

Focus Group End of Year Report for 2023

Name of Focus Group Adoption and Foster Care (AFC)

Chair/Co-chairs Drs. Cheryl Fortner and Rachel Farr

Chair/Co-chairs email

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1. What were your focus groups major activities or accomplishments this year?

Our activities and accomplishments are directly tied to the goals specified in our 2022 work plan.

Adoption & Foster Care FG Goal	Activities or Accomplishments
Continue to collaborate to create AFC symposia/sessions for the 2023 NCFR conference, with continued efforts to include and involve people whose experiences and perspectives are underrepresented in scholarly AFC discourse. The 2023 theme will allow us to to deliberately represent topics focused on DEI issues in realms of AFC, such as racial/ethnic identity and socialization in multiracial adoptive families and intersections with additional identities, social locations, and contexts.	Collaborations cultivated during our 2022 Focus Group meeting resulted in a symposium accepted (we did submit two): FP SY 137: <i>Birth Family Roles and Experiences in the Context of Adoption and Foster Care Systems</i> (10 collaborators) and at least one other individual AFC-related presentations accepted: FP LI 228-04 <i>Micro Matters: Microaffirmations and Microaggressions in How Adopted LGBTQ+ Youth and their Families Navigate LGBTQ+ Identities</i> (4 collaborators).
Continue to engage, add, and maintain members by providing a place and mechanism for NCFR members and conference attendees with professional and/or personal AFC interests to network, listen, and be heard	As with last year and previous years, our 2022 focus group meeting minutes and subsequent digital discourse reflect a robust conversation that fostered new and continued connections, potential applied and research collaborations, and resource sharing.
Keep AFC-related issues on the forefront for NCFR and its members; Work with NCFR staff and leadership to maintain current AFC-related events and issues in NCFR communications and our discussion board/forum.	In addition to the preparation of AFC conference proposals and presentations, Focus Group members share resources and opportunities via email and through the AFC discussion forum. The Chairs encourage members to use the NCFR AFC discussion forum to build interest and share opportunities with students, practitioners, researchers, professionals, and other AFC individuals. This year, the 3 AFC Focus Group members who were awarded the Olson Grant in 2022 (“A Multimethod Approach to Understanding Transitions to Adoptive Parenthood”) will give an invited address at the 2023 conference.
Work with NCFR staff and leadership to maintain current AFC-related events and issues in NCFR communications and our discussion board/forum.	We routinely coordinate with NCFR staff and leaders to ensure communication across our discussion board and those of other focus groups and sections. For instance, we are particularly collaborative with members over overlapping interest areas, e.g., Family Policy, Families and Health, and Feminism and Family Studies sections.

2. What has your focus group done during the past year to further NCFR's inclusion and diversity initiatives?

The NCFR annual conference provides fantastic opportunities each year for our members to present, discuss and network in efforts to promote and further understanding of the experiences of adoptive and foster families of diverse backgrounds. We routinely integrate discussion and presentation of DEI topics given intersections with transracial and intercultural fostering and adoption. Our focus group meeting and online discussion group also provides a useful tool for disseminating relevant resources and information. We appreciate NCFR's efforts in creating options for hybrid participation in the 2023 conference to enhance access to those who may face financial and geographical challenges or familial and professional commitments. This has been an area of discussion for our members, and especially with this year's location of FL and its heightened anti-LGBTQ+ laws and policies, we are grateful for NCFR's sensitive and creative approach.

3. Please list any concerns, questions, or suggestions.

Question: Does the NCFR Board or staff have suggestions for our focus group on how we might better support NCFR's DEI initiatives and NCFR's expectations for focus group impacts?

Gratitude: Thank you to the entire NCFR staff for being accessible to answer questions and support our work, for working with us on scheduling our annual meeting to avoid conflicts for our members and potential members, and for maintaining the online communication tools (digest, lists, etc.).

Return by **Monday, October 16, 2023** to membership@ncfr.org