

FROM CRISIS TO COMMUNITY

The U.S. foster care system is in crisis—a crisis of capacity, stability and quality.

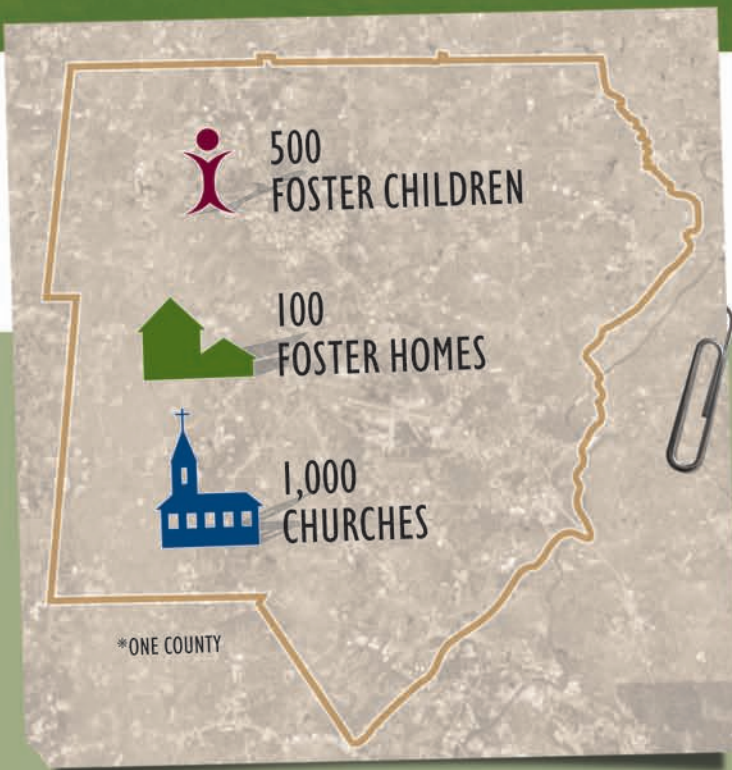
A crisis of capacity. Each year, nearly 800,000 children are temporarily removed from their parents' care for reasons ranging from neglect and abandonment to abuse. There are only 240,000 or so foster families to care for them.

A crisis of stability. The average foster child remains in care for just over two years. One in three foster children lives in more than three homes per year.

A crisis of quality. Statistics and stories show that foster children have a higher risk of juvenile delinquency and other negative outcomes in adult life.

FaithBridge Foster Care has a solution. That solution is the local church. FaithBridge believes the current crisis provides an opportunity to lead our country into a new kind of community—a Community of CareSM.

The local church has a scriptural mandate to engage in a foster care ministry. And with its existing infrastructure, vibrant ministries and caring congregations, the local church can solve this crisis.



“Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.”

James 1:27

Take, for example, a suburban county outside of Atlanta with a 2008 foster care population of 500—and only 100 or so families to serve them. The result is that children are moved from home to home, crowded into less than ideal settings.

In that same county, there are more than 1,000 churches. If each church cared for just one child, the foster care crisis in that community would be eliminated.

Our approach is to mobilize and equip a handful of willing, obedient church partners in a strategic way—creating independent foster care ministries through a Community of Care model.

There are more than 300,000 churches and 100 million evangelical Christians nationally. Imagine what would happen if in each community, the local church provided the necessary capacity, stability and quality needed to help each and every foster child.



Together with the local church, FaithBridge aims to transform the way foster care is delivered in this country. How? By deploying a foster care service delivery model that is so stable and scalable that each community can take ownership of its foster children through small group networks called Communities of CareSM.

FROM CRISIS...TO COMMUNITY

CAPACITY

From too few foster families	To more than 125 prospective Christian foster families for each child ¹	The local church recruits, trains and supports foster families in a caring small group ministry.
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STABILITY

From moving from foster home to foster home	To a single, stable community group that provides care for as long as a child needs it	Foster families are surrounded by a caring community of trained volunteers and professionals who help meet the entire family's physical, emotional and spiritual needs, offering unparalleled support before, during and after a foster placement occurs.
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QUALITY

From sporadic care and inconsistent standards	To a community-based approach and individual communities linked through a replicable and sustainable model	Individual, autonomous Communities of Care are linked and supported through a network of coordinated services and centralized administration.
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¹ Estimates indicate that there are 100 million evangelical Christians in America. With 800,000 children in foster care in 2007, this translates to 125 prospective families for every foster child.

To learn more about FaithBridge Foster Care and its strategy of moving From Crisis to Community, visit us online at www.faithbridgefostercare.org. You can access a position paper on this topic in the Resources section.

