

A F I L M B Y V Y N E F I L M S



W H E R E ' S
F O S T E R

PRODUCED & DIRECTED BY ALICE STRICKLAND



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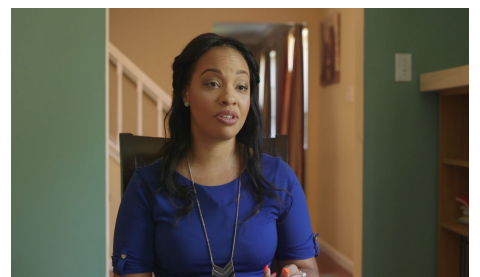
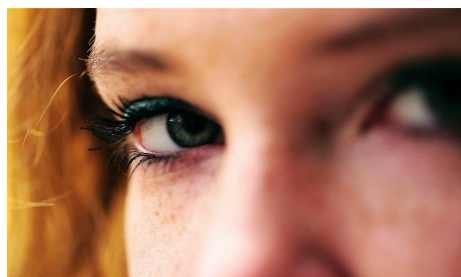
VYNE FILMS presents

WHERE'S FOSTER?

Production Type	Feature Film
Runtime	117 min
Genre	Documentary
Completion Date	November 16, 2021
Production Budget	\$9,000
Language	English
Country of Origin	United States
Country of Filming	United States
Format	HD, 24fps, 16:9, color, Sound stereo 48kHz
Rating	This Film Is Unrated
Official Website	wheresfoster.com
Links	IMDB: imdb.com
	Facebook: facebook.com/vynefilms
	Twitter: twitter.com/VyneFilms

SYNOPSIS (100 words)

In *Where's Foster*, social workers dispel myths about why children are removed from their biological parents, breaking down their overwhelming workload. Lawyers uncover the harsh reality of young children navigating the legal system. Advocacy organizations try to keep children safe and away from predators. An eclectic array of interviews from foster care alumni explore their connections (or lack thereof) with social workers, the fragile bond with each foster home, how trust can fall apart, and how those unable to adapt spent time in group homes. The film concludes with alumni success stories, working to remove the stigma of foster care.



SYNOPSIS (250 words)

There are currently over 400,000 children in foster care in the United States. The abuse and neglect which land these children in foster homes can range from a parent's drug addiction, to the inability to care for the child due to illness.

Where's Foster? discusses the infamous "knock at the door," dispelling myths about why children are removed from their biological parents. Candid interviews with lawyers uncover the harsh reality of young children navigating the legal system – the constant battle between social workers, foster and biological parents, and family court judges deciding their futures. Advocacy organizations detail their efforts to keep children safe from harm, off the streets, and away from sexual predators. Social workers and childcare advocates break down the overwhelming workload of the under-resourced system.

Where's Foster? features an eclectic array of individuals sharing their experiences in foster care. Journeys hallmarked by connections (or lack thereof) with social workers, and the fragile bond with each foster home. They explore how trust can fall apart, and how they were seen as financial assets. Some homes came with uncaring parents, while others came with tough rules and harsh punishments. For those unable to adapt, they were sent to group homes, managed by underpaid young adults lacking proper training. This can lead to more trauma, delinquency, and homelessness.

The film concludes with the success stories of these foster care alumni. They're activists, artists, and even foster parents, working to remove the stigma of foster care from past and future generations.

SYNOPSIS (350 words)

There are currently more than 400,000 children in foster care in the United States. The abuse and neglect which land these children in foster homes can range from a parent's drug addiction, to the inability to care for the child due to an illness.

Where's Foster? grants access to Washington DC's Child and Family Services, to discuss the infamous "knock at the door," and dispel myths about why children are removed from their biological parents. Candid interviews with the New York lawyers of Brooklyn Defenders uncover the harsh reality of young children navigating the legal system – the constant battle between social workers, foster and biological parents, and family court judges deciding their futures. Organizations such as the Sasha Bruce Place, Children's Rights, and the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children shine a light on their crusade to keep children safe from harm, off the streets, and out of the hands of sexual predators. These perspectives are buttressed by interviews of social workers (past and present), and childcare advocates who break down the overwhelming workload of the under-resourced American foster care system.

Conversely, **Where's Foster?** features an eclectic array of individuals sharing their experiences in foster care. Their journeys are complex and nuanced, hallmarked by their connection (or lack thereof) with social workers, the little time they typically had to bond with each foster home, and the scarce few families which were available. They explore how trust can often fall apart, and how often foster parents see them merely as financial assets. Some homes came with limited involvement on behalf of the parents, while others came with tough rules and harsh punishments. For those children unable to adapt, they found themselves in group homes, managed by underpaid young adults lacking proper training. This can lead to more trauma, mental illness, a "foster care to prison pipeline," and homelessness.

But the abandonment, neglect, and abuse is seen through the success stories of these foster care alumni. They've gone on to be activists, artists, and even foster parents, working to remove the stigma of foster care and to uplift the next generation.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I was motivated to tell this story, because I was raised in my great grandmother's home in Mount Vernon, New York, where she was the foster mother of six foster children. In my teens, I had two young relatives placed in foster care, and we discovered they were abused and neglected by their foster parents. While serving in the Army, most of my peers shared horror stories about foster care.

“I want the audience to walk away from the film, realizing they are the ones who can spark change...”

I saw other documentaries about foster care over the years, but they always followed young people in foster care, and I always wanted to know what happened to the kids who are now adults. How did they adjust to life after foster care? That's the main element that separates my film from others.

My goal is to bring awareness to the decreased number of good foster homes. I want the audience to walk away from the film, realizing they are the ones who can spark change, by opening their homes to children in need.

- Alice Strickland



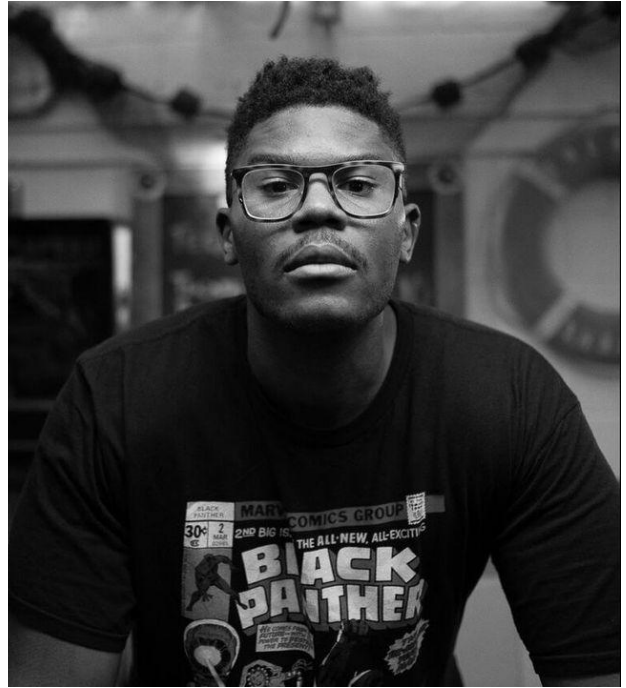
LEADING INTERVIEWS



ROB SCHEER

Co-Founder/CEO - Comfort Cases

Rob Scheer is an alumni of the foster care system, a proud veteran of the United States Navy, and the Co-Founder of Comfort Cases, an organization dedicated to providing luggage and personal care items for youth entering the foster care system. Rob has over 25 years of leadership experience in the financial industry. and lives in Maryland with his husband Reece and their four children.



MONROE MARTIN III

Comedian

Monroe Martin is a rising comedy star who mines his laughs from life experiences, such as growing up in foster care and bouncing around from one dysfunctional family to another. With a very honest, open approach to storytelling and an engaging personality, Martin effortlessly turns his childhood of hard knock experiences into comedy gold.

KEY SUPPORTING INTERVIEWS



SHALITA O'NEALE

CEO - Fostering Change Network

Shalita O'Neale has over 12 years of experience working and advocating for youth in the foster care system and is also a foster alumna of Maryland's child welfare system. Founder of Hope Forward, Inc. (formerly The Maryland Foster Youth Resource Center), Fostering Change Network LLC, and CEO of GroCharity Events, O'Neale also works as a Community Organizer and Nonprofit Coach.



JUDITH SCHAGRIN

Retired Social Worker

Judith Schagrin is currently Professor of Social Work at University of Maryland, Baltimore, with over 30 years of experience in the child welfare system as a social worker. She also served as a foster parent in Maryland, and is the co-author of several academic papers, such as "The ABCs of Foster Care" for *Administration in Social Work*, and "Knowing That I Wasn't Alone" for the *Children and Youth Services Review*



HEMANGI PAI

Senior Trial Attorney

Hemangi Pai is currently a Senior Trial Attorney in the Homicide/Serious Crimes Unit of Brooklyn Defender Services. Prior to her work in this unit, Pai worked as a Senior Trial Attorney on the Brooklyn Adolescent Representation Team, where she exclusively represented youth (ages 14-24), charged with serious felonies. She also serves as an Adjunct Professor at the Borough of Manhattan Community College.

KEY PERSONNEL



ALICE STRICKLAND

Director/Producer

Alice Strickland is a United States Army veteran with over 20 years of cybersecurity experience, with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Capella University. Under the rap moniker "Ally Vyne" she released her debut album ***American Winter*** in January of 2022. She is making her directorial debut with ***Where's Foster?***

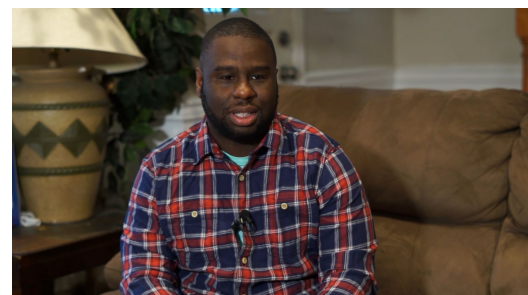


MATTHEW DAVID ROE

Editor

Matthew David Roe is a filmmaker and essayist with over 15 years experience in television, video, and online content. He most recently wrote, directed, edited, and narrated the 2021 showbiz documentary ***Hideaki Anno: A Career Retrospective*** for the Anime News Network. He was nominated for the 2019 Jean-Luc Godard Award in Experimental Film by Cult Critic Magazine (***Chemicals, Like God***), and won Best Feature Film at the 2021 Maryland International Film Festival (***The Forgiving***).

SCREENSHOTS



CREDITS

INTERVIEWS

Monroe Martin III

Shalita O'Neale

Amanda Byrd

Rob Scheer

Shenandoah Chefalo

Robert Matthews

Richard Barth

Diane Redleaf

Judith Schagrin

Judith Sandalow

Sandy Santana

Eduardo Ferrer

Rob Bell

Molly Meltzer

Hemangi Pai

Kathleen Stines

Keon Marshall

Lisa Salvatore

Robert Lowry

Niya Gregg

Tawana Howard

Bronwyn Mitchell Strong

CREW

Director/Producer – Alice Strickland

Camera Operation

& Location Sound – Kyle Benardos

Glen Fortner

Ramone Messam

Albert Myers

Editor – Matthew David Roe

Music & Stock Footage – Storyblocks

Special Thanks

Brooklyn Defender Services

Children's Law Center

Children's Rights

Comfort Cases

Dc Child & Family Services Agency

Fostering Change Network

Georgetown University Law Center

National Center For Missing & Exploited Children

Sasha Bruce Youth Center

University Of Maryland School Of Social Work

Dedicated To

Eloise Gatson-Wyche