Placing siblings together reduces depression, self-blame, and anxiety.

- Rebecca L. Hegar, *Kinship Care and Sibling Placement: Child Behavior, Family Relationships, and School Outcomes*, 31 Child. & Youth Srvcs. Rev. 670 (2009), https://ideas.repec.org/a/eee/cysrev/v31y2009i6p670-679.html

    This study uses data from the National Study of Child and Adolescent Wellbeing (NSCAW) to examine correlations between kinship foster care, sibling placement, and child welfare outcomes. Substantive findings from the study included the following: (1) "From the viewpoint of the youth, being placed with a sibling was significantly related to lower levels of internalizing problems (e.g., depression, self-blame)"; (2) "girls placed in kinship foster care reported lower levels of externalizing behaviors (e.g., anger, aggression) than did girls placed in non-kinship settings"; and (3) "children and youth who are placed with one or more siblings are significantly more likely than others to feel emotionally supported, to feel close to a primary caregiver . . . and to like living with the people in the home." *Id.* at 676.

- Sabrina M. Richardson & Tuppett Yates, *Siblings in Foster Care: A Relational Path to Resilience for Emancipated Foster Youth*, 47 Child. & Youth Srvcs. Rev. 378 (2014), https://adlab.ucr.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Richardson-Yates-2014.pdf

    Using data from 170 recently emancipated youth from the California foster care system between the ages of 17 and 21, this study investigates the correlation between sibling co-placements during foster care with subsequent educational and occupational competence, housing quality, relational adjustment, and civic engagement. It analyzes these outcomes in relation to the proportion of time which a child had spent placed with, versus separated from, his or her siblings. In particular, the authors found that "the presence of a sibling is typically associated with better proximal outcomes in foster care . . . [such as] fewer symptoms of anxiety and depression." *Id.* at 379 (internal citations omitted).

- Bilha Davidson-Arad & Adva Klein, *Comparative Well Being of Israeli Youngsters in Residential Care With and Without Siblings,* 33 Child. & Youth Srvcs. Rev. 2152 (2011), https://ideas.repec.org/a/eee/cysrev/v33y2011i11p2152-2159.html

    This study compares the wellbeing and self-esteem of 91 Israeli youth between 12-14 years of age who were placed with their siblings (referred to as "intact care") in residential facilities with those who were placed without their siblings (referred to as "separate care"). As used in the study, the term "wellbeing" refers to the children's "psychological, social, cultural and physical quality of life. Special attention is given to self-esteem in light of claims that being in care with a sibling may alleviate or compensate for the detrimental impact of removal from home to children's self-esteem." *Id.* at 2153. The data used came directly from the children participating in the study through questionnaires they completed. The study ultimately found that those in care with siblings reported greater wellbeing than those in care alone. *Id.* at 2156.

- Adam McCormick, *The Role of the Sibling Relationship in Foster Care: A Comparison of Adults with a History of Childhood Out-of-Home Placement* (2009) (Dissertation, St. Edward's University in Austin, TX)

This dissertation analyzes the experiences of 50 adults who had out-of-home placements as children (such as a foster care placement), focusing on the correlation between childhood sibling experiences and adult outcomes. The study describes existing research about the importance of protective sibling relationships for children in out-of-home care, noting that "siblings can play a critical role in repairing and minimizing the psychological damage of instability, separation, and trauma caused by one's parents." *Id.* at 6. The study further notes that "[s]eparating siblings who have been removed from their parents only seems to intensify the pain, grief, and trauma that they have already experienced when they were initially removed from their parents." *Id.* Moreover, existing studies have shown that at a time children are separated from their parents "when such emotions as fear, confusion, and anxiety are heightened, the presence of a sibling may be the only predictable factor in a child's life" and thus can "play a critical role in reducing the negative effects of parental loss." *Id.* at 26 (internal citations omitted). In this study, in order to assess the strength of childhood sibling relationships and later adult outcomes, the author looked at a number of variables, including age, gender, number of placements, and age at placement. The specific research question he sought to address is whether "adults who had an experience of out-of- home placement as children who report having greater access to and closer relationships with their siblings have more positive outcomes those who do not." *Id.* at 34. The study ultimately found that those who had greater access to their siblings during their youth had higher levels of social support, self-esteem, and income as adults.

- Armeda Stevenson Wojciak, Lenore M. McWey, & Jeffery Waid, *Sibling Relationships of Youth in Foster Care: A Predictor of Resilience*, 84 Child. & Youth Srvcs. Rev. 247 (2018), https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0192513X18758345

Using data from 246 children who attended a non-profit organization's summer camp program, this study investigates the correlation between a positive sibling relationship and resilience for youth in the foster care system. As part of its analysis, the authors discuss another study of resilience within the foster care system, which found that youth with higher resilient adaptation "had higher levels of self-esteem and lower levels of depression." *Id.* at 247-48 (internal citations omitted). The study ultimately found that a "warm sibling relationship" promoted individual resilience for middle childhood and adolescence development periods. Accordingly, the authors stress that this study demonstrates that "more should be done to promote warm sibling relationships for youth in foster care." *Id.* at 253.