
- OpenGrey
- Digital Dissertations

This search will comprise of all relevant literature created between 1980 and 31 August 2019.

## Search strategy

[https://www.crd.york.ac.uk/PROSPEROFILES/149011\\_STRATEGY\\_20190829.pdf](https://www.crd.york.ac.uk/PROSPEROFILES/149011_STRATEGY_20190829.pdf)

## Types of study to be included

Inclusion criteria: (1) Quantitative or mixed-methods research on the impact of placement instability on emotional and behavioural outcomes in youths in foster care.

Exclusion: (1) Qualitative research. (2) Books, book chapters. (3) Studies not available in the English language.

## Condition or domain being studied

The impact of placement instability on emotional and behavioural outcomes of youths in foster care.

## Participants/population

Looked After Children up to the age of 18 who are or have been within the foster care system

## Intervention(s), exposure(s)

This review will not focus on interventions for emotional and behavioural difficulties in foster care youth as it is an exploration of the impact of an aspect of the foster care system on outcomes in this population.

## Comparator(s)/control

Not applicable.

## Main outcome(s)

Emotional and behavioural outcomes of foster care youth as a result of placement instability.

## Measures of effect

Not applicable.

## Additional outcome(s)

None.

### Measures of effect

Not applicable.

### Data extraction (selection and coding)

Data will be retrieved and considered in line with the PRISMA-P guidance (Moher et al, 2015). Research will be retrieved from the above named databases by the principal investigator, based on article title, abstract and key terms. Studies which do not fulfil these criteria will be excluded. If potentially appropriate for inclusion, a thorough review will be conducted of the body of the text. If deemed viable on this basis, it will be included, or otherwise discarded.

The review will be conducted as a narrative synthesis and as such will explore a wide range of variables which may contribute to and effect results, bias and overall study quality. Data will initially be recorded in an excel spreadsheet formatted to include all relevant headings, prior to data synthesis.

Data extraction will initially be conducted by one researcher, under the supervision of an academic supervisor. A secondary, independent researcher will then conduct a further search to identify possible selection bias and identify any further research which fits the initial criteria.

All research included in the review will be assessed for quality and risk of bias using the Quality Assessment Tool for Observational, Cohort and Cross-Sectional Studies (National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute). The principal reviewer will complete an excel spreadsheet with scores for each of the selected papers based on this quality assessment tool. The second reviewer will conduct the same quality assessment independently. The results of each independent review will be compared and if there are discrepancies then a third independent review will assess in order to reach consensus.

### Risk of bias (quality) assessment

All research included in the review will be assessed for quality and risk of bias using the Quality Assessment Tool for Observational, Cohort and Cross-Sectional Studies (National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute).

### Strategy for data synthesis

The review will be conducted in the form of a narrative synthesis in order to appraise the quality of the chosen research and to effectively synthesise its results. Quality will be assessed through analysis of e.g. study design and methodology, participant demographics and reliability and validity of measures, while effect sizes and other relevant outcomes will be synthesised to explore the results of the data. These results will be those directly pertaining to the effect of placement instability on emotional and/or behavioural outcomes in foster care youth. The review will be conducted with reference to a minimum of 6 individual studies, selected as per the data extraction criteria detailed above.

### Analysis of subgroups or subsets

Data will be subdivided into “emotional outcomes” and “behavioural outcomes” of placement instability on foster care youth.

### Contact details for further information

Darren Maguire  
dmaguire15@qub.ac.uk

### Organisational affiliation of the review

Queens University, Belfast  
<https://www.qub.ac.uk/schools/psy/>

### Review team members and their organisational affiliations

Mr Darren Maguire. Queens University, Belfast  
Miss Keziah May. Queens University, Belfast  
Dr David McCormack. Queens University, Belfast  
Dr Tim Fosker. Queens University, Belfast

### Type and method of review

Narrative synthesis, Systematic review

### Anticipated or actual start date

01 August 2019

### Anticipated completion date

30 September 2020

### Funding sources/sponsors

Queens University, Belfast

### Conflicts of interest

### Language

English

### Country

Northern Ireland

### Stage of review

Review Ongoing

### Subject index terms status

Subject indexing assigned by CRD

### Subject index terms

Adolescent; Emotions; Foster Home Care; Humans

### Date of registration in PROSPERO

14 October 2019

### Date of first submission

30 August 2019

### Stage of review at time of this submission

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Started</b>	<b>Completed</b>
Preliminary searches	Yes	No
Piloting of the study selection process	Yes	No
Formal screening of search results against eligibility criteria	No	No
Data extraction	No	No
Risk of bias (quality) assessment	No	No
Data analysis	No	No

### Revision note

Changes were made to add an additional reviewer, revise the quality assessment tool to one more appropriate for the study and to clarify some of the language and information regarding the use of an independent reviewer during quality assessment. There have not been any changes made to the nature of the review itself.

*The record owner confirms that the information they have supplied for this submission is accurate and*

*complete and they understand that deliberate provision of inaccurate information or omission of data may be construed as scientific misconduct.*

*The record owner confirms that they will update the status of the review when it is completed and will add publication details in due course.*

### Versions

14 October 2019

14 September 2020