



Natural Mentor Relationships Among Young Adults with Foster Care Experience : Pathways to Emerging Adulthood Outcomes.

Johanna Kp Greeson



During emerging adulthood, most youth receive family support to help them weather the difficulties associated with transitioning to independence. When foster youth emancipate from the child welfare system, they confront the challenges associated with this developmental stage and are at risk of having to transition without family support. As a result, many former foster youth experience myriad negative long-term outcomes, including depression, delinquency and violence, and a lack of self-sufficiency. A caring adult who offers social support is normative for adolescent development and protective for youth across many risk conditions. Natural mentoring can cultivate such relationships and has been recognized as a promising approach for buffering former foster youth against poor outcomes. Natural mentors are naturally occurring important adults in a youths existing social network. This research contributes to the knowledge base about how supportive adult relationships may buffer the developmental risks former foster youth face during emerging adulthood. Using data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health, this dissertation examines the association between caring adult relationships and emerging adulthood outcomes in both a normative sample of young adults and a sample of young adults identified as former foster youth. Results suggest that specific natural mentor roles are important for specific emerging adulthood outcomes. Results also suggest that the patterns and magnitudes of the associations between variables differ by sample, indicating that previous foster care experience may moderate the association between natural mentor relationship characteristics and emerging adulthood outcomes. This dissertation extends previous research on natural mentoring by focusing on relationship characteristics. This is one of the first series of analyses to pose questions about specific relationship features and processes. This dissertation also highlights the importance of considering how individual risk (i.e., foster care experience) may shape associations between relationship characteristics and outcomes. Results are discussed within a conceptual framework that highlights how the transitional period from late adolescence into early adulthood for former foster youth is characterized by not only the premature adoption of adult roles and responsibilities, but often takes place without the required help and support available to same age peers in the general population.

- [Nation Builders Treatise : Theology: A Contemporary Revelation of the Abraham - Sarah Covenants](#)
- [National Museum of Wales Accounts 1993-94: Accounts of National Museum of Wales Prepared Pursuant to Section 9 \(4\) of the Museum and Galleries Act 1992 for the Year Ended 31 March 1994, Together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General Thereon: \[Hc\]: \[1993-94\]: House of Commons Papers: \[19](#)
- [Natural Gas Market Review 2006, Towards a Global Gas Market](#)
- [Nat Geo Traveler New York City](#)
- [Naturalistische Novellen in Italien Und Osterreich](#)
- [Naturally Saponified](#)
- [National Gallery Technical Bulletin: v. 14](#)
- [A Nation Born in a Day : How God` Land Grant to Abraham Affects World Affairs and the End Times, and How You Can Partner with God in This Coming Event](#)