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## Cumulative Risks of Foster Care Placement for American Children by Race/Ethnicity and Sex, 2000–2009

Lecture by Christopher Wildeman

Tuesday, October 23, 2012

Time: 3 – 4.30 p.m., Room A 300

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## Invitation

First estimates will be presented of the cumulative risk of experiencing foster care placement by age 18 for American children by race/ethnicity and sex for the years 2000 to 2009. Data are used from the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) and synthetic cohort life tables. Results provide support for three conclusions. First, many children will experience foster care placement at some point. About 5 per cent to 6 per cent of children will experience foster care placement by age 18, far greater than the less than 1 per cent of children who are in foster care on any given day. Second, there are vast racial/ethnic disparities in this risk. Asian children had the lowest risk at 2 per cent to 3 per cent, with whites (about 4 per cent) and Hispanics (about 5 per cent) slightly higher.

The risks for African American and Native American children were dramatically higher, however. African American children had risks in the 9 per cent to 12 per cent range, while Native American children had risks of between 12 per cent and 15 per cent. Finally, sex differences in the cumulative risk of foster care placement were negligible. Taken together, results demonstrate that more children will experience foster care placement at some point than typically thought and that these risks are unequally distributed enough that they may have consequences for childhood inequality.

**Christopher Wildeman** is an assistant professor of sociology, a faculty fellow at the Center for Research on Inequalities and the Life Course (CIQLE), and a resident fellow at the Institution for Social and Policy Studies (ISPS) at Yale University. He received his Ph.D. in Sociology and Demography from Princeton University in 2008.

*The WZB provides child care during the lecture. If you are interested, please respond by October 11, 2012, indicating the number of children and their age.*

*To register, please reply by October 18, 2012, to Marie Unger: [marie.unger@wzb.eu](mailto:marie.unger@wzb.eu), fax: 030/25491–680.*

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