

# Oral Defense Announcement

## University of Missouri – St. Louis Graduate School

An oral examination in defense of the dissertation for the degree  
Doctor of Philosophy in Education with an emphasis in Educational Psychology

Gabrielle Louis Sewester

M.S. in Human Development and Family Science, August 2018, University of Central Missouri  
B.S. in Child and Family Development, August 2015, University of Central Missouri

### Exploring Strategies for Placement Stability Among Foster Care Children

Date: April 9, 2024  
Time: 1:00pm to 3:00pm  
Place: TLC - Sigma-Aldrich

#### **Abstract**

Children in foster care are considered a vulnerable population because of the maltreatment and abuse that previously occurred. In addition to the trauma resulting from previous abuse or neglect, children in foster care face ongoing exposure to trauma due to the lack of stability within the system. Instability in the foster care system is displayed by frequent changes in placement providers, multiple school changes, inconsistent mental and physical health treatment, prolonged permanency, and loss of connections with biological family members. The aim for this study is to fill the gap in the literature on foster parent's experiences with successful placement outcomes for foster care children. This research utilized a grounded theory approach to analyze the experiences of 13 foster parents in the state of Missouri. The findings were grouped into three different components. The three major groups that were developed focused on successful placements, challenges with stability, and strategies used by foster parents. This research examined current foster parent's experiences with successful placement outcomes in order to develop strategies for placement stability for foster care children.

#### **Defense of Dissertation Committee**

Chair: Cody Ding, Ph.D.  
Shea Kerkhoff, Ph.D.  
Emily Brown, Ph.D.  
Kristy Brann, Ph.D.