

**Course:** Foster Care Elective **Course Number** PED 2122

**Department:** Pediatrics

**Faculty Coordinator:** Hilda Loria, MD

**Asst. Fac. Coordinators:** Heidi Roman, MD; Kimberly Stone, MD

**Hospital:** Children's Health

**Periods Offered:**

**Length:** 4 weeks

**Max # of Students:** 2

**First Day Contact:** Hilda Loria, MD

**First Contact Time:** 8:00 am

**First Day Location:** Rees-Jones Center for Foster Care Excellence  
Children's Specialty Center (2350 N. Stemmons Freeway, Dallas, TX), 2<sup>nd</sup> floor

**Prerequisites:** Completion of pediatrics clerkship

- I. **Course Description:** This 4-week elective is designed for medical students who are interested in the care of vulnerable child populations, particularly the care of children in the child welfare system (e.g. foster care system). Using an interactive, multidisciplinary, and inter-professional team approach, the elective will focus on obtaining the clinical knowledge and skills to effectively care for children in the child welfare system. Primary areas of focus include the evaluation, diagnosis and treatment of physical, behavioral/developmental/emotional, and psychosocial health conditions related to childhood trauma/neglect; the practice and delivery of trauma-informed care; and care coordination and cross-sector collaboration as a systems-approach to the care of children in the child welfare system.

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Goals	Objectives	Assessment methods
<b>Patient Care:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Students will demonstrate the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to perform appropriately focused and accurate histories and physical assessments specific to the care of children in the child welfare system.</i></li> <li>2. <i>Students will assist in the development of comprehensive evaluation and treatment plans to address the physical, mental, and psychosocial health sequelae associated with childhood trauma and neglect.</i></li> <li>3. <i>Students will begin to take responsibility for implementation of the evaluation and treatment plans.</i></li> <li>4. <i>Students will demonstrate the skills necessary to deliver trauma-informed care.</i></li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Define trauma-informed care.</li> <li>2. Obtain a trauma-informed history for a child in foster care.</li> <li>3. Perform a trauma-informed physical exam for a child in foster care.</li> <li>4. Complete learning modules on the delivery of trauma-informed care</li> <li>5. Utilize a fully-integrated medical and behavioral health model of care to develop comprehensive care plans for children in foster care.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Direct observation + feedback from Foster Care Clinic faculty on trauma-informed history-taking and physical exam skills</i></li> </ul>
<b>Medical knowledge:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Students will be able to identify the physical, mental, and psychosocial health sequelae of toxic stress.</i></li> <li>2. <i>Students will be able to explain the impact of adverse childhood experiences on a child's development.</i></li> <li>3. <i>Students will know how to assess and manage common complaints related to toxic stress as a result of childhood trauma and neglect.</i></li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Understand how a child enters and moves through the foster care system</li> <li>2. List the most common symptoms of childhood trauma and neglect</li> <li>3. Demonstrate a trauma-informed counseling technique that addresses physical/behavioral health symptoms of trauma.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Presentation with feedback from multidisciplinary team on a foster-care related topic to be delivered during the last week of the rotation</i></li> <li>• <i>Pre and post-survey ("self-assessment") regarding medical student knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs about the care of children in foster care</i></li> </ul>

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<p>4. <i>The student will know the pathophysiology explaining the long-term impact of adverse childhood experiences on adult health outcomes.</i></p>	<p>4. Prepare and deliver a presentation to a multidisciplinary team on a topic related to the care of children in foster care</p>	
<p><b>Interpersonal and communication skills:</b></p> <p>1. <i>The students will effectively exchange information with patients, families, consultants and the team, including nurses, faculty, residents, ancillary staff, and community partners.</i></p>	<p>1. Participate in an integrated visit with a member of the behavioral health team</p> <p>2. Students will collaborate with members of a multidisciplinary and inter-professional team to develop comprehensive care plans to address the health issues of children in foster care.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Observations of foster/kinship families, faculty, staff, and community partners</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Practice Based learning and Improvement:</b></p> <p>1. <i>Students will demonstrate the ability to assimilate scientific evidence and improve patient care practices.</i></p>	<p>1. Apply health supervision guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics on the care of children in foster care, kinship care, or adoptive care.</p> <p>2. Locate and apply evidence-based clinical practice guidelines for common pediatric physical, developmental, and behavioral health conditions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Presentation with formal feedback from multidisciplinary team on a topic related to foster care, to be delivered during the last week of the rotation</i></li> <li>• <i>Critical review of a relevant article</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Professionalism:</b></p> <p>1. <i>Students must demonstrate a commitment to carrying out professional responsibilities, adherence to ethical principles, and sensitivity to a diverse patient population</i></p>	<p>1. Identify and discuss ethical considerations in the care of children in foster care.</p> <p>2. Demonstrate a deeper awareness of biases and challenges with this patient population, as demonstrated in a reflective writing assignment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Observations of faculty, staff, and community partners</i></li> <li>• <i>Narrative/reflective essay with feedback and discussion with Foster Care faculty</i></li> </ul>

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<b>Systems based practice:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Know how children in foster care fit into the larger system of health care.</i></li> <li>2. <i>Work with patients, families, the hospital system, the child welfare system, and community partners to optimize use of system resources.</i></li> <li>3. <i>Identify systemic barriers and contribute to a culture of improvement and cross-sector collaboration.</i></li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in interactive learning activities involving the interdisciplinary healthcare team, the child welfare system, and community partners (including the judicial system, child abuse teams, early childhood intervention, behavioral/mental health partners, etc.)</li> <li>• Participate and present at weekly interdisciplinary rounds.</li> <li>• Foster an awareness of the role of the pediatrician as an advocate for children and ways that this can be accomplished on the local, state, and federal level.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Observations of faculty, staff, and community partners</i></li> <li>• <i>Narrative/reflective essay with feedback and discussion with Foster Care faculty</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Guided reflection will ask students to reflect on their attitudes and beliefs about caring for children in foster care, challenges and barriers to caring for this population, and strategies to incorporate into their clinical practice as they encounter children and/or adults who have been in the foster care system.</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

### III. Methods of Instruction will include didactics, clinical experiences, and interactive activities as noted below:

<b>Week 1: Overview of the Foster Care System</b>	
Content	Educational Strategies
History of Foster Care	Didactic lecture: epidemiology, terminology
	Documentary (ReMoved, part 1 and 2)
Evaluation and Diagnosis of Child Abuse	REACH clinic
A Child's Journey through Foster Care	TED talk + didactic lecture from CPS liaison
	A Day in the Life of a CPS caseworker
	Clinic: New patient visit → 1 <sup>st</sup> Integrated visit → Follow-up visit
The Impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences	Texas Health Steps online module on ACEs
	Clinic: in-utero drug exposure, developmental delay, failure to thrive, "ADHD"/behavioral issues, depression/suicide

<b>Week 2: Attitudes and Beliefs About Foster Care</b>	
Content	Educational Strategies
Attitudes and Beliefs About Foster Care	Guided Reflection, Part 1
	Movie: Instant Family + discussion
	Meet with former foster care youth at CASA
	Clinic: Meet families in clinic to ask about their journey with the foster care system

<b>Week 3: The Role of the Health Care System in the Care of Children in Foster Care</b>	
Content	Educational Strategies
Health supervision/considerations in Foster Care	Texas Health Steps online module on Foster Care in Texas
	<i>Pediatrics</i> Health Supervision Guidelines
	How to do an H&P in Foster Care (observation then feedback)
	Clinic: see patients independently with attending supervision
Trauma-Informed Care	Didactic session on trauma-informed care
	Self-reflection/observation of each step of trauma-informed care model during clinical encounters
	Observe parent-child interaction therapy
Teamwork Makes the Dream Work	Shadow psychologist Shadow psychiatrist Shadow early childhood specialist Shadow clinical therapist Interdisciplinary Rounds (Tues AM)
Things I Wish Our Doctor Knew	Interactive session with foster/kinship/adoptive family on child/family experiences navigating the healthcare system

<b>Week 4: Advocacy in Foster Care</b>	
Content	Educational Strategies
Advocating for Early Childhood	Visit ECI Center: learn about ECI and promote health literacy (story time with the class)

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Advocacy in the Child Welfare System	Didactic session with Rees-Jones Center Director of Policy, Advocacy, and Research on <i>Policy and Advocacy in Foster Care</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Includes guided interactive activity involving a call, letter, or visit with state representative</li></ul>
	Interacting with the Legal System: Attend court hearing with CASA advocate
Wrap-Up	Oral presentation
	Shared Reflection/Discussion with Foster Care faculty

### IV. Overview of student responsibilities:

1. Attend all clinic sessions and elective activities.
2. Participate and contribute in all clinic sessions and elective activities.
3. Complete self-directed assignments.
4. Demonstrate professionalism in all interactions with patients, team members, and community partners.
5. Provide feedback to course faculty regarding elective experience.

### IV. Method of evaluation of students and requirements: Evaluation based on assessment methods listed above, grade is Pass/Fail