



## **PRESS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Department of Human Services

April 9, 2019

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### **HBO Documentary Film FOSTER Comes to Pennsylvania As Part of 10-State Social Impact Screening Tour Hosted by Participant Media**

*Campaign seeks to accelerate solutions to support children and families in the foster care system and in communities across the country*

**Press Welcome**

**Location:** Landmark's Ritz 5, 214 Walnut St., Philadelphia

**WHEN:** Thursday, April 11, 2019

4:30pm – 5pm Registration

5pm – 5:15pm Program

5:15 Documentary screening

**PHILADELPHIA, PA** – The upcoming documentary FOSTER, presented by Participant Media and Emerson Collective, in association with HBO Documentary Films, is coming to Philadelphia on April 11, 2019, as part of a special 10-state social impact tour that aims to change perceptions about youth living in foster care and accelerate solutions for children and families in the foster care system. Hosted by Participant Media and The Philadelphia Department of Human Services, Juvenile Law Center and CHOP PolicyLab, the screening and discussion will bring Philadelphia policymakers, advocacy organizations, child welfare agencies and others together to generate ideas that can drive change for our community and help families thrive.

Premiering on HBO on May 7, FOSTER, from Oscar®-winning filmmakers Mark

Jonathan Harris and Deborah Oppenheimer, provides a first-hand look at the foster system through those who know it best: the children, youth, parents, and foster parents who experience it, and the professionals who work tirelessly every day in the field. With extraordinary access to the inner workings of the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services, the film goes beyond headlines and stereotypes to take an unprecedented look at an often misunderstood world and upend some of our most enduring myths about foster care and those it serves.

Through its social impact campaign, Participant Media aims to shift perceptions of youth living in foster care from “those children” to “our children,” while also giving advocates across the country a platform to champion meaningful change for the foster care system -- an issue that too often flies under the radar. In the U.S., 1 in 8 children suffer a combined case of neglect or abuse by the time they are 18 years old. More than 400,000 of these children and youth are in the foster care system, and that number continues to rise. Close to 5,000 children and youth are in foster care at any given time in Philadelphia. By investing in solutions that strengthen families and support preventative solutions, we can start to chart a new course for America's foster youth.

“FOSTER does an excellent job capturing the enormity and complexity of the work of any large child welfare system in America.” Says Cynthia Figueroa, Philadelphia DHS Commissioner. “The experiences and intensive efforts to strengthen families are truly reflective of the children, youth and family's we serve. We are encouraged that through HBO a viewer will be exposed to realities and family issues that affect so many of us.”

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**About the Philadelphia Department of Human Services (DHS)**

DHS is the county child welfare agency. We lead, support, coordinate and implement services to prevent and address child abuse and neglect; and operate juvenile justice programs for Philadelphia.

**About Participant Media**

Founded by Chairman Jeff Skoll and under the leadership of CEO David Linde, Participant Media ([www.participantmedia.com](http://www.participantmedia.com)) combines the power of a good story well told with real world impact and awareness around today's most vital issues. Through its worldwide network of traditional and digital distribution, aligned with partnerships with key non-profit and NGO organizations, Participant speaks directly to the rise of today's “conscious consumer,” representing the well over 2 billion consumers compelled to make meaningful content a priority focus.

As an industry content leader, Participant annually produces up to six narrative feature films, five documentary films, three

episodic television series, and more than 30 hours of digital short form programming, through its digital subsidiary SoulPancake. Participant's more than 100 films, including Wonder, Contagion, Lincoln, The Help, CITIZENFOUR, RBG, Food, Inc., and An Inconvenient Truth, have collectively earned 73 Academy Award® nominations and 18 wins, including Best Picture for Spotlight and Green Book and Best Foreign Language Film for ROMA and A Fantastic Woman. Participant's digital division, SoulPancake ([www.soulpancake.com](http://www.soulpancake.com)), is an award-winning provider of thought-provoking, joyful, and uplifting content including such widely popular series as Kid President and The Science of Happiness and reaches an audience of over 9 million fans. Follow Participant Media on Twitter (@Participant) and on Facebook and Instagram. Follow SoulPancake on Twitter (@soulpancake) and on Facebook and Instagram.

#### **About Emerson Collective**

Emerson Collective is an organization dedicated to removing barriers to opportunity so people can live to their full potential. Established and led by Laurene Powell Jobs, Emerson Collective centers its work on education, immigration reform, the environment, health, and other social justice initiatives. Emerson Collective uses a wide range of tools and strategies to develop and execute innovative solutions that will spur change and promote equality.

#### **About Juvenile Law Center**

Juvenile Law Center advocates for rights, dignity, equity and opportunity for youth in the foster care and justice systems. Founded in 1975, Juvenile Law Center is the first non-profit, public interest law firm for children in the country. We fight for youth through litigation, appellate advocacy and submission of amicus (friend-of-the-court) briefs, policy reform, public education, training, consulting, and strategic communications. Widely published and internationally recognized as leaders in the field, Juvenile Law Center has substantially shaped the development of law and policy on behalf of youth. We strive to ensure that laws, policies, and practices affecting youth advance racial and economic equity and are rooted in research, consistent with children's unique developmental characteristics, and reflective of international human rights values. For more information about Juvenile Law Center's work, visit [www.JLC.org](http://www.JLC.org).

#### **PolicyLab at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP)**

CHOP PolicyLab is dedicated to achieving optimal child health and well-being by informing program and policy changes through interdisciplinary research. Founded in 2008, PolicyLab is a Center of Emphasis within the CHOP Research Institute, one of the largest pediatric research institutes in the country. With 35 highly-regarded faculty and 60 passionate staff who bring expertise from myriad of fields covering health, research and health policy, our work focuses on improving public systems, improving health care delivery and improving child health outcomes. For more information, visit <http://www.policylab.chop.edu>.