Abstract

Previous studies emphasise the importance of the biological family to the welfare of fostered adolescents. However, the majority of these studies only take into consideration the viewpoints of the professionals, foster parents and biological parents, not those of the adolescents themselves. For this reason little is known about the perceptions the adolescents have and the needs they express.

Method: This study has gathered data from 57 adolescents in kinship family foster care in Spain (AFE). The study applied qualitative reseach, using focus groups to gather data, and the Atlas.ti programme to analyse the data. The qualitative data give us a more profound understanding of how the fostered adolescents relate to their biological families.

Results: The results highlight the specific needs of these adolescents with regard to: a) understanding of their family history, b) the impact of visits from and relationship with their biological family, and c) the relationship between the biological family and the foster family.

Conclusions: These findings reveal implications to consider when creating support programmes aimed at this group.

Keywords

Kinship foster care, fostered adolescents, biological family, specific needs.