Organisation
EUSARF 2014 is organised by SFI – The Danish National Centre for Social Research. The centre is a research institution under the Ministry of Social Affairs. SFI conducts internationally recognised social research. We prepare elucidation reports, measure effects, compile data, map knowledge and give advice on social and welfare-policy matters.

The local organising committee of the 13th EUSARF Conference would like to thank our sponsors for their generous support:

The Ministry of children, gender equality, integration and social affairs has the overall responsibility for measures in relation to disadvantaged children, elderly and disabled people, marginalized groups such as homeless people, people with mental disorders and drug addicts.

The Danish foundation TrygFonden works to make Denmark a safer place to be. Their mission is to inspire everyone in Denmark to take responsibility for their own safety as well as that of others.

Interested in Danish survey data on children and youth?
SFI are responsible for several, extensive surveys that describe trends in a specific group of people over a long period of time. As an example, the Danish Longitudinal Survey of Children (DALSC) is following approximately 6,000 children born in 1995 in Denmark. In a special survey besides the DALSC Study, we focus on children in out-of-home care environments, the Children in Care – a Danish Longitudinal Study (CiC). The latest data collection is from spring 2014.

Another longitudinal study, The Danish Longitudinal Survey of Youth - Children (DLSY-C) is continuing in the footsteps of the Danish Longitudinal Survey of Youth (DLSY), a unique SFI survey from 1968 which involved eight waves of data on 3,000 Danish seventh-grade students aged 14-15 years from 1968 to 2004. The DLSY-C is now focusing on their children.

For more information please visit www.sfi.dk or contact Head of the Child & Family Research Department at SFI Anne-Dorthe Hestbæk at adh@sfi.dk.
Welcome to EUSARF 2014

Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of SFI – The Danish National Centre for Social Research it is a great pleasure for us to welcome you all to Copenhagen to the 13th International EUSARF Conference.

The conference in Copenhagen takes place 25 years after the first EUSARF conference was held in De Haan, Belgium in 1989. This is the first time EUSARF has come to Denmark and we promise you a very busy and interesting programme. The conference will build on the last EUSARF Conference in Glasgow 2012 focusing on ‘All our Children’, where participants explored positive experiences and successful outcomes for vulnerable children. The heading for this year’s conference is ‘Making a Difference’, to encourage participants to discuss how we can translate these positive experiences and outcomes into best practices that make a difference in the lives of vulnerable children and their families.

With an inspiring line up of keynotes, over 300 papers accepted on a huge variety of topics, and participants from more than 30 different countries from all over the world, there truly is something for everyone with an interest in looked after and vulnerable children.

We hope you find the next few days informative and enlightening and take the time to network with others to share your experience and knowledge.

Participating in the EUSARF conferences is a unique opportunity to learn from a wealth of experiences, so please make the conference your own and get as much out of your time here as you can. We of course hope you also get the chance to see parts of our beautiful capital and country while you are here.

Agi Czonka
Managing Director

Anne-Dorthe Hestbæk
Head of Children and Family

Mette Lausten
Senior Researcher

Dear Delegates,

On behalf of our board, I would like to welcome you to the 13th International Conference of EUSARF. Copenhagen, thank you for hosting us! In 25 years of EUSARF conferences, this is only the second time the conference takes place in a Nordic country, and the first time in its history, that EUSARF meets in Denmark.

You make this conference! Be keen to learn and discuss, keep your networks fresh and enjoy the social moments. It is my greatest wish that you go home with some new ideas and plans that help improve practices and policies in your country.

Good luck!

Hans Grietens,
President of EUSARF
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child Protection in the Nordic Welfare States</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne-Dorthe Hestbæk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Components of Evidence Based Practices</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Barth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The use of research evidence in child welfare contexts</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fred Wulczyn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making a difference? Education and health of children in out-of-home care</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bo Vinnerljung</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting Better Foster Care: Some Evidence from the UK</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ian Sinclair</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding risk and child maltreatment in Europe: A data informed approach</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Fluke</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent and child risk factors for abuse and neglect</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lenneke Alink, Saskia Euser, Marian Bakermans-Kranenburg, Marinus van Ijzendoorn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child maltreatment risk factors in step-families: a first Flemish study</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bert Van Puyenbroeck, Johan Vanderfaeillie, Hans Grietens, Lisa Obers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measuring risk factors in Germany: difficulties encountered and lessons learned during the design of a national prevalence study</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Brand, Andreas Eickhorst, Katrin Lang, Christoph Liel, Andrea Schreier, Anna Neumann, Ilona Renner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing a toolkit on mapping agency response to child maltreatment</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andreas Jud, Lisa M. Jones, Christopher Mikton</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upgrading CAN cases’ surveillance capacity among crisis era at national and European level: the experience from Greece</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athanasios Ntinapogias, Chara Tompra, Marianna Tsana, Foteini Zarokosta, George Nikolaidis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France: administrative intricacies and their consequences for the development of data collection programs</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Séraphin Gilles, Bauduin Claire, Bolter Flora</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with Traumatised Young People in Foster Care: A Case Study</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John McHale, Tony Kearney</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving clinical outcomes through the use of clinical feed-back systems</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dagfinn Mørkrid Thøgersen, Bernadette Christensten, Knut Taraldsen, Nina Tollefsen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
General organizational core factors for the implementation and utilization of an
evidence-based practice focusing on client outcome - a model
Oscarsson Lars, Anna Gärdegård, Annika Larsson

It takes two to tango: The role of alliance assessment in professional education
and routine youth care monitoring
Wybren Grooteboer, Hubert M Pijnenburg, Rinie van Rijsingen

Utilising a research-informed model to support the development of practice and
policy for adolescents who experience neglect within families
Leslie Hicks

Life, learning and achievement: Education is the best predictor of outcomes for
children and young people in care. A free resource to audit educational
attainment for children and young people in care.
Stephen Mondy, Vanessa Smith, Michael Cashin, Romaine Moss

The Bookworm Club: The evolution and evaluation of an evidence-informed
literacy program for children residing in out-of-home care
Eavan Brady, Trisha Hendsbee, Angus Francis, Michael Justinich

Young children at risk: Protecting children entering education
Harriet Ward, Georgia Hyde-Dryden, Rebecca Brown, Caroline Thomas

Facilitating Educational Success in Out-of-home Care
Benjamin Strahl

Foster parents' attitudes toward parenting
Skrallan de Maeyer, Johan Vanderfaeillie, Marijke Robberechts, Femke Vanschoonlandt, Frank
van Holen

Assessing attachment in foster parents to be
Karin Lundén

Attachment-Based Intervention for Foster Families: A Pilot Study with VIPP-
Femmie Juffer, Marije Stoltenborgh, Nikita Schoemaker, Lisanne Marijs, Lenneke Alink

Do foster mothers and foster fathers differ in their support needs and
satisfaction with the foster care placement?
Johan Vanderfaeillie, Frank van Holen, Femke Vanschoonlandt, Skrallan de Maeyer, Marijke
Robberechts

Youth's rights perceptions as related with their psychological well-being in
residential care: the role of place attachment
Eunice Magalhães, Maria Manuela Calheiros

Experiences of Physical Victimization by Peers among Youth in Residential Care
Settings: An Ecological Examination
Shalhevet Attar-Schwartz
Non-Suicidal Self-Injury and Social Support - a Danish population-based sample

Katrine Schjødt Vammen, Mogens Nygaard Christoffersen

Substance use by adolescents in residential youth care institutions

Veerle Soyez, Johan Rosiers, Inge Baeten, Sarah Melis

Youth carefarm as a promising new kind of care for youth with serious behaviour problems

Ronald De Meyer, Jan Hassink, Ruikes Theo, Rien Van Den Heuvel, Paul Van Der Sman, Jan Willem Veerman

Looking Back and Moving Forward: Developing a Human Rights based approach to historical institutional abuse of children in Scotland

Moyra Hawthorn

Building on “effective ingredients” in family collaboration and therapy: a key to strengthening the social capital of children and adolescents in residential care

Kristina Wimberley, Poul Ertner

Psychometric properties and sensitivity to change of the Dutch version of the Self-Sufficiency Matrix (SSM-D) in a residential setting

Marc Delsing, Ans Dekker

Age-specific exit rates from residential care

Eric van Santen

Rekruttering av fosterforeldre - hvordan best nå frem til flere egnede fosterforeldre?

Hedvig Torvik Nilsen

Parental Approval of Foster Home

Irene Wormdahl

En ny vej for effektive alliancer mellem den offentlige- og den frivillige sektor?

Samarbejde mellem kommuner og frivillige organisationer om efterværn for tidligere anbragte unge

Kirstine Karmsteen, Sanne Bruun

Ohälsa bland barn i fosterhem - en utmaning för de nordiska länderna

Eyvind Elgesem, Fredrik Hjulström

Child Social Work Practice & EBIs: Where’s the Fit? What’s the Future?

Patricia Chamberlain

Development of an Evidence Base for Social Work Practice in Child Welfare

Patricia Chamberlain, Bryan Samuels, Lisa Saldana, Fred Wulczyn

Linked Evidence-Based Interventions

Patricia Chamberlain, Lisa Saldana, Fred Wulczyn
Finding the Impact of At-Scale Evidence Based Interventions  
Fred Wulczyn  

Pulling from Linked EBPs to Inform Caseworker Practice: The R3 Strategy  
Lisa Saldana, Patricia Chamberlain  

Young People with a disability transitioning from Out-of-home Care in Victoria  
Philip Mendes  

Moving On? Researching the characteristics and experiences of disabled care leavers  
 Berni Kelly, Theresa McShane  

'Skydiving without a parachute': A Case Study of youth transitions from out of home care in mainland China  
Claire Ting Zhao, John Pinkerton, Stan Houston  

Yasmeen’s case: How cultural values promote the return of female care leavers as adult clients  
Rawan Ibrahim, Jude Batayneh  

Reclaiming Lost Childhoods: Access to Records and Information about Care Services  
Andrew Kendrick, Moyra Hawthorn, Julie Shaw, Samina Karim  

Child and family assessments: research on parental capacity to change and social work decision-making processes  
Emily Munro  

Decision-making within a child’s timeframe  
Rebecca Brown, Harriet Ward  

Assessing Parental Capacity to Change when Children are on the Edge of Care: An overview of research evidence  
Harriet Ward, Georgia Hyde-Dryden  

New child and family assessment practices in response to the Munro Review of Child Protection: messages from the pilots  
Emily Munro  

Residential parenting assessments: uses, costs and contributions to effective and timely decision making  
Emily Munro, Katie Hollingworth  

Implementing, Evaluating and Sustaining a Research and Principle-based Program model in Residential Care with Children and Adolescents: Learning from the Cornell CARE Program Experience  
James Anglin
Overview of the CARE Model Implementation and Research Program

Martha Holden

Year 4 results from the quasi-experimental study of the CARE program

Charles Izzo, James Anglin

The Process of CARE Implementation and the Managing of Complexity in Residential Care with Children and Adolescents

Martha Holden, Frank Kuhn, James Anglin

A case study in using critical incident administrative data to measure implementation and sustainability

William Martin, Michael Nunno, James Anglin

Experimental and Correlational Research to Improve the Educational Outcomes of Children in Care

Robert Flynn

Effectiveness of a group-based tutorial direct instruction program with a Canadian-Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal sample of children in care

Julie Harper, Fred Schmidt

Gender effects in a randomized trial of individual tutoring with children in care

Robyn Marquis, Robert Flynn

Results from a Swedish Trial of Paired Reading Tutoring with Children in Care

Hilma Forsman, Bo Vinnerljung, Eva Tideman, Marie Sallnäs

A Randomised Trial of Educational Support Interventions for Children in Care

Misja Eiberg

Educational trajectories of Canadian children in care in primary school and the early years of secondary school

Kelly Weegar, Andrea Hickey, Tessa Bell, Elisa Romano, Robert Flynn

Formal and Informal Kinship Care and Support

Valerie O’Brien

Reunification-processes - from long term foster care to the birth family

Judith Pierlings

Cooperation with birth mothers in foster care: which factors play a role?

Marijke Robberechts, Johan Vanderfaeillie, Femke Vanschoonlandt, Skrallan de Maeyer, Frank van Holen

Returning Abused and Neglected Children to Their Parents: Issues and Outcomes

Elaine Farmer
How does reunification work: The nature and predictors of reunification in Australian out of home care
Elizabeth Fernandez, Paul Delfabbro

Abuse and neglect in foster and residential care in the UK
Nina Biehal, Linda Cusworth, Jim Wade

Are family group conferences good for children’s mental health? -the first results from a longitudinal study
Svein Arild Vis

Therapeutic residential services for children under 12 years - A shared needs model of intervention
Michael Cashin, Vanessa Smith, Stephen Mondy, Romaine Moss

Who are the foster children? How best to assess them?
Elisabeth Backe-Hansen

Aggressive behaviour among young offenders in a Malaysian youth justice institution: A mixed method study
Nazirah Hassan, Andrew Kendrick

Driving Outcomes: Resilience and Young People Living in Residential Care
David Berridge

The group climate in open and secure residential care and the relation with aggression incidents
Carolien Konijn, Chantal van Rijswijk, Annemarie van de Vall, Jantine van Den Tillaart, Ellen Eltink

Which profile of pretreatment characteristics predicts a higher working alliance with girls in residential care?
Marie-Helene Ayotte, Nadine Lanctot, Marc Tourigny

Børns forestilling, forventning og forståelse om inddragelse
Mimi Petersen, John Steen Johansen

Titel: Aktionsforskning i en kommunal kontekst
Mette Larsen, Sofie Danneskiold-Samsøe

A comparative study of the usage of different risk assessment in Danish municipalities
Kresta Sørensen

Myndighedssagsbehandlere erfaringer med Integrated Children’s System
Cecilie K. Moesby-Jensen

Reflections on a tool - revisions on 'the age specific focus themes' in ICS and what this means for the assessment tool
Helene Oldrup, Anna-Katharina Højen-Sørensen
Lay persons as decision-makers in Swedish child protection
Staffan Höjer, Torbjörn Forkby, Andreas Liljegren

How to supervised visitation in child protection context? Result from a study on the practices of social workers (Quebec, Canada)
Carole Côté, Marie-Andrée Poirier, Catherine Sellenet

Beyond Contact: Work with Families of Children Placed Away from Home in Four European Countries
Janet Boddy, June Statham, Helene Join-Lambert, Inge Danielsen, Esther Geurts

Discretion and the use of expert opinion in care order cases
Line Marie Sørsdal

Swedish child welfare: a goldmine for private entrepreneurs?
Tommy Lundström, Gabrielle Meagher,

Social Reintegration of Girls in Residential Care: An Organizational Outlook
Satarupa Dutta

What happens after leaving care? Selected findings from an Irish sample
Conor McMahon, Robbie Gilligan

Kinds of Support Provided for Care Leavers in Saudi Arabia: Strengths and Limitations
Ahmed Albar

A way forward for public and private companionship? A Collaboration Model between Municipalities and Voluntary Organizations concerning a better transition to adulthood for young people in care
Kirstine Karmsteen, Sanne Bruun

Young People Transitioning from Out-of-home Care in Victoria: Strengthening Support Services for Dual Clients of Child Protection and Youth Justice
Philip Mendes

Prevalence, concomitance and evolution of physical and psychological violence against children: Results of three populational surveys
Marie-Eve Clément, Helen Jones

The Healthcare Experiences of Young People Leaving Residential Childcare Institutions in Bangladesh
Md. Tuhinul Islam

Udviklingen i kriminalitet for børn og unge anbragt på den sikrede institution
Sølager 1986-2006
Lene Mosegaard Søbjerg
Home or care? Pathways and outcomes for maltreated children in a multi-ethnic cohort

Linda Cusworth, Jim Wade, Nina Biehal

Youth’s adjustment in residential care: how do rights’ perceptions and group identification can be related to it?

Eunice Magalhães, Maria Manuela Calheiros

Participating processes during the transition to adulthood for young Swedish care leavers

Ingrid Höjer, Yvonne Sjöblom

Security in the Interparental Subsystem Scale (SIS): psychometric study with a sample of Portuguese adolescents

Carla Silva, Maria Manuela Calheiros

The role of emotional security in associations between Interparental conflict and adolescents’ self-representations

Carla Silva, Maria Manuela Calheiros

Alyxia’s Journey from Languishing to Thriving: Making a Difference from a Youth’s point of view

Marlyn Wall, Morag Demers, Alyxia Hendricks, Meagan Miller

New Directions in European Child and Family Welfare

Silvio Premoli

Inter-agency policies and practices to support Western Australian students in foster care

Amy Schmidt

Evaluating positive behaviour as an interactional strategy to address therapeutic goals: A conversation analysis

Margot Jager, Andrea de Winter, Janneke Metselaar, Erik J. Knorth, Sijmen A. Reijneveld, Mike Huiskes

Social images of institutions of residential care

Joana Patrício, Maria Manuela Calheiros, Margarida Garrido, Diniz Lopes

Social images of children and youth in residential care

Maria Manuela Calheiros, Joana Patrício, Margarida Garrido, Diniz Lopes

A randomized trial of the effect of monetary incentive on survey response for vulnerable children and youth

Jan Pejtersen, Turf Jakobsen

Barns psykiske helse i forbindelse med konfliktfylte samlivsbrudd

Rød Per Arne
Evidence based implementation of guidelines for child and family care in the Netherlands
Karlijn Stals

Parents’ expected barriers in accessing psychosocial care for their child: common and associated with parents’ educational level and children’s ethnicity
Marieke Nanninga, Sijmen A. Reijneveld, Erik J. Knorth, Danielle E. M. C. Jansen

Looked After Young People at Risk of Offending: Their Views of a Mixed-Gender Placement
Jennifer Copley, Daniel Johnson

From practice to principles - Capitalising learning from 15 years of child protection development in Albania
Rachel Harris, Ian Milligan

Relation between CBCL syndromes and PTSD diagnosis according to CPSS among children in care
Visitación Fernández, Jose Antonio López-Pina, Maravillas Castro, Mavi Alcántara, Concepción López-Soler

Overview of programs aiming to increase the involvement of birth parents in foster care
Marijke Robberechts, Frank van Holen, Skrallan de Maeyer, Femke Vanschoonlandt

What is the relationship between local authority placement type on the mental health of independent migrant children? A systematic review of the evidence
Aoife O’Higgins

Prevalence of emotional and behavioral disorders in a Spanish sample of children and young people in residential care. Exploring the use of therapeutic services and family background.
Carla González, Eduardo Martín, Amaia Bravo, Jorge Fernandez Del Valle, Maria Vicenta Alcántara

Children in and out of care, and their health and wellbeing - using data from a Danish longitudinal Study
Alva Albæk Nielsen

Empowerment and Gender violence prevention of girls in residential care through peer mentoring experiences
Mireia Foradada Villar, Josefina Sala Roca, Laura Arnau-Sabatés, Marta Bertrán Tarrés, Andreu Villaba Biarnés

Turning Points to Higher Education among Care Leavers
Benjamin Strahl, Tehila Refaeli
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improvement of residential youth care by matching needs and services of the clients</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carolien Konijn, Resy Broekhoven, Annemarie van de Vall</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome monitoring in clinical practice, organisation development, and youth policy</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom van Yperen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing a CRC Rights-based Approach in Foster Care</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silvio Premoli, Frederique Lucet, Ivana Jedud Boric, Mónica López López, Nelli Petrova Dimitrova, Vincent Ramon, Robert Theisen, Bep van Sloten, Madeleine Tearse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational Overhead Costs to Increase Programme Sustainability in the Child Welfare System: A Cross-Cultural Challenge</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa Holmes, Lisa Saldana</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selvskadende adfærd blandt danske unge - baggrund og indsatser</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katrine Schjødt Vammen, Mogens Nygaard Christoffersen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing guidelines for youth care in the Netherlands: the Guideline Severe Behavioural Problems</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marjan de Lange, Leoniek Kroneman</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How an organisation can provide a supportive environment for foster families</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posch Christian, Line Grove Hermansen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holistic approach for the inquiry, diagnosis and management of cases of child abuse and neglect: National Protocol of inquiry, diagnosis and management of cases of child abuse and neglect</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Nikolaidis, Angeliki Gyftopoulou, Aikaterini Kyriakou, Daphne Stamati</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Abuse and Neglect: An overview of Surveillance Systems in Europe, USA, Canada and Australia</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chara Tompra, Maria-Anastasia Tsana, George Nikolaidis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Functioning of Children Involved with Child Welfare Services: Progress &amp; Future Directions</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jaime Wegner-Lohin, Nico Trocme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth mothers’ experience of compulsory adoption in the context of youth protection in Quebec (Canada)</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marie-Andree Poirier, Geneviève Page, Anne-Marie Piche, Geneviève Turcotte</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster care profiles: A guide to identifying at-risk placements</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isabel M. Bernedo, Maria D. Salas, Miguel Angel García-Martín, Maria J. Fuentes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slipping Down Ladders and Climbing up Snakes: The Educational Experiences of New Zealand Bachelor Degree Students who were in Foster Care as Teenagers</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iain Matheson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Transition from State care to the non-government sector: the Australian experience in New South Wales

Vanessa Smith, Stephen Mondy, Michael Cashin, Romaine Moss

Personal Narrative and Oral History: Contrasting Perspectives of Historic Abuse and Residential Child Care

Julie Shaw, Andrew Kendrick, Moyra Hawthorn, Samina Karim

Looking Back and Moving Forward: A Human Rights Approach to Historical Abuse in Care

Moyra Hawthorn, Andrew Kendrick, Julie Shaw

Opening the black box of care for youth with emotional and behavioural problems: Development and application of a taxonomy

Els Evenboer, Anne-Marie Huyghen, Jolanda Tuinstra, Sijmen A. Reijneveld, Erik J. Knorth

Participative Practicies in Child and Youth Care

Peters Ulla

Wellbeing and Residential care quality in Portugal

Rodrigues Sónia, Iglésias Joana, Barbosa-Ducharne Maria Adelina, Jorge F. Del Valle

Innovation and technology: Clinical applications and program development in an RTC

David Slesinger

Deinstitutionalization of child care system in Lithuania: two steps forward, two steps backwards

Dalija Snieskiene

Challenges of fostering Roma children in Croatia

Ivana Jedud Boric, Ivana Maurovic, Antonija Zizak

Growing conscious and responsible citizen

Elisabetta Kolar

Inside the shelter, outside the margin - yet a survivor

Päivi Känkäänen

Growing Up in Italy

Giulia Barbero Vignola, Cinzia Canali

Contact Family Service in Children’s Eyes

Tiina Lehto-Lundén

The Role of Forgiveness in the Historic Abuse of Children in Care

Samina Karim, Andrew Kendrick
Serious Youth Violence and Policing in the UK: the perspectives and experiences of Black and Asian Young People growing up in two poor East London Neighbourhoods
Anthony Gunter

Dropout Prevention in Germany - Evaluation of a Social Information Processing Training Program
Marie-Christine Vierbuchen, Clemens Hillenbrand, Tobias Hagen

Challenges and Hope among Looked After Young People
Ahmed Albar

Adolescent Firesetting: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of Adolescent Males in Secure Care
Claire Reilly, Daniel Johnson, Jennifer Copley

Peer aggression and bullying in residential care
Susan Steele, Simon Hunter, Kevin Durkin, Jennifer Copley

A cumulative analysis of the likelihood of Danish and English children entering care before the age of 16: policy and practice implications
June Thoburn, Mads Ubbesen, Ruth Gilbert

ARQUA-P: A Comprehensive Evaluation System for Residential Care in Portugal
Rodrigues Sónia, Jorge F. Del Valle, Barbosa-Ducharme Maria Adelina

Effects of global research on local child policies and care practices
Niels Peter Rygaard

Bente Heggem Kojan, Anita Storhaug, Willy Lichtwarck, Graham Clifford

Routine Outcome Monitoring (ROM) in youth care: Providing practice based evidence by means of web-based questionnaire applications and dashboards
Ron Scholte, Marc Delsing

Investing in childhood for growing life: is it possible to improve the conditions of children from migrant and low-income families? An Italian experience of multi-level connections
Marzia Sica, Tiziano Vecchiato, Cinzia Canali

Profiling disabled children and young people living in public care in Northern Ireland
Sandra Dowling, Berni Kelly, Karen Winter

The first Social Benefit Bond in Australia: A new policy setting to improve outcomes for children in care
Linda Mondy
Is practice-friendly science possible: a case study?  
Antonija Zizak, Ivana Jedud Boric, Ivana Maurovic  

Children at the boundaries of disciplines and institutions  
Päivi Petrelius  

Strengthening the Evidence Base for Practitioners and Service Providers  
Judy Sebba  

An overview of research designs used in studies on fostering  
Judy Sebba  

The educational progress of looked after children in England: linking care and educational data  
Nikki Luke  

Developing and implementing an RCT that seeks to assess the effectiveness of the Letterbox Club in improving the reading and number skills for primary school children in care  
Karen Winter, Paul Connolly, Jennifer Mooney  

Risk and protective factors for the educational outcomes of children in foster care: An international systematic review  
Aoife O'Higgins  

Multiple perspectives on education while in care  
Rami Benbenishty  

Educational support for young people in care - perspectives from 25 "nominated adults"  
Ingrid Höjer, Helena Johansson  

School climate, expectations, educational plans and needs of Israeli youth villages  
Eran Melkman  

The Meaning of Education in Care - a Life Course Perspective  
Koengeter Stefan, Mangold Katharina, Benjamin Strahl,  

Contradictory dimensions of education in mother-child-institutions - Irritating incoherences between education and motherhood  
Samuel Keller, Renate Stohler  

Foster Care or Residential - Tweedledum and Tweedledee?  
Signe Frederiksen, Rikke Fuglsang Olsen  

Experiences of care and wellbeing - the views of young people from foster and residential care in England  
Jo Dixon, Nancy Jones, Charmaine Kavira
Development and validation of a questionnaire to assess the social image of youth in residential care

Diniz Lopes, Joana Patrício, Maria Manuela Calheiros, Margarida Garrido

Exploring the borders between residential care and mental health treatment

Jorge F. Del Valle, Amaia Bravo, Eeva Timonen-Kallio

Therapeutic Residential Care in the U.S. Challenges and Opportunities in Building Evidence-Based Practices

James Whittaker

Research Insights from the Family Home Program: An Adaptation of the Teaching Family Model at Boys Town

Ronald Thompson, Daniel Daly

Evidence-based Treatments in Therapeutic Residential Care

Sigrid James

Creating and Maintaining Family Partnerships in Therapeutic Residential Care: The Critical Role of the 'Professional Parent Liaison'

Richard Small, Christopher Bellonci, Susan Ramsey

Identifying Research Priorities for Therapeutic Residential Care

James Whittaker

Etniske minoritetsfamilier i barnevernet: diskurser, intervensioner og god praksis

Ragnhild Bjørknes

Etniske minoritetsfamilier i barnevernet - hva sier forskningen?

Ragnhild Bjørknes, Marte Fylkesnes

Diskurser om barn i norsk kontekst

Ragnhild Hollekim, Norman Anderssen, Marguerite Daniel

Foreldreveiledning med etniske minoritetsmødre - effekten av positivt samspill mellom mor og barn

Ragnhild Bjørknes

Om god praksis - fortellinger om godt samarbeid i det flerkulturelle barnevernet

Marte Fylkesnes

The Assessment Process in Norwegian Child Protection - When to intervene and how to choose the right intervention

Jim Lurie, Torill Tjelflaat

Looked-after children and youth justice: overcoming 'system abuses'

Julie Shaw
Audit of residential child and youth care in Sweden  
David Pålsson

What motivates social workers to stay in municipal child welfare services?  
Anette Christine Iversen, Fungisai Gwanzura-Ottemöller

Decision-making in child protection care orders: A cross-country analysis of practice  
Jill Berrick, Jonathan Dickens, Tarja Pösö, Marit Skivenes

Experiences and resilience characteristics of Romanian care leavers: A longitudinal case study approach  
Gabriela Dima

Perceptions of Needs and Resources in the Transition to Adulthood for Youth in Care: Development of a Youth Peer Support Network  
Marie-Claude Richard, Vanessa Fournier, Nadeau France, Catherine Godin

Young people's transitions from care to adulthood in European and post-communist Eastern European and Central Asian Societies  
Mike Stein

Care leavers' views on their entry to work: a multiple case study in Ireland and Catalonia  
Laura Arnau-Sabatés, Robbie Gilligan

Young people in care and care leavers: the influence of carers in their progression into and through the world of work  
Robbie Gilligan, Laura Arnau-Sabatés

Listening voices from children, families and careers in the child protection system: initiatives across Europe to improve the practice  
Nuria Fuentes-Peláez

From voices to listen to actions to take: the "World of the child" as a tool to foster children and parents' participation  
Marco Ius, Serbati Sara, Ombretta Zanon, Diego Di Masi, Paola Milani

The experience of children and families when the child is placed out of home: improvements to the practice  
Nuria Fuentes-Peláez, Mªangels Balsells, Crescencia Pastor, Mªcruz Molina, Ainoa Mateos, Eduard Vaquero, Pere Amorós

The voice of the foster carers' biological child  
Kirti Zeijlmans, Elly Singer, Adimka Uzozie

Family foster care in Southern European countries. A comparative research on foster carer perception of satisfaction in Portugal and Spain  
Paulo Delgado, Monica Lopez Lopez, João M. S. Carvalho, Jorge Fernandez Del Valle

Eusarf 2014 | Conference Information
Time use data: Policy and fiscal implications for child welfare services  
Lisa Holmes  

Costing child welfare services: An overview  
Lisa Holmes, Harriet Ward  

Mapping time use data across different child welfare systems: An example from Scotland  
Samantha McDermid, Lisa Holmes  

John Landsverk, Jennifer Rolls-Reutz, Lisa Holmes, Harriet Ward  

Time Use, Cost, and Child Welfare Innovation in the U.S.  
Fred Wulczyn  

Does allocation to a control condition in an RCT affect the routine care?  
Frank van Holen, Johan Vanderfaeillie, Skrallan de Maeyer, Marijke Robberechts, Tim Stroobants  

Making a difference with a new intervention in foster care of young (preschool aged) children: the FFI (Foster child-Foster carer Intervention)  
Hans van Andel, Erik J. Knorth, Hans Grietens  

The effectiveness of the Stepping Stones Triple P parenting support among parents of children with borderline to mild intellectual disability and psychosocial problems: a randomized controlled trial  
Marijke Kleefman, Danielle E. M. C. Jansen, Sijmen A. Reijneveld  

Back to the Future: relational social work in a multi-disciplinary team  
Andressa Gadda  

Implementing the MTFC programme for adolescents in England: issues in programme transfer  
Nina Biehal, Jo Dixon  

Implementing Intensive Family Case Management in Youth Care - Every Child Safe Forever  
Marc Dinkgreve  

The development of Intensive Family Case Management - why we really had to change  
Sigrid van de Poel, Marc Dinkgreve  

The implementation of Intensive Family Case Management: what and how  
Marc Dinkgreve, Sigrid van de Poel
Present and ongoing research on implementation, program fidelity & effectiveness

Inge Busschers, Marc Dinkgreve

Intensive Family Case Management comparative initiatives in Denmark and the Netherlands

Helle Kreipke, Sanne Clemmensen, Lars Bo Kjaer, Marc Dinkgreve, Sigrid van de Poel, Inge Busschers

Factors of Efficacy in an Intervention for Adolescents with ADHD: Quantitative and Qualitative Results of a Content Analysis

Timo Hennig, Stephanie Ahl

Mental health disorders of children in residential care: comparing cases referred to services and cases detected by screening tools

Jorge Fernandez Del Valle, Amaia Bravo, Carla González, Iriana Santos, Susana Lázaro

The Effect of Medical Treatment of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) on Foster Care Caseloads: Evidence from Danish Registry Data

Peter Fallesen, Christopher Wildeman

Effects of Pharmacological Treatment on the Educational Achievement of Children Diagnosed with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

Maria Keilow, Anders Holm

Conceptualising respite care in child and family social work - a cross national exploration of partnership, service and respite

Anu-Riina Svenlin

Long-term care for multi-problem families: Target group, care characteristics and outcomes of a family coaching program

Tim Tausendfreund, Jana Knot-Dickscheit, Erik J. Knorth, Hans Grietens

Effectiveness of home-visiting special youth care services in Flanders

Stroobants Tim, Johan Vanderfaeillie, Skrallan de Maeyer, Marijke Robberechts

Perspectives of professional youth workers on support needs of youngsters in vulnerable living conditions

Jan Naert, Vanderplasschen Wouter

Home-based interventions in Norwegian Child Welfare

Øivin Christiansen

Attachment patterns of adolescents in residential care

Xavier Oriol Granado, Gemma Filella Guiu, Josefina Sala Roca

Resilient processes from the perspective of adolescents in children's homes in Croatia

Ivana Maurovic, Antonija Zizak, Ivana Jedud Boric
Evidence-based Practices in Residentially-based Programs: Results from a U.S. Survey
*Sigrid James, Ronald Thompson, Neal Sternberg*

Handle with care: Group care workers can make the difference for children in residential treatment
*Inge L. W. Bastiaanssen*

Staff attitudes towards young people in looked after accommodation
*Jennifer Copley, Daniel Johnson, Stella Bain*

Dokumentation af resultater af indsatser på sociale institutioner
*Michael Christensen*

Dokumentation modus 2 - på vej mod refleksiv systematisk dokumentationspraksis
*Michael Christensen, Martin Madsen*

Fra viden til handling - vidensbaseret og reflekteret kvalitetsudvikling på den enkelte institution
*Jes Jessen, Lone Bang-Møller*

Kvalitetsmodel som ramme for meningsfuld dokumentation
*Mette Munch-Petersen*

Barrierer for faglig refleksion og dokumentation i tværfaglige sociale tilbud
*Martin Madsen*

Towards a comprehensive view of factors affecting decision making in child welfare
*Mónica López López*

Decision Making Ecology: A framework for organizing decision-making research in child welfare and an example of its application in the decision to place a child out of home
*John Fluke, Chris Graham, Donald Baumann, Alan Detlaff*

Decision making in cases of suspected child maltreatment: A comparative international study on child welfare attitudes, maltreatment substantiation, risk assessment, and intervention recommendations
*Rami Benbenishty, Bilha Davidson-Arad, Erik J. Knorth, Carien Koopmans, Mónica López López, Cilia Witteman, Jorge Fernandez Del Valle, John Devaney, David Hayes, Trevor Spratt*

The role of education, training and experience in decision making in cases of suspected child abuse
*Mónica López López, Bilha Davidson-Arad, Rami Benbenishty, Erik J. Knorth, Carien Koopmans, Cilia Witteman, Jorge Fernandez Del Valle, John Devaney, David Hayes, Trevor Spratt*
Why clinicians decide to contact child protection services?
Amélie Turlais

Doing research with care leavers: methodological and ethical challenges and opportunities
Anne-Kirstine Mølholt

Dimensions of leaving-care research and its consequences for common comprehension
Samuel Keller, Eran Melkman

Research with youth in or after care (youth transition from out of home care) - managing multiple alliances
Åsa Söderqvist, Claire Ting Zhao

Disadvantaged by circumstance: how young adults manage after-care emancipation
Georgiana Tri

Perspectives on Everyday Life among Care Leavers
Anne-Kirstine Mølholt

How to gain insight into the everyday lives of young people in care in England and France?
Hélène Join-Lambert, Janet Boddy

The impact of client-professional communication on adolescents' participation and learning processes in psychosocial care
Margot Jager, Sijmen A. Reijneveld, Janneke Metselaar, Erik J. Knorth, Andrea de Winter

THEN THEY TALK AND TRY TO CALM YOU DOWN A methodological exercise in studying physical restraint in residential care
Susanna Hoikkala, Tarja Pösö

Making plans and decisions for children in care: professionals, parents and young people
Jonathan Dickens, Gillian Schofield, Chris Beckett

Paths to permanence in England and Norway: evolving policy and the welfare state foundation
June Thoburn, Marit Skivenes

'...because you need to hear that somebody's having a bad time like you are...'
The importance of peer support in post-adoption support
Andressa Gadda

The path of children placed in foster-to-adopt families: how did they get there?
Geneviève Page, Sonia Hélie
Adoption reform in England: Messages from local authorities on changes in processes and timescales

*Katie Hollingworth, Emily Munro*

What difference has PaCT made to permanence in Scotland? And how do we find out?

*Rachel Harris, Andressa Gadda*

Engaging foster carers in research teams: Recruiting and supporting foster carers

*Judy Sebba*

Why people become foster carers

*Judy Sebba*

Informing and evaluating foster carer peer support groups

*Nikki Luke*

Participating in research as an interviewer - a foster carer’s perspective

*Colin Chatten, Nikki Luke*

Professor Ian Sinclair to respond to the three papers

*Ian Sinclair*

Training issues and challenge for professionals regarding the British framework for assessing the developmental needs of vulnerable children in four western countries

*Claire Chamberland*

Adaptation of the British framework and tools for assessing the needs of children in Quebec

*Claire Chamberland, Lessard Danielle, Lacharité Carl, Fafard Guylaine*

Implementation of the British Assessment Framework in organisation in Haute-Savoie

*Lhoussni Mohamed, Helen Jones*

Assessment Framework Implementation in England

*Helen Jones, Harriet Ward, Jenny Gray*

The implementation of Assessment framework (FACNF) in Italy: the experience of P.I.P.P.I. (Program of Intervention for Prevention of Institutionalization)

*Paola Milani, Serbati Sara, Marco Ius, Diego Di Masi, Ombretta Zanon*

Fostering unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people

*Jim Wade*

Pregnant young women in foster care

*Frank Ainsworth, Patricia Hansen*
Contact in Foster Care in Porto: a study about patterns and outcomes 266
Vânia S. Pinto, Paulo Delgado, João M. S. Carvalho

Disinterest of child protection for kinship care in France 267
Bernadette Tillard

Caring for who? The impact of burnout and stress among practitioners and vulnerable young people in Ireland 268
Lavinia McLean, Emmett Tuite

Child Welfare Services when clients do not speak the National Language: Voices from the Frontlines 269
Sarah Maiter, Ramona Alaggia, Adrienne Chan

Vicarious trauma for staff: Treatment for second order effects that improve outcomes for children and young people in care 270
Romaine Moss, Michael Cashin, Stephen Mondy, Vanessa Smith

A new approach to postgraduate education in Australia: Improving skills, knowledge and role satisfaction in child and family welfare 271
Patricia McNamara, Margarita Frederico, Maureen Long, Lynne McPherson, Nadine Cameron

Working with Young People in Secure Accommodation - From Chaos to Culture 272
Jim Rose

Readiness for independent living among youth on the verge of leaving juvenile correctional facilities 273
Eran Melkman, Tehila Refaeli, Rami Benbenishty

Stories of girls in secure unit care 274
Maria Andersson Vogel

Pilot study: Evaluation of the Teaching Recovery Techniques Programme in Rossie Young People’s Trust (Secure Care) 275
Ian Barron, David Mitchell, William Yule

Lær for Livet - et landsdækkende lærringsprogram for anbragte børn 276
Illa Westrup Stephensen

Barn og unges deltakelse i vanskelige beslutningssituasjoner 277
Anne-Kari Johnsen, Astrid Strandbu

Familieråd i et kulturelt perspektiv 278
Reidunn Håøy Nygård, Merete Saus

Functional Family Therapy (FFT) & Scandinavia - a Match? / The State of implementation of FFT in Sweden, Norway & Denmark 279
Dagfinn Mørkrid Thøgersen, Bianca Albers, Gunilla Anderson

Higher education among care leavers 280
Rami Benbenishty
A peer research on leaving care: education and economical insertion  
Robin Pierrine

Alumni of educational residential setting: Factors related to their integration in higher education  
Yifat Mor-Salwo, Anat Zeira

Longitudinal study among care leavers: predictors of self-efficacy regarding post-secondary education  
Tehila Refaeli, Rami Benbenishty, Anat Zeira

How well can we predict young people's educational success during transition from their earlier in-care risk and protective factors?  
Nicholas Tessier, Robert Flynn

Project Iris - Caring for a sexually abused foster child  
Dorijn Wubs, Hans Grietens, Laura Batstra

Positive development after a rough start  
Daniela Reimer

„In and out of foster care“- Perspective of children placed in children's home following inadequate foster care  
Ivana Jedud Boric, Antonija Zizak, Ivana Maurovic

Growing up in foster care: the point of view of children  
Anne-Marie Doucet Dahlgren, Chiara Sità, Catherine Sellenet

The voices of children in residential care in Portugal: Preliminary results from a comprehensive quality assessment of the Portuguese residential care system  
Sónia Rodrigues, Jorge F. Del Valle, Maria Adelina Barbosa-Ducharne

Decision-making regarding refugee and migrant children: is the best interest of the child taken into account?  
Daan Beltman

Decision-making concerning asylum and migrant children from a multidisciplinary perspective  
Daan Beltman, Elianne Zijlstra, Margrite Kalverboer, Mijntje Ten Brummelaar, Danielle Zevulun, Carla van Os

(Non-)Participation of asylum seeking children in decision-making procedures  
Mijntje Ten Brummelaar, Carla van Os, Elianne Zijlstra, Margrite Kalverboer, Danielle Zevulun, Daan Beltman

Home sweet Home? - Professional's understanding of 'home' within residential care for unaccompanied youths in Sweden  
Äsa Söderqvist
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring the living situation and well-being of the child after return to the country of origin through the BIC-Method</td>
<td>295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danielle Zevulun, Margrite Kalverboer, Elianne Zijlstra, Mijntje Ten Brummelaar, Daan Beltman, Carla van Os</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring the living situation and well-being of the unaccompanied asylum seeking child in the host country through the use of the BIC-Method</td>
<td>296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margrite Kalverboer, Elianne Zijlstra, Mijntje Ten Brummelaar, Danielle Zevulun, Daan Beltman, Carla van Os</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective bonding? The ‘Stronger Together’ research program on working alliances and youth care outcome</td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hubert M Pijnenburg</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children in residential care: how to improve working alliances?</td>
<td>298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eefje Strijbosch, Mariette van Brandenburg, Linda Heutink, Peer van Der Helm, Marieke de Greef, Hubert M Pijnenburg, Inge Wissink</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback on parent-worker alliance: an effective tool for optimizing care efficacy and professionalization?</td>
<td>299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linda Heutink, Dagmar Kallen, Mariette van Brandenburg, Marieke de Greef, Marion van Hattum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance between youth care professionals and their managers: associations with manager competencies and youth care worker functioning</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judith van Vugt, Marieke de Greef, Thomas Ruitenbeek, Marion van Hattum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three forms of alliance in youth care: interdependence and association with care outcome</td>
<td>301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marieke de Greef, Ellen Marres, Marion van Hattum, Hubert M Pijnenburg</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students with in-care experiences: identity issues and support</td>
<td>302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branka Sladovic Franz, Vanja Branica, Kristina Urbanc</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The education of children in residential, kinship and family foster care</td>
<td>303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carme Montserrat, Ferran Casas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to tertiary education from out of home care in Australia: The case for a national framework</td>
<td>304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrew Harvey, Patricia McNamara</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From Risks to Resilience - Transitions out of care: challenges and opportunities</td>
<td>305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tarja Heino</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionalisation of Foster Care: Perspectives in 4 Countries</td>
<td>306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marie-Andree Poirier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The introduction of a Social Pedagogy for UK foster care: emerging findings from a UK study</td>
<td>307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samantha McDermid, Lisa Holmes, Helen Trivedi, Clare Lushey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results of a Quebec study on the factors of satisfaction in the role of foster parent. Potential positive and negative impacts of greater professionalization of foster parents.

Marie-Pierre Joly, Marie-Andree Poirier

Foster care’s professionalization: multiple stakes in daily life, in relations and in institutions of child protection in France

Séverine Euillet

Synthesis and links with the Danish context

Inge Danielsen

Mental health needs of children in care: research contributions and new approaches

Jorge F. Del Valle

A mental health service model for children and young people in care: Evidence and practice

Panos Vostanis

Treating trauma in children and adolescents in care: Advantages of the implementation of new technology

Concepción López-Soler

Trauma symptoms and impact of traumatic life events in foster children aged 6-12

Hans Grietens

A Research Study about Mental Health of Children in Residential Care

Torill Tjelflaat

Identifying Divergent Foster Care Careers for Danish Children

Peter Fallesen

Family matters? The effect of kinship care on foster care disruption rates

Signe Hald Andersen, Peter Fallesen

Making the right decision: Care pathways of children in foster care

Cinzia Canali, Tiziano Vecchiato

Assessed young persons in secure units - trajectories in out-of-home care

Sofia Enell

The Very First Months in Care

Susanna Helavirta, Riitta Laakso, Tarja Pösö

En praksisnær forskningstilgang som brobygning mellem forskning og praksis

Cecilie K. Moesby-Jensen

Tværprofessionelt følgeskab i børn og unges skolegang og fritidsliv

Ida Schwartz
Et spørgsmål om relationer - Et kvalitativt studie om tidligere anbragte unge i
efterværn
Anemone Kierkgaard, Jin Lemming Drewsen

Resourceful or At Risk - The Danger of Social Categories in Research and Social
Work
Anna-Katharina Højen-Sørensen

Outside Looking in: The Experiences of Young People Leaving Residential
Childcare Institutions in Bangladesh
Md. Tuhinul Islam

Support in transition to adulthood
Inger Oterholm

The influence of informal social support on the lives of young people leaving
state out-of-home care
Jacinta Waugh

Young people leaving youth care in Flanders: taking the plunge into the
unknown
Sharon van Audenhove

Identity construction in the transition to adulthood from different placements:
a comparison of the narratives of young people from foster care, adoption and
residential care
Gillian Schofield

What levers for action to support children from families with interpersonal and
material weaknesses?
Claire Ganne

Patterns of help-seeking among at-risk and normative adolescents based on the
threat to self-esteem model
Shlomo Romi, Zeev Kaim

It's nothing special. Investigating the role of violence in marginalised young
people's everyday lives
Tea Torbenfeldt Bengtsson

Where is better: foster family or residential institution? Voices of children from
Lithuania
Dalija Snieskiene

Being at home without a home? Experiences of children from evicted
households
Helene Oldrup
Child Protection in the Nordic Welfare States

Child protection in the Nordic welfare states is very much focused on early prevention, universal services, and provision of in-home child protection services for families and children. Still, there are a relatively high number of children in the child protection system, even children placed out of their homes. In this keynote presentation, the Danish child protection system will be introduced, among other things highlighting the vast number of children and young people in out-of-home care, the rare use of family foster care and the unusual high number of children in residential care. Next, the focus will be on recent research results on child protection in Denmark. Finally, the keynote will end by discussing some of the most important socio-political trends and challenges in the Danish and Nordic child protection systems.

Anne-Dorthe Hestbæk, is head of the Department of Child and Family at SFI – The Danish National Centre for Social Research, a Danish Centre conducting research and commissioned work in all areas of Danish welfare state policies. The main research areas of the Department of Child and Family are childhood conditions, intergenerational transmission of poor conditions, action taken for children at risk, children in care, family policy, childcare, equal opportunities, social aspects of crime and crime prevention, education, and integration. Anne-Dorthe Hestbæk’s research interests are on the one hand initiatives for vulnerable children and youth, especially children in out-of-home care, and on the other hand the relation between family life and work life, especially focusing on coping strategies in families with younger children. Anne-Dorthe Hestbæk did - together with Tine Egelund - initiate Children in Care - a Danish Longitudinal Study (CiC) in 2003.
Common Components of Evidence Based Practices

The call for evidence-based practices (EBPs) rings around the world. A few have now been shown to be effective across oceans and national boundaries. These EBP interventions - wherever they arise - often share characteristics that are based on fundamental developmental, cognitive, and behavioral processes. Yet, we too often treat each of these interventions as if they were completely unique - with the greatest level of uniqueness offered to those that have met such standards as having succeeded in two randomized clinical trials, by independent researchers, with effects that last at least a year. For many practical reasons, there is growing interest in identifying the common components of these interventions rather than treating them as, largely, unique. This should allow us to be more flexible in employing these interventions even when local agencies cannot afford or wait for training by those who have an EBP at the highest level of EBP approval. Conventional systematic reviews are not especially useful at identifying these common components - as they tend to operate at the program level. Other strategies which can help to clarify what the most important components might be are being developed. The keynote will discuss three such strategies. Issues of how to maintain the fidelity of such common component interventions must be addressed and will be discussed.

Richard P. Barth, PhD, MSW, serves as the Dean of the School of Social Work at The University of Maryland. Barth has authored 10 books and more than 170 book chapters and articles about children’s services - especially related, recently, to evidence based practices and children’s mental health and child welfare. He was the 1986 winner of the Frank Breul Prize for Excellence in Child Welfare Scholarship from the University of Chicago; a Fulbright Scholar in 1990 and 2006; the 1998 recipient of the Presidential Award for Excellence in Research from the National Association of Social Workers; the 2005 winner of the Flynn Prize for Research; the 2007 winner of the Peter Forsythe Award for Child Welfare Leadership from the American Public Human Services Association, and the 2010 Lifetime Achievement Award from the Society for Social Work and Research. He is the President of the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare.
The use of research evidence in child welfare contexts

Despite the critical role private agencies (NGOs) play in shaping child outcomes, private providers of child welfare services have rarely been studied in a focused, theoretical way. With specific reference to the use of research evidence (acquiring, processing, and applying research evidence) to advance practice, the paucity of research has left at least three main gaps in knowledge: 1) there are no known studies underway that examine factors that predict research evidence use by NGOs; 2) less is known about the impact organizational context has on evidence use; and, 3) the literature is silent on whether research evidence use is associated with child outcomes. Given the tacit assumptions behind the argument for investing more in research evidence use, building the bridge between evidence use and child outcomes is a necessary undertaking.

To fill this gap in the literature, we conducted surveys of child welfare staff in 26 NGOs serving more than 8,000 children. Surveys were conducted with caseworkers, supervisors, mid-managers, and executive staff. We asked about worker background (e.g., education, tenure, role, etc.) and worker use of research evidence. We also collected data about political context. Finally, we interviewed agency executives to learn about agency size, structure, service array, budget, and approach to service delivery.

For the first wave of data analysis, we examined whether agencies have a clear culture that supports research evidence use. That is, how does the leadership within the organization affect the commitment to research evidence use? Ultimately, we are interested in understanding how research evidence use connects to improving outcomes for children.

Fred Wulczyn, Ph.D., is a Senior Research Fellow at Chapin Hall. Wulczyn is the 2011 recipient of the James E. Flynn Prize for Research and has been recipient of the National Association of Public Child Welfare Administrators’ (NAPCWA) Peter Forsythe Award for leadership in public child welfare. He is director of the Center for State Foster Care and Adoption Data, a collaboration of Chapin Hall, the American Public Human Services Association, and other research partners. He is an expert in the analysis of administrative data, and was an architect of Chapin Hall’s Multistate Foster Care Data Archive, and constructed the original integrated longitudinal database on children’s services in Illinois. Wulczyn has also designed two major social experiments: the Child Assistance Program and the HomeRebuilders project. The Child Assistance Program was awarded the Innovations in Government Award from Harvard University and the Ford Foundation.
Making a difference? Education and health of children in out-of-home care

The links between school failure and serious psychosocial problems later in life are very strong for all children, regardless of family background. This is bad news for children in out-of-home care. They do poorly in the education system, worse than peers with the same cognitive ability. The good news is that most interventions targeting foster children’s school performance seem to yield positive results. Health is another area that has been neglected in the Nordic welfare states. Again, the good news is that relatively simple interventions can make a substantial difference. Bo Vinnerljung uses results from a host of national population studies and intervention studies to argue for a strong - “back-to-basics” - focus on education and health in child welfare practice.

Bo Vinnerljung is professor of Social Work at Stockholm University. He usually works in multi-disciplinary research teams, using Swedish national register data in longitudinal studies of children from adverse backgrounds. He has also been involved in several intervention studies, mainly targeting school performance of children in out-of-home care.
Getting Better Foster Care: Some Evidence from the UK

The effectiveness of foster care depends on getting two things right. The first of these relates to conscious decisions (for example, the strategic decision to provide a certain level of residential care or foster care or the individual decision to place a child in stranger foster care or with kin). The second element relates to the way the child gets on with and is treated by those in immediately in context with him or her (primarily the carer(s), but also those at school, and members of their own family). Clearly this latter element is influenced by conscious decisions and includes them. It is, however, the realm of relationships and much that is important there is not the product of deliberate choice. Within this context this talk will discuss evidence relevant to

1) The degree to which different kinds of outcome are influenced by differences within these levels (e.g. the effects of different local authorities on the different decisions that are taken)

2) The choice between ‘strategically different’ kinds of foster care (kin care, stranger foster care, ‘permanence options’ (adoption, permanent foster care, and ‘mixed options’ such as the English ‘special Guardianship’, specialist treatment options (specifically MTFC as against residential care)

3) The mechanisms which govern the effects of foster care ‘within four walls’ (characteristics of caring family, child, and the interaction between them

4) The mechanisms which might ensure that the good effects of foster care may or may not outlast the particular placement in which they occur

5) A rational approach to getting better foster care at these different levels and progressively improving it.

The main focus of the talk will be on points two and three above. However, there will also be some limited discussion of the theories by which the key processes may be understood.

Ian Sinclair. Following a first degree in philosophy and ancient history Ian Sinclair worked in secondary teaching, probation, social services, counselling and industrial and social research. He was director of research at the National Institute for Social Work from 1977 to 1989 when he became first Professor of Social Work and then (in 1996) co-director of the Social Work Research and Development Unit at the University of York where he is still an emeritus Professor. Since retirement in 2006 he has worked on a mixed randomised and observational evaluation of the English implementation of Multi-dimensional Treatment Foster Care and has provided consultancy to the Rees Centre at the University of Oxford. His ideas reflect this career, but also the influence of his late wife, a trained social worker, who also at times ran a residential unit, worked as a foster carer and took in homeless adults and young people. He has published books and articles on, among other things, foster care and residential care for young people and the operation of the English care system.
Wednesday, 3rd September | Bridging the Gap (Symposium) | 10.30

Bridging the gap between research, policy and practice

Understanding risk and child maltreatment in Europe: A data informed approach

*Symposium Co-ordinator: John Fluke*

Risk indicators and factors that are determinants of child maltreatment exposure are key part of the research landscape in the field. Developing an understanding of these factors has important implications for the development of prevention and intervention programs and systems. However, this understanding hinges on the availability of population level data on risk and maltreatment incidence and prevalence. This symposium includes presentations regarding population based survey designs that were implemented in three European countries to help develop an understanding of maltreatment risk factors.

Each presentation will include a description of the data collection methodology, and where available presentation of findings tied to various demographic, family structure, behavioral, economic, and other conditions related to maltreatment.

Each of the presentations will consider how the results and the experience with the data collection programs have implications for prevention and intervention policy in the three countries. They will also address the need for ongoing research and next steps for data collection and analysis activities.
Parent and child risk factors for abuse and neglect

Speakers & Authors: Lenneke Alink, Saskia Euser, Marian Bakermans-Kranenburg, Marinus van Ijzendoorn

Factors that increase the risk for child abuse and neglect can be found on the level of the parent, the family, and the broader environment, such as the neighborhood or society.

In this study we used data from the second Netherlands' Prevalence Study of Maltreatment of youth (NPM-2010; Euser, Alink, Pannebakker, Vogels, Bakermans-Kranenburg, & Van IJzendoorn, 2013) to test specific parent and child characteristics that may increase the risk for abuse and neglect. In this study professionals from various occupational branches (sentinels) were asked to report each child (including some background information on the child and family) for whom they suspected child maltreatment during a period of three months. Second, we used data from the Netherlands' Prevalence Study on Child Maltreatment in Out-of-Home Care (Euser, Alink, Tharner, Van IJzendoorn, & Bakermans-Kranenburg, 2013) which had a similar methodology. Professionals in residential care and foster care for children with and without (mld) intellectual disabilities reported on the abuse the children experienced in their care facilities.

We will focus on the following parent variables in the NPM-2010: age, gender, and psychopathology. In addition, we will test whether age, gender, and physical and mental disabilities of the children increase the risk for child maltreatment in the NPM-2010 and the youth care prevalence study. Implications for prevention and intervention based on the results will be discussed.

Child maltreatment risk factors in step-families: a first Flemish study

Speakers & Authors: Van Puyenbroeck Bert, Johan Vanderfaeillie, Hans Grietens, Lisa Obers

A regional Flemish study examined whether growing up in a stepfamily is associated with a greater risk of maltreatment and abuse compared to a biological two-parent family or single-parent family. In a provincial town in Flanders, all twelve full-time secondary schools were invited to participate in the research. The experiences of young people with intra-familial child abuse were measured using a Dutch translated version of the ISPCAN Child Abuse Screening Tool Children’s Home Version (ICAST-C). A total of 543 students from six different secondary schools filled out the questionnaire. It concerns 314 (57.8%) girls and 229 (42.2%) boys with a mean age of 15.10 years (SD = 1.99).

With some caution in interpreting the item scores, it can be said that about half of the respondents had ever witnessed violence in the home environment, and about one child in three has been a victim of neglect in the home once. Young people are less victims of sexual abuse and only a very limited group is exposed to pornography. Results show that Flemish children from a stepfamily are two times more at risk of neglect compared to children from an original family. Also, minors out of stepfamilies report that they are being taken care of more poorly, and that no one truly supports them and they are faced with the threat that someone may abandon them forever. In the presentation, both these results as well as the psychometric validity of the ICAST research tool will be critically discussed. Implications for practice and possibilities for further research conclude the presentation.
Measuring risk factors in Germany: difficulties encountered and lessons learned during the design of a national prevalence study

Speakers & Authors: Christian Brand, Andreas Eickhorst, Katrin Lang, Christoph Liel, Andrea Schreier, Anna Neumann, Ilona Renner

Objectives: Early exposure to psychosocial burdens has been identified as a potential risk factor for child abuse and neglect. However, in Germany there is a recognised lack of nationally representative epidemiological evidence of the prevalence of psychosocial burdens. Such data is urgently needed to better understand the needs of families with small children and to plan prevention and intervention efforts within the German federal action plan for early prevention.

Method: A large-scale national prevalence study focussing on families with children 0 to 3 years of age is planned for 2015. A risk inventory has been developed and tested in three pilot studies: (1) a limited version of the inventory has been piloted as a module of an established national survey of families (n interviewed>10.000); (2) the full inventory has been trialled in a local survey where recruitment was done via population registry data (n sampled>10.000); (3) and also in another local survey where recruitment was done via paediatricians (n target>1.500). The different trials also tested a variety of data collection modes (telephone, paper/pencil, web-based).

Results: The conceptual development of both the risk inventory and the national prevalence study will be presented as well as the key results of the pilot studies. Among those, our main focus was on the difficulties encountered and lessons learned concerning one of the main tasks of the national prevalence study: reaching all social strata (in particular difficult to reach socially deprived groups) and asking sensitive questions in surveys. Effects of different data collection modes have also been observed and will be discussed.

Key words: risks, survey design, psychosocial burden
Bridging the gap between research, policy and practice

Developing a toolkit on mapping agency response to child maltreatment

**Speakers & Authors: Andreas Jud, Lisa M. Jones, Christopher Mikton**

Although countries around the world share and value the goal of protecting children from harm, national data on child maltreatment and the involvement of social services, the judiciary and health services remain relatively scarce. It is therefore often not known whether children have equal access to services in all parts of a country or if the child protection system is culturally sensitive. To fill this gap and support researchers and policy-makers in planning national efforts to collect agency data on child maltreatment, a toolkit is being developed with input from an international panel of experts - researchers with experience using professional surveys and administrative data to study child maltreatment incidence. We line out research strategies on a set of methodological questions from country’s readiness of applying the toolkit, to agency and case selection, coding issues, and obtaining successful agency and professional participation. For example, we strongly recommend to first map the universe of child protection-related agencies. Based on the mapping process, researchers should then decide on what type(s) of agencies to include considering among other factors the age of children served by agencies, level of service density, agency size, population mobility, language, religion, at-risk population, and urban vs. rural differences. The process of disseminating the toolkit not only aims at promoting future studies. By gathering feedback from researchers around the world, we also intend to improve the strategies outlined there.
Upgrading CAN cases’ surveillance capacity among crisis era at national and European level: the experience from Greece

Speakers & Authors: Athanasios Ntinapogias, Chara Tompra, Marianna Tsana, Foteini Zarokosta, George Nikolaidis

Child abuse and neglect (CAN) surveillance has been accepted as an ultimate way to promote evidence based social policy interventions but also as a valuable tool for augmenting daily work of first line professionals. Despite that, there has been relatively little progress in developing comprehensive systems throughout Europe let alone making existing ones compatible with one another. On the grounds of the above a two fold initiative was undertaken in a particularly difficult circumstance for (i) developing a national CAN cases registry in Greece and (ii) launching a cooperative project for the identification of a minimum data set for CAN cases surveillance that could be compatible with existing resources throughout European countries. In this presentation the methodology developed and preliminary results are presented. For the national level initiative the process adopted included a literature review, communication with agents operating already established national registries, building on prior evidence based resources by recent research on the current capacities and registration competences of authoritative organizations, developing of a draft concerning both procedures and selected variables, putting the first draft into multiple circles for public consultation with professionals involved and academia, operating the modified national registry for a pilot period of 6 months and a follow-up round of public consultation as well as training for first line professionals in its utilization. For the pan-European level the method of work included recording country profiles for participant countries, identifying commonalities and differences as well as minimum denominators in terms of procedures, operators and variables, preparing a first draft of selected variables, putting this through public consultation with involvement of organizations, researchers and experts from as many European countries as possible, modifying draft CAN minimum data set outcome, manualizing material, producing handy internet based protocols, guides and other self-training resources for its application and submitting this into respectful evaluation. At both levels, particular emphasis was given in ethical considerations on CAN surveillance systems including issues of confidentiality and sensitive data protection in operation, subjects’ privileged control, management and storage of data aspects of running the whole system.
France: administrative intricacies and their consequences for the development of data collection programs

Speakers & Authors: Séraphin Gilles, Bauduin Claire, Bolter Flora

In the framework of the symposium on the development of data collection programs regarding CAN, our presentation will focus on the French example. The French child protection system was completely restructured in 2007. Analyzing it at national level requires a double balancing act: between the national policy and the diversity of its local (département) implementations on the one hand, between social-services-based measures and judicial interventions on the other. These two tensions entail a number of complications that immediately affect data collection and make it particularly hard to consolidate an observation system.

Rather than present the system and reform in depth, we will focus on the new tools and technologies that have been used to assess the new policies and document the trajectories of children: a very ambitious data collection program, sketched out since 2004 and consolidated at the heart of the 2007 reform through the creation of local child protection observatories to mirror what ONED does at national level.

Implementing any data collection program is a lengthy process. But France's complex child protection system offers additional challenges, especially since the decree describing the data collection program lists 130 variables divided into 6 categories. Through a constant discussion with all parties involved, and a consensus-building process in 2013, ONED has managed to iron out the initial difficulties and consolidate the definition of the observation perimeter. The first complete databases should arrive in the spring of 2014: our presentation will include early findings after this much-awaited milestone.

This final stage of the implementation process is also interesting for what it tells us about the requirements for a solid observation system: by seeing what has been useful and what hasn't in the actual data collection process, we should be able to share our experience on what aspects of the system need to be made flexible, and which don't.
Evidence-based practice and implementation

Wednesday, 3rd September | Evidence-based Practice | 10.30

Working with Traumatised Young People in Foster Care: A Case Study

Speakers & Authors: John McHale, Tony Kearney

We shall consider the developmental approach taken to support foster carers and staff working with the complex young people placed with Intensive Fostering Services. Reference shall be made to a range of theoretical and practice intervention strategies used to support carers understanding of the complex needs of the young people placed with IFS. A theme throughout shall be the concept of developmental trauma. The presentation shall link into a reflective study with a view to suggesting the concepts/theories discussed, including Life Space Crisis Intervention, Safe Crisis Management, attachment and the impact of trauma on the developing brain. An insight into the work of IFS discussing practice ethos and future plans to meet the needs of complex young people shall flow through the presentation and conclude with some insight into how we believe future practice may be enhanced through use the Neuro-sequential model of Therapeutics as developed by the Child Trauma Academy along with the introduction of Social Pedagogy as a practice model.

We believe that we have an opportunity to offer a reflective study outlining key aspects of training and guidance offered to foster carers to care for complex and challenging young people that many in our chosen field may consider interesting and beneficial.

We would not intend to lecture on our work by saying this is the only way to approach caring for complex and challenging young people and would hope to encourage a high degree of reflective discussion throughout the session with a view to embedding the critical message that trusting relationships work to support young people but also that it takes time, knowledge, understanding, self awareness and patience to gain the trust of a traumatised young person who requires specialist foster care provision.

To support the presentation we shall focus some thought on our support of one particular young person who acted in and co-wrote “Please Listen”, the play about being in care that was presented at Eusarf 2012 in Glasgow. This young person has been supported through many significant challenges in his life by foster carers and staff in IFS and continues to be supported into young adulthood.
Evidence-based practice and implementation

Improving clinical outcomes through the use of clinical feed-back systems

Speakers & Authors: Dagfinn Mørkrid Thøgersen, Bernadette Christensen, Knut Taraldsen, Nina Tollefsen

Providing therapists with clinical feed-back has been identified as an effective strategy to improve therapeutic outcomes. This presentation will give in-depth examples of how clinical feed-back routines constitutes a central role in three evidence-based programs for youth with behavioral problems; Functional Family Therapy (FFT), Multisystemic Therapy (MST) and Multi-dimensional Treatment Foster Care (MTFC).

The Norwegian Center for Child Behavioral Development was established by the Norwegian government in 1997 to develop, implement, monitor and perform research on methods for treatment of children and youth with serious behavioral problems. In 1999 the Center started a nation-wide implementation of MST, and went on to implement FFT and MTFC in 2007 and 2008, respectively. Today there are 30 teams delivering MST, FFT and MTFC treatment in Norway.

The quality assurance and quality improvement structures in all three methods focus on strategies to ensure the best possible treatment outcomes through increasing therapist competency and model fidelity. In each program data is gathered on a range of clinically significant aspects of the treatment delivery. This data is used to provide clinical feed-back on different levels and at different intervals. There is a tiered layer of clinical feed-back where therapists, supervisors and consultants analyze and use clinically relevant data on different levels of analysis. Together these feed-back routines help to guide the clinical planning process and the tailoring of treatment to each family. It also allows the identification of trends in treatment delivery and outcomes, and the ability to address areas of therapist competency or organizational support in need of improvement.

The presentation will focus on the important value of designing data systems that focuses on clinically relevant and significant indicators of good treatment. Case examples of the use of clinical feed-back data at different levels will be presented, and strategies for applying these structures most efficiently will be discussed. Recommendations for the design and application of clinical feed-back systems for therapists working with highly complex and challenging clinical work will be given.
Evidence-based practice and implementation

General organizational core factors for the implementation and utilization of an evidence-based practice focusing on client outcome - a model

Speakers & Authors: Oscarsson Lars, Anna Gärdegård, Annika Larsson

Until recently, the professional discussion in social work about evidence-based practice has been mainly focused on questions concerning the effects and the efficacy of different intervention models or techniques. Today, we can also see a growing literature on the importance of contextual factors related to local organizational learning, leadership and individual personnel-based characteristics for the implementation and utilization of an everyday evidence-based practice. Our aim is to present a theoretical model designed to serve as an analytical tool or map to empirically identify and assess such organizational, professional, process-related, and individual-based factors. In the model, we distinguish between general organizational and general individual/personnel-based factors; and apart from the nominal designation of these core factors (such as “EBP”, “learning organization”, “leadership”), they are operationalized, i.e., concretized, in sequential steps trying to get close to the empirical everyday practice where employees meet and are supposed to “use” these factors to perform an evidence-based practice focusing on client outcome. The model is part of a larger project aiming at identifying general as well as client-group specific core conditions related to the implementation and utilization of en evidence-based practice within, e.g., family and child care.

Apart from model construction, in the project we try to empirically identify the presence or absence of these conditions and factors in social work with children and families in two of Stockholm’s 14 local social service authorities - one with experience of using Performance Management (PM) and one of basic use of evidence-based practice (EBP). The project has a mixed methods approach including theory building and empirical data collection from social workers, managers, and politicians. Data is collected using questionnaires, individual and focus-group interviews, and case files. As a theoretical frame and analytical tool for the project, the model is based on previous research by, in particular, Austin and Lee with colleagues, Kitson and colleagues, and Rycroft-Malone.

Key words: evidence-based practice, core factors, organizational context
It takes two to tango: The role of alliance assessment in professional education and routine youth care monitoring

Speakers & Authors: Wybren Grooteboer, Hubert M Pijnenburg, Rinie van Rijssingen

Focused routine care monitoring and feedback can contribute to care outcome (Van Yperen, 2013). An important monitoring and feedback theme is alliance, which refers to the quality and strength of the collaborative relationship between client and therapist (Bordin, 1979). Alliance is considered the most important nonspecific/common change promoting factor in mental health (Hubble et al., 2010).

Barnhoorn et al. (2013) and Pijnenburg (2012) hypothesize this also holds true for youth care. To validate this assumption, our research group at HAN University of Applied Sciences researches alliance in relation to youthcare efficacy. Part of our program was a follow-up study among former clients, aimed at identifying key factors in youth care from a client viewpoint. The majority of clients interviewed confirmed the important status of alliance (Berendsen, Jacobs & Rensen, 2011). Monitoring alliance in youthcare prospectively may offer insight into how we may build - and if necessary repair - the professional working relationship. Our Research Group have developed the Youth Alliance Scale (YAS), a multi-informant instrument designed to assess alliance and facilitate client-professional dialogue about their working relationship. Currently validity and reliability of the YAS are being assessed.

From a clinical perspective, an important question is how to implement the YAS in youth care and professional education programs alike. Our presentation focuses on a presentation of the instrument and preliminary findings, and discusses conditions for successful implementation.

References:
Utilising a research-informed model to support the development of practice and policy for adolescents who experience neglect within families

Speakers & Authors: Leslie Hicks

Aim and objectives
This presentation will consider a research implementation project designed to enable a local authority children's services department to integrate the findings from research about adolescent neglect into policy and practice locally.

Methods
The project involved an intensive process of research utilisation, where researchers worked in partnership with eight multi-agency senior managers to consider the relevance of the research findings to their own settings, with the action research goal of implementing changes in local awareness, practice and policy. The project was based on findings from government funded research which investigated adolescent neglect at the levels of research, policy and practice.

Research design
The project used an innovative approach to research utilisation and was exploratory in nature. A structured approach to service development was employed. The local authority District Management Team agreed to the release of staff time with a view to establishing potential for change in participants' own practice and in local policy. Initially, five utilisation workshops were held with eight senior managers from the full range of children's services. The workshops involved:
- fitting the core findings from research about adolescent neglect to participants' own areas of practice and policy, establishing the implications for individual agencies and for the local authority in making changes to practice;
- identifying the potential for the development of practice and policy within participants' own jurisdiction, establishing goals for change;
- devising plans to enable change, implementing, monitoring and reviewing progress.

Data
In-depth interviews with individual managers established the nature of changes in practice and policies which had been enabled by the research utilisation process.

Key findings
The research implementation model highlighted barriers and enablers to changes in policy and practice; cultural shifts in the organisation ensuing from the recognition of 'adolescent neglect' as a legitimate term for use; and practical changes e.g. the inclusion of neglect in assessments of older children and their families, and monitoring data on adolescent neglect being collected by the local authority performance team. The effective application of this utilisation model bodes well for research-informed service development, and ultimately for improving the lives of vulnerable young people.

Key words
Adolescent neglect; research implementation; knowledge exchange; partnership research
Education of children in care and schooling as a protective factor

Life, learning and achievement: Education is the best predictor of outcomes for children and young people in care. A free resource to audit educational attainment for children and young people in care.

Speakers & Authors: Stephen Mondy, Vanessa Smith, Michael Cashin, Romaine Moss

Research has shown a clear relationship between educational success and success in adult life. Research has equally demonstrated that young people leaving care are often educationally disadvantaged. The best predictor of successful transition into adult life for children in the care system is their level of educational attainment. Children with higher education levels fare better in terms of being happy, safe and well; they are more resilient; are more likely to be engaged in prosocial activities including employment, further education and training; and less likely to be engaged in activities such as drug use and crime. Young people will often have had educational problems before they come into care. They need additional support and attention to education to compensate for these early disadvantages. The reality, however, is that education often sinks to the bottom of the priority list as services address more visible and demanding needs of children and young people. This paper presents a free toolkit available to agencies to help keep the focus on education and learning activities for young people in care. It draws on the experience of CatholicCare Diocese of Broken Bay with current and past clients in intensive therapeutic residential and foster care programs in northern Sydney and the Central Coast of NSW in Australia. The toolkit specifically targets young people of high school age but the tools and concepts are also relevant to younger children.
Education of children in care and schooling as a protective factor

The Bookworm Club: The evolution and evaluation of an evidence-informed literacy program for children residing in out-of-home care

Speakers & Authors: Eavan Brady, Trisha Hendsbee, Angus Francis, Michael Justinich

This presentation will outline the evolution and evaluation of the Bookworm Club, an Ontario-based, provincial literacy program for children living in out-of-home care (modeled on the UK-based Letterbox Club) in grades one to eight. Participants in the program receive packages containing developmentally appropriate books and related materials, mailed personally to children in their out-of-home placement once a month for six months.

We will provide: 1) an overview of the program evolution and growth; 2) findings from the 2012 pilot program evaluation that involved 131 children and their caregivers and, 3) findings from the 2013 program which grew to include 532 children and their caregivers.

A mixed-methods research design was used in both evaluations involving a quantitative (pre and post-test) and a qualitative component (telephone interviews with caregivers and letters written from participating children). The following areas were explored via questionnaires both before and after participation: child’s self-esteem, child’s motivation for reading, child-caregiver relationship (according to the child), child-caregiver relationship (according to the caregiver), caregiver expectations of the child, and the placement literacy environment.

Key findings relate to the process of growing the Bookworm Club within the province of Ontario, and the findings of the 2012 and 2013 program evaluations which highlight the impact of the program on participating children and their caregivers along with key areas for enhancing the program. For example, the 2012 program pilot evaluation indicated that children’s motivation for reading significantly increased during the six months of participation in the Bookworm Club.

This case example from one child welfare community (Ontario, Canada) demonstrates how an evidence-informed practice initiative has been evaluated and grown to full-scale provincial implementation. The continued evaluation of the program and the unique method of obtaining feedback from participating children as part of the evaluation stand out as distinctive features and have implications for the field of child welfare internationally. This presentation will outline the relevance of this literacy program and evaluation process to the child welfare community internationally.
Education of children in care and schooling as a protective factor

Young children at risk: Protecting children entering education

Speakers & Authors: Harriet Ward, Georgia Hyde-Dryden, Rebecca Brown, Caroline Thomas

Aim and objectives
The Centre for Child and Family Research, Loughborough University is undertaking a longitudinal study of children identified as suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm before their first birthdays. From about the children’s third birthdays, professionals increasingly expressed the expectation that social workers would withdraw their support when the child entered school. It was assumed that the children would be adequately safeguarded once they were in school, with indicators of on-going abuse and neglect being easily identified. Findings about the role of schools in protecting young children from harm will be presented and discussed.

Methods
Mixed methods.

Research design
Longitudinal design, tracing the life pathways of children from birth until the age of five.

Data
Data were collected from children’s social-care case files and in-depth interviews with parents, carers, social workers and education professionals. ‘Strengths and Difficulties’ questionnaires were completed by parents/carers and teachers. Data were collected for 37 children.

Key findings
For about one third of the sample children, circumstances had not improved, or were deteriorating when they started school. Also, almost one in three of the children had extensive emotional and behavioural difficulties. There was no evidence that pro-active social work was increasing in response.

Teachers expressed satisfaction with their safeguarding training and confidence in identifying signs of abuse and neglect, but less certainty about how to respond. Head teachers described dissatisfaction with inter-agency working when schools made safeguarding referrals to children’s social care services, and the support available for looked after children. Consequently, some schools had developed their own imaginative strategies for supporting very vulnerable children outside existing strategic plans for service delivery at a local authority level. Sample children often received exceptional levels of support from individual teachers. However, this potentially masked abuse and neglect so that social workers were less likely to take action to protect children.

Key words:
Education, child development, professional decision making, abuse and neglect, looked after children,
Facilitating Educational Success in Out-of-home Care

Speakers & Authors: Benjamin Strahl

Educational success in school impacts the capacities of young people to come to terms with various challenges in their out-of-home care story. Findings of the project "Higher education without Family Support" suggest, that educational success of children and youth in care has to be seen in association with the experience of self-efficacy and their capacity to act in situations of indeterminacy. The analyses of biographical interviews with care leavers in higher education highlight that educational success is dependent on experiences of agency and participation in decision making processes. In this sense, the educational career has to be seen as a stage of life, where children and youths in care can experience self-efficacy.

Background:  
Compared to their peers, young people in out of home care achieve lower levels of educational attainment. However, against all odds, some of them succeed in their educational career and enter into higher education.

According to the concept of education (Bildung) that is prevalent in German Social Pedagogy, education is considered to be a subject-driven process of learning.

Methods:  
A subject orientated approach is crucial to understand the individual accesses to formal education. Therefore, the presented study uses qualitative methods of biographical analyses to reconstruct successful educational careers of care leavers in a life course perspective.

17 autobiographic-narrative interviews with care leavers in higher education have been conducted to analyze the educational processes and processes of learning.

Sequential analyses of the interviews are used to explore the interplay of daily life and educational performance.

Implications for practice:  
Young people in care suffer a lot of other-directed interventions. In contrast, education in school can be an area of life, where self-efficacy can be experienced. In order to enable successful educational careers, good learning conditions should be arranged, but young people must not be overwhelmed and pressured with school matters.
Foster parents’ attitudes toward parenting

Speakers & Authors: Skrallan de Maeyer, Johan Vanderfaeillie, Marijke Robberechts, Femke Vanschoonlandt, Frank van Holen

Foster parenting is not always easy. Nevertheless foster parents can have much influence on the well-being of a foster child, one of those influencing aspects are the foster parents’ attitudes toward parenting. Hence, assessing their attitudes is important when selecting and recruiting for capable and high quality foster parents.

In this study foster parents’ attitudes toward parenting of 188 Flemish non-kinship foster parents were examined using a Dutch version of the Adult-Adolescent Parenting Inventory (AAPI-2). The AAPI assesses high-risk parenting (potential for child abuse and neglect) by measuring attitudes regarding five constructs: (a) inappropriate expectations, (b) lack of empathy, (c) value of physical punishment, (d) role reversal and (e) oppressing children's power and independence. This last subscale was not used because of a low internal consistency (α = .28).

Flemish foster parents had average scores on the four subscales or were at medium risk for negative parenting. Regarding the subscales inappropriate expectations and role reversal half of the foster parents had positive attitudes or were at low risk for negative parenting. One to eight percent of the foster parents were at high risk for child abuse and neglect as indicated by their scores on at least one of the four subscales. No foster and family characteristics were associated with attitudes toward parenting.

The results showed that Flemish foster parents were at medium risk for negative parenting. The results should stimulate foster care workers and researchers to invest in a good, qualitative selection procedure, aiming at identifying foster parents at high risk for negative parenting and at excluding them from being a foster parent. Additionally foster parents at medium risk should be trained and supported in better parenting attitudes and behavior, to alter the medium risk scores into low risk ones.
Foster care: different paths and their implications

Assessing attachment in foster parents to be

Speakers & Authors: Karin Lundén

Secure attachment is considered a very important factor in resilience. Literature has shown that both foster parent’s and adoptive parent’s own attachment significantly affects the development of a more secure attachment in children placed in their care. To measure attachment will therefore be essential in professional’s assessments. In Sweden there is limited knowledge of attachment in foster parents. A descriptive study was therefore conducted in order to investigate attachment in both groups of parents. To measure attachment the Attachment Style Interview (Bifulco, 2002) was used.

The group under study consisted of 50 foster parents under assessment for approval. Following questions were investigated: how many of the foster parents had a secure attachment; how many foster parents where children already were placed, had a secure attachment; how many foster parents with secure attachment lived together with a more insecure partner.

Tentative results showed that just over half of the foster parents had a secure attachment. Almost half of them had an insecure attachment. Just over half of the foster parents had the same level of attachment as had their partners. Almost half of foster parents with secure attachment lived together with a more insecure partner. As we can see conclusively there are a substantial amount of foster parents with insecure attachment. Professionals have investigated all of them for approval before they were selected as foster parents. As secure attachment in foster parents have been proven to be such an important factor for the development of their placed children the tentative results highlight the need for the possibility to measure attachment as part of the assessment process. How this can be implemented will be discussed.

Key words: attachment, foster parents, assessment
Foster children often experienced adversity such as neglect and separations in their biological families or in institutional care. This may have negative consequences for their attachment relationships with new parents and contribute to later behavior problems. As a consequence of their less fortunate histories, foster children's signals may be distorted or difficult to interpret, making it harder for foster parents to respond to their children in a sensitive way. A meta-analysis revealed that foster children indeed show more insecure disorganized attachment compared to normative children (Van den Dries, Juffer, Van IJzendoorn, & Bakermans-Kranenburg, 2009). One of the possible consequences of disorganized attachment is controlling child behavior, which can be very challenging for foster parents.

In a randomized controlled trial (RCT) we test the effectiveness of an attachment-based intervention program aimed at improving sensitive parenting and sensitive discipline skills of foster parents. The evidence-based program VIPP-SD (Video-feedback Intervention to promote Positive Parenting - Sensitive Discipline; Juffer, Bakermans-Kranenburg, & Van IJzendoorn, 2008) proved to be effective in 10 RCTs in different countries. For the current study VIPP-SD was adapted for families with 1- to 6-year-old foster children. For these adaptations we used recent knowledge about foster children's development. The main adaptations of this program involve helping the foster parent recognize signals specific for foster children and respond adequately to these signals, and supporting adaptive stress regulation of foster parents and foster children.

We will present results from the first pilot cases. Three mothers of foster children (2 girls, 1 boy) received video feedback on their videotaped parent-child interaction and tips during six intervention home visits. The themes of the intervention sessions will be presented, and video clips will illustrate the intervention process in these three cases.

Placement careers: stability and discontinuity

Do foster mothers and foster fathers differ in their support needs and satisfaction with the foster care placement?

Speakers & Authors: Johan Vanderfaeillie, Frank van Holen, Femke Vanschoonlandt, Skrallan de Maeyer, Marijke Robberechts

Family foster care is a very valuable but also vulnerable youth care intervention. Over the past years the recruitment and retention of experienced foster parents cause concerns. Offering support to foster mothers and fathers can increase their satisfaction with the foster care placement and the intent of continuing fostering. Knowledge of differences between foster mothers and foster fathers regarding their support needs and satisfaction with the foster placement is non-existent. Aiming at tailoring the support offered to them, differences in support needs and satisfaction between foster mothers and foster fathers need to be examined.

All foster parents out of one Flemish province were questioned with the "Support Needs and Satisfaction Questionnaire - Foster Parents". The questionnaire measures support needs regarding contact with the birth parents and the fostering of the foster child, next to satisfaction with pre-service training, satisfaction with collaboration with the foster care agency, satisfaction with experienced recognition and satisfaction with reimbursements. 159 foster families (38%) fostering 217 foster children (38%) returned the questionnaire. From 86 couples of foster parents fostering 120 foster children a questionnaire of both foster mother and foster father was available.

Contrary to the expectations foster mothers did not differ from foster fathers in their support needs regarding contact with the birth parents and fostering of the foster child. Satisfaction with pre-service training, collaboration with the foster care worker, experienced recognition and reimbursement neither differed between foster mothers and foster fathers. Furthermore results indicated that satisfaction could be enhanced by balancing the needs and rights of birth parents on the one hand and these of the foster parents on the other hand. Recognizing that foster parents are experts on their foster child and consulting them in case of important decisions will also largely contribute to enhanced satisfaction.

Key words: Foster care, Support needs and satisfaction, Foster parents
Health and wellbeing of children in care

Youth's rights perceptions as related with their psychological well-being in residential care: the role of place attachment

Speakers & Authors: Eunice Magalhães, Maria Manuela Calheiros

Aim: this presentation will be focused on how youth's perceptions about the fulfillment of their rights in residential care are related with their psychological wellbeing, and on the role of place attachment in this relationship.

Methods: three studies were performed: the first and second studies were implemented to construct a measure on youth's rights perceptions and the third study provided data on it validity and reliability. Also, this third study revealed evidences about the model on psychological wellbeing and place attachment.

Research design: the first study involved a documental analysis to identify the underlying dimensions of youth's rights that would be assessed by a self-report scale. From a systematization of rights' dimensions in the first study, a second one was performed to explore the youth's views about their rights in care. Six focus groups were developed to offer a privileged context for discussion about this issue. The third study involved a cross-sectional and national study, using self-reported measures, to assess psychological wellbeing, place attachment and rights' perceptions.

Data: the first study included the analysis of three documents on children and youth's rights, with a content data analysis. The second study was performed with 29 adolescents (12-18 years old) and the data was analyzed from the grounded theory framework. In the third study, 420 adolescents (11-18 years old) from 59 institutions filled out these measures: Rights Perceptions Scale; Place Attachment Scale; Psychological Wellbeing Scales.

Key findings: a short, reliable and valid scale was found to assess youth's rights perceptions in this context. Participation, Autonomy, Respectful system practices, Normalization or Privacy were found in this study as key dimensions, that could have important implications in terms of youth's perceptions about their attachment to the residential setting, as well as in terms of psychological wellbeing. The results will be discussed in terms of research and practice relevance for residential care, since this protection service aims to provide those necessary conditions for a healthy development, guarantying the youth's needs and rights.

Key words: youth's rights, psychological well-being, place attachment
Experiences of Physical Victimization by Peers among Youth in Residential Care Settings: An Ecological Examination

Speakers & Authors: Shalhevet Attar-Schwartz

Peer violence is a disturbing yet under-examined feature of children's life in residential care. This study explores the prevalence and multilevel risk factors of physical violent behaviors (such as punching or kicking) by peers among 1,324 Israeli Arab and Jewish adolescents (aged 11 to 19) residing in 32 residential care settings (RCS) for children at-risk in Israel. Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM) was used to examine the relationships between physical victimization and adolescents' characteristics (age, gender, self-efficacy, adjustment difficulties, maltreatment by staff, and perceived social climate) as well as institution-level characteristics (care setting type, size, structure, and ethnic affiliation). Over 50% (56%) of the adolescents surveyed reported having experienced at least one form of physical violence by peers. Boys and younger adolescents were more likely to be victimized than girls and older adolescents. The results show that adolescents with adjustment difficulties or low social self-efficacy, and adolescents who perceive an institution's staff as strict and/or had experienced maltreatment by staff, are vulnerable groups for peer victimization. Lower levels of victimization were found in care settings with a familial element than in traditional group settings. Institutions with high concentrations of young people with adjustment difficulties and violent staff behaviors had higher levels of violence among residents. Applying an ecological perspective to an investigation of peer victimization in RCS enables the identification of risk factors at adolescent and institution levels. This type of examination has implications for child welfare practice and policy that can help in the development of prevention and intervention methods designed to tackle the involvement in violence of youth in care.
Non-Suicidal Self-Injury and Social Support - a Danish population-based sample

Speakers & Authors: Katrine Schjødt Vammen, Mogens Nygaard Christoffersen

Key words: Non-suicidal self-injury, childhood maltreatment, social support

This presentation will focus on the epidemiology of non-suicidal self-injury (NSSI). NSSI is defined as a deliberated, self-inflicted destruction of body tissue without suicidal intent and for purposes not socially sanctioned. From a theoretical perspective, NSSI is understood as a coping strategy, which is used to temporarily reduce psychic tensions associated with negative effects such as anger, guilt, depression, intense depersonalization, and feelings of helplessness. These negative effects are commonly seen among children exposed to maltreatment. Our hypotheses are first, that childhood maltreatment and other traumatic life events in childhood increase the risk of NSSI and second, that receiving social support in childhood decreases the risk of NSSI. The study is based on a representative national sample of 2,980 young adults born in Denmark in 1984, whereas 852 have received assessments and services provided in the home (e.g., family support). Respondents are asked retrospectively between October 2008 and April 2009 about maltreatment, other traumatic life events, and social support in their childhood. A mediator analysis is performed using analytic procedure appropriate for testing if social support is a mediator between the independent variable and the dependent variable. The method uses three regression equations to test for the statistical significance of a mediator effect. We estimate the incidence of NSSI to 2.7 per cent out of 2,980 young adults. Our results confirm our hypotheses: firstly, maltreatment such as physical and sexual abuse and other traumatic life events in childhood increase the risk of NSSI significantly and secondly, receiving social support in childhood decreases the risk of NSSI. We find that social support is a partial mediator between maltreatment, other traumatic life events in childhood and NSSI. Furthermore, our results confirm the theory, that NSSI could be understood as a coping strategy, which is used to temporarily reduce psychic tensions. The presentation will focus on how to define and understand NSSI and discuss different strategies to help young adults suffering from NSSI.
Wednesday, 3rd September | Health & Wellbeing | 10.30

Health and wellbeing of children in care

Substance use by adolescents in residential youth care institutions

Speakers & Authors: Veerle Soyez, Johan Rosiers, Inge Baeten, Sarah Melis

Aim: Research on substance use in adolescents is often performed in classic school contexts. As a result, a large group of ‘vulnerable’ youngsters is un- or underrepresented in these studies. The current study tries to fill this gap.

Method and data: In this presentation we describe a mixed-method study conducted in Flanders (Belgium) in which we compare results from two surveys on substance use. A group of adolescents staying in residential youth care (N=272) was compared with a group of secondary school students (N=296). Both groups were given the same questionnaire, and matched on following criteria: age, education level and gender. Additionally, in-depth interviews with 40 adolescents in residential youth care were conducted.

Key findings: With regard to the use of different substances, both the life time and last year prevalences were higher for the adolescents residing in residential youth care. Especially, substantial differences were found in the prevalence rates for cannabis use (e.g. cannabis used last year: 35,1% vs. 11,1%) and for other illegal drugs (e.g. other illegal drugs used last year: 21,0% vs. 1,7%); differences in alcohol use were much smaller. Strikingly, we did not find significant differences between the two groups concerning the age at which drug use was initiated.

Adolescents residing in residential youth care reported more (and different) motives for (not) using alcohol or drugs (cannabis). Special attention is given in this presentation to the motive for not using substances “because I have seen the consequences it has on someone's life”. Additional qualitative interviews with adolescents in residential youth care revealed that substances and substance use are omnipresent in these youngster's lives, not at least because they have a family member (N=25), or a friend (N=26) using substances. As a result, adolescents have a firm opinion about what is right or 'helpful', and what isn't. A common thread reported throughout the interviews is the need for dialogue and for openness to discuss substance (use) in institutions. Consequences for daily practice will be discussed.
Health and wellbeing of children in care

Youth carefarm as a promising new kind of care for youth with serious behaviour problems

*Speakers & Authors: De Meyer Ronald, Hassink Jan, Ruikes Theo, Van Den Heuvel Rien, Van Der Sman Paul, Veerman Jan Willem*

For a growing group of youth with serious problems the current youth care seems not the right answer in the Netherlands. These youth often have bad contact with their parents, are dropouts and they are prone to seek bad friends. As a consequence farm care programs, that make use of the green environment are considered as new treatment options for these youngsters and could give them a new future. Yearly more than 200 children aged between 8 and 20 years are placed on about 100 youth care farms under supervision of a farmer and a social worker. After a survival training they work on the farm for six months in a program with structured tasks, outdoor activities and reflection moments. The family is always involved in the process. After the farm period the children practice the learned competencies in their own family environment.

In 2012-2013 52 participants (38 boys, 14 girls) aged between 13 and 18 years were for a half year placed on care farms of three care agencies in three regions of the province Noord-Brabant. At the start and the end of treatment the youngsters, their parents and the social workers filled out questionnaires about problem behaviour, coping styles, self-esteem, empowerment and parenting stress to determine if their problems reduced and their strengths improved during the care farm project.

During the training phase on the farm the child’s behavior problems and the parenting stress decreased and coping behaviour, self-esteem and empowerment of youth and parents increased significantly. Further society relevant topics as parental contact, school or work, a structured leisure time and drugs/alcohol are also measured at the start and the end of the care farm project. Negative aspects like substance abuse reduced during treatment and positive aspects like better parental contact and school attendance improved.

Youth care on the farm seems to be a promising new care to treat youth with several problems and give them a new perspective in life. For some youngsters youth farm care could be a good alternative for residential care, which is for instance more costly for society.

In the presentation the authors will present information about theoretical background of experiential learning, the participants, the working elements of the care farm project and outcomes.
Looking Back and Moving Forward: Developing a Human Rights based approach to historical institutional abuse of children in Scotland

Speakers & Authors: Moyra Hawthorn

While recognising that many people have had positive, warm and nurturing experiences in residential care as children, since the 1980s in jurisdictions across the world there have been a number of people coming forward reporting 'historical' institutional abuse. There are however many narratives and histories; those of care leavers and survivors of institutional abuse, of residential practitioners and managers, of providers of care services, many of whom no longer provide child care services as well as present day managers who have responsibility to respond to residents of the past who want to approach the agency that holds their childhood while caring for the children and young people in care today and in the future.

This presentation describes a Human Rights based approach to developing an Action Plan on Justice for Victims of Historic Abuse of Children in Care. Scottish Human Rights Commission worked in partnership with the Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland (CELCIS) to bring together those 'stakeholders' in the process and hold an Interaction, a form of community dialogue. The views of survivors of institutional abuse, care providers and former care providers, present day residential practitioners and managers, as well as representatives of statutory agencies, government, religious and professional bodies have been actively involved. Individuals and groups of stakeholders have been able to contribute, sharing experiences and concerns, having an opportunity to understand perspectives while respecting the rights of other parties in the process as the Action Plan has developed.

This presentation will briefly explain the background to the Interaction then will describe the process, the challenges and the opportunities presented of adopting a human rights approach, concluding with the Action Plan and way forward in Scotland for addressing historical abuse of children in care.
Building on “effective ingredients” in family collaboration and therapy: a key to strengthening the social capital of children and adolescents in residential care

Speakers & Authors: Kristina Wimberley, Poul Ertner

Aim/objectives: The purpose of the presentation is to share ongoing efforts to strengthen and develop the way staff collaborate with and treat the families of children and adolescents in residential care in the context of one of the world's largest social welfare departments (Copenhagen municipality, Denmark). It is argued that strengthening “effective ingredients” in praxis that are context dependent and experience-based is key to enhancing the social capital of disadvantaged children and adolescents (cf. Gilligan 2012).

Methods: Based on a mixed methods and participatory study among 24 residential institutions six “effective ingredients” and supportive factors in family collaboration and therapy were identified. As a first step to strengthening praxis, these findings will be disseminated to practitioners within the residential institutions and to key collaborators within the Social Welfare department (preventive services, foster care and authority in June 2014.

Data: In the autumn of 2013, the current praxis regarding family collaboration and therapy in 24 different residential institutions was mapped in two ways:
- A qualitative exploration of praxis in five selected residential institutions
- A review of praxis in all 24 institutions

In order to enhance the utility and applicability of the study's findings, the study design was very participatory involving many parts of the organisation.

Key findings: Much current praxis regarding family collaboration and therapy in the municipality's residential institutions is oriented towards enhancing the social capital of children and adolescents in residential care, in its focus on strengthening the ties between children and their parents (cf. Gilligan 2012) as well as parental competences. This is achieved by working with six “effective ingredients” in the daily practice within institution, in the homes of parents and other social arenas. "Effective ingredients” can create a common focus in praxis across a range of methods, theories, programs and interventions.

The study also found a need to ensure the quality of family collaboration and therapy across all 24 institutions in the municipality and a common language/understanding between professionals across the organisation. This study can contribute to this.

Key words: Effective ingredients, family collaboration and therapy, residential care, social capital
Psychometric properties and sensitivity to change of the Dutch version of the Self-Sufficiency Matrix (SSM-D) in a residential setting

Speakers & Authors: Marc Delsing, Ans Dekker

An increasingly important outcome variable for evaluating the effectiveness of youth care in the Netherlands is former clients' ability to provide for themselves regarding specific life domains (e.g., housing, social support, mental health) without further requirement of any professional assistance. To assess individuals' functioning on these domains, Lauriks and colleagues (2010) have developed the self-sufficiency matrix SSM-D, which is a Dutch adaptation of the Utah- and Arizona-versions of the SSM developed in the US. Despite its quickly increasing popularity with practitioners, researchers, and policy makers, support for the psychometric properties of the instrument is still limited. There are currently no studies on the psychometric properties of the US versions of the SSM. The only published study on the psychometric properties of the Dutch version was partly carried out by the developers themselves (Fassaert et al., 2013). In two mental health care settings, they found support for adequate psychometric properties of the SSM-D. Further research, however, is needed to establish the generalizability of Fassaert et al.'s findings to other settings (e.g., residential youth care). Moreover, the authors used cross-sectional data only, which preclude conclusions regarding the sensitivity to change of the instrument.

In this contribution, findings of a study on the psychometric properties and sensitivity to change of the SSM-D in a Dutch youth residential setting will be presented. Data were collected for 307 adolescents and young adults. For 203 clients, ratings were available at both the beginning and end of treatment. In addition, pre- post-treatment data were available of the CBCL, YSR, and ASR. Analyses indicate adequate psychometric properties (internal consistency, convergent validity) of the SSM-D. Also, the instrument proves to be sensitive to change, which is an important characteristic of an outcome measure if it is to be used to evaluate clients' responsiveness to treatment. Altogether our findings suggest that the SSM-D is a valid and reliable measure to evaluate individuals' (changes in) functioning on a broad range of life domains targeted by youth care interventions. Implications for youth care practice, research, and policy will be discussed.
Age-specific exit rates from residential care

**Speakers & Authors:** Eric van Santen

Analyzing age-specific hazard rates can give a clue what the vulnerable age periods for specific transitions out of residential care are. Little is known about the connection between age at entry, age at exit and exit type since study observation periods are usually short and often focus on specific age groups at entry as well as single exit types (mostly reunification).

The data stems from a exit cohort (N=44,721). Event history analysis is used to determine age-specific hazard rates. Rates of different exit types are compared.

The period immediately following the start of residential care is one of the hazard rate peaks for all age groups. In the first year after the start of care, the hazard rates of all age groups decline almost continuously, at different levels and stay stable afterwards. Independent of age at entry age-specific hazard rates tend most notably to rise again after the children passed their 15th birthday. Hazard rates for reunification are highest for young children shortly after admission and decrease continuously. Older children, who have been in care for longer periods, have high hazard rates for entry into (other) residential care as well as emancipation from care.

As the rate for reunification is especially high during the first months of care, child welfare services should keep intensive contact with parents. Whereas in adolescence with higher rates of exit to emancipation and (other) residential care, intensified contacts should be established with the youth themselves to potentially avoid placement instability and prepare youth for emancipation.
Rekruttering av fosterforeldre - hvordan best nå frem til flere egnede fosterforeldre?

Speakers & Authors: Hedvig Torvik Nilsen


Keywords: Barnevern, fosterhjem, rekruttering, rekrutteringsstrategier.
Familiepleje: forskellige tilgange og deres implikationer

Parental Approval of Foster Home

*Speakers & Authors: Irene Wormdahl*

Before a child can be placed in foster care in Norway, the Child Welfare Service has to perform a specific approval of the foster home pursuant to prevailing regulations. The Linnea Resource Centre in Tonsberg, Norway, has developed an intervention called "Parental approval of foster home", where the biological parents make the final approval of the foster home for their child. This project aimed at providing insight into how parents experience this approval process and what impact it has on their further engagement and cooperation with the foster home and the child.

The study was conducted as part of a master's thesis at the Child and Adolescent Mental Health at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), Faculty of Medicine, Regional Centre for Child and Youth Mental Health and Child Welfare.

The study had a qualitative approach. Using a semi-structured interview guide, three biological mothers were interviewed about their personal experiences as participants in the parental approval of foster home process. The data material was structured into four categories that formed the basis for the analysis:
- Mothers' experience of the approval meeting.
- Mothers' experience of personal significance.
- Mothers' perception of the significance for the children.
- Mothers' perception of significance for further cooperation.

For the three informants who participated in this study, the data indicates that the parental approval of foster home had a positive impact on their experience and perception of the foster care process. They also narrated positive effects related to their own mental health in areas such as self-esteem and experience of inclusion. In mothers' perception this intervention had positive significance for the children by facilitating the moving process and for the child to settle down in their foster home. There are indications that this intervention facilitated future cooperation.

Parental approval of foster home is an intervention that can constitute part of the process before the child moves into the foster home. This study draws attention to the voice of the biological parents and shows that parental involvement and participation is possible, and maybe even positive, in an area where Child Welfare Services traditionally exerts considerable influence.

Key words: Parental approval, foster home, Child Welfare Service
Overgange fra anbringelse til voksenliv: udfordringer og muligheder

En ny vej for effektive alliancer mellem den offentlige- og den frivillige sektor? Samarbejde mellem kommuner og frivillige organisationer om efterværn for tidligere anbragte unge

Speakers & Authors: Kirstine Karmsteen, Sanne Bruun

I dette speciale undersøger vi samarbejdet mellem kommuner og frivillige organisationer omkring efterværn til tidligere anbragte unge. Målet for specialet er at afdække barrierer for samarbejdet mellem kommuner og frivillige organisationer. Hvilke udfordringer er der i selve interaktionen mellem parterne – og hvilke udfordringer er der internt i hver organisation, der påvirker samarbejdet mellem organisationerne?


Formålet med samarbejdsprojekterne er at give tidligere anbragte unge, som ikke tilbydes eller ikke ønsker at modtage kommunalt efterværn, en anden form for tilbud om støtte. Målgruppen er unge i alderen 16-23 år, der har været eller ophører med at være anbragt, og som ikke tilbydes eller ikke ønsker at benytte sig af de tilbud om støtte, som findes i deres bopælskommune.

Vores hidtidige resultater peger på, at organisatoriske omstruktureringer, i form af fx udskiftninger af ledere eller andet personale inden for såvel kommunen som det frivillige projekt, udgør en central barriere i samarbejdet mellem kommuner og frivillige organisationer i samarbejdet omkring efterværn til de tidligere anbragte unge.
Sundhed og trivsel blandt anbragte børn

Ohälsa bland barn i fosterhem - en utmaning för de nordiska länderna

Speakers & Authors: Eyvind Elgesem, Fredrik Hjulström


Kunskapsläget

Nordisk forskning tyder på att barn i fosterhem är en högriskgrupp för somatisk ohälsa. De annars välfungerande hälsokontroller som alla barn får, fångar inte upp dessa barn i tillräcklig omfattning. Kunskapen om förekomst av somatisk ohälsa i vuxen åldersgrupp hos barn som vuxit upp i fosterhem är låg. Två norska registerstudier fann att det var vanligare att fosterbarn i vuxen ålder uppbara sjukersättning för kroniska hälsoproblem, jämfört med jämnåriga.


Kunskapen om hur barnens psykiska hälsa utvecklas under pågående vård är bristfällig. Studier har dock visat nerslående resultat. Nordiska registerstudier har visat på mycket höga överrisker för allvarlig psykisk ohälsa för vuxna fosterbarn.

Denna kunskap ställer de nordiska länderna inför ett mycket allvarligt etiskt dilemma som bör leda till systematiska förbättringar av hälsohändelsetagandet av fosterbarn. Under presentationen kommer vi diskutera hur det kan göras.

Förbättringsförslag vi diskuterar
- Ge hälsokontroller till alla barn vid placering.
- Bevaka placerade barns somatiska hälsa.
- Standardiserad undersökning av psykisk hälsa
- Rådgivande samtal om psykisk hälsa som rutin vid utskrivning av äldre tonåringar.

Nyckelord: Fosterbarn, hälsa
Wednesday, 3rd September | Social Work (Symposium) | 10.30

Social work and welfare policy

Child Social Work Practice & EBIs: Where’s the Fit? What’s the Future?

Symposium Co-ordinator: Patricia Chamberlain

The symposium will address the topic of developing evidence-based case worker practices that optimize relationships with children and parents (foster, biological, adoptive, and relative) and how these can be integrated with EBI's that have been successfully implemented in the child welfare system. The overarching aim of the integrated approach is to achieve positive outcomes on child and family well-being.
Social work and welfare policy

Development of an Evidence Base for Social Work Practice in Child Welfare

*Speakers & Authors: Patricia Chamberlain, Bryan Samuels, Lisa Saldana, Fred Wulczyn*

**Aim:** Recently, there has been increased awareness and subsequent significant opportunity to implement a policy and practice agenda to improve social, emotional, physical, and educational outcomes for children, youth, and families involved in the child welfare system (CWS). Examples exist across the country of promising federal, state, and local efforts on which to build. Under the leadership of the Administration on Children, Youth and Families (ACYF) at the U.S. Health and Human Services the role of academic research on child welfare practice was elevated as was the importance of child well-being as a primary outcome of concern for child welfare practice with children in out-of-home care. The initiative calls for CWSs to be proactive in using research to enhance their capacities for making informed assessments and provision of services. This work emphasizes the emergence of a cutting-edge body of scholarship in evidence-based interventions and neuroscience. The potential for innovative contributions to understanding the effects of maltreatment on child development and efforts to integrate evidence-based interventions into child welfare practice will be described.

**Methods:** Social work practice in CWSs includes the implementation of standardized procedures and tasks designed to further and monitor the progress of children and families designed to promote safety, permanency, and child well-being. In enacting these, social workers have numerous contacts with the children and with their caretakers including foster parents, parents (biological and adoptive), and relatives. The importance of caseworker relationships with children, caretakers and potential permanency resources has been well documented in numerous qualitative studies. Absent, are well specified, theoretically based, testable practice interventions for building and maintaining supportive relationships between caseworkers and the key consumers of child welfare services.

**Design:** This presentation will focus on a design that tests the independent contribution of a theoretically based strategy for improving practice relationships among key stakeholders (child, foster parents, parents, relatives) with the implementation of linked evidence-based interventions shown to improve child, parenting, and system outcomes.

**Key Findings:** An example will be presented of a preliminary integration of practice and intervention models.
Linked Evidence-Based Interventions

_Speakers & Authors: Patricia Chamberlain, Lisa Saldana, Fred Wulczyn_

**Aims/Objective:** To describe the use of linked evidence-based interventions in the context of a foster care reform effort in the New York City Administration for Children's Services (ACS) to achieve a reduction in the following outcomes: a) census of children in foster care, b) placement disruptions (lateral moves), c) the number of placement days, d) the number of re-entries into care. Achieving the 17% targets in these outcomes would make the reform effort cost neutral. Two evidence-based interventions were chosen to achieve these targets: KEEP (Keeping foster and kinship parents trained and supported) and PMTO (Parenting Through Change to support and increase skills of biological parents). These interventions are linked in that they are based on the same (social learning) theory, use similar intervention components, use a common fidelity monitoring system, and the initial training and ongoing consultation of case workers and supervisors is coordinated. The start-up time for this system reform was 5 months from conceptualization, design, agency selection, planning/readiness, fidelity monitoring system design, to caseworker training.

**Methods:** Formal and informal mechanisms of communication and collaboration will be described including initial agency visits to obtain buy in, on-site training in the intervention models, weekly consultation for quality improvement, use of observations to rate model fidelity, data on child behavioral/emotional adjustment and parenting behaviors and mechanisms of feedback to agencies. In addition bi-monthly policy calls, and monthly all agency meetings will be discussed and examples of the types of problems addressed within those meetings will be described including issues related to logistics, budget, technology challenges, staffing/caseload, and how agencies are being held accountable for outcomes.

**Results:** Data that are feedback to the agencies and ACS on observed fidelity, child behavioral/emotional adjustment, parenting behaviors and consultation model adherence will be presented. The agency's level of engagement in the consultation process and with data uploads will be discussed. The relationship between model fidelity and system-level outcomes will be discussed.
Finding the Impact of At-Scale Evidence Based Interventions

Speakers & Authors: Fred Wulczyn

Aim:
Implementation of evidence based interventions (EBIs) faces at least two significant hurdles. The first is the problem of scale; the second is the problem of impact. The two problems go hand-in-hand. An EBI delivered at scale is expected to have impact at scale.

An evaluation of an at-scale implementation of an EBI in a large city in the U.S will be described. Initiated by the public agency, interventions were selected to improve the well-being of children. The public agency promoted the practice changes because leadership believed the impact would be measured at a comparable scale. This presentation will describe how we addressed the implicit evaluation challenges of this strategy.

Design and Methods:
The EBI was implemented at a significant scale, limiting opportunities for more traditional evaluation designs using comparison groups/random assignment. Rather, a multiple baseline design was employed to detect whether, relative to the past, performance differed from what would have been expected under a business as usual design. Further, we adopted a unique dose/response model for understanding when treatment was administered and whether the receipt of treatment improved outcomes. Innovative strategies were used for establishing what is likely to happen as a counterfactual against which to compare what did happen.

Key findings:
We found what we believe is a reasonable model for detecting at-scale impact outside a traditional evaluation design. If so, this will be one potential solution to a major public policy problem. When public agencies launch an EBI they do so in a context that differs from the controlled conditions of a laboratory; impact on outcomes is as, if not more, important. The question has long been - how do we measure with confidence the magnitude of what happened relative to what might have otherwise happened absent a controlled experiment. Without a solution to this problem, policy-makers, practitioners, and social scientist are left to speculate about impact. Further, from a methodological perspective we implemented the multiple baseline design, with an emphasis dose/response to the treatment model. Our results are based on an intent to treat analysis.
Pulling from Linked EBPs to Inform Caseworker Practice: The R3 Strategy

**Speakers & Authors:** Lisa Saldana, Patricia Chamberlain

**Aim:** The primary point of contact between children and families with the child welfare system is through their caseworker. For families involved in the foster care system, children as well as their biological, foster, and/or adoptive parents are all provided a set of expectations and services to help guide a case toward permanency. However, the manner in which these expectations and services are delivered varies greatly between caseworkers. This presentation will describe one strategy, R3, developed out of shared strength-focused principles of evidence-based practices focused on positive parenting for biological and foster caregivers.

**Methods:** The R3 strategy was built by pulling from the common foundational principles of two linked EBPs for biological and foster parents: (1) Reinforcement of relationships and roles (e.g., between caseworkers and caregivers, caregivers and children, supervisors and caseworkers), (2) Reinforcement of small steps, and (3) Reinforcement of effort. Focusing on these three key areas of reinforcement, a caseworker strategy was designed to impact each level of relationship in the hierarchy of a foster care agency (e.g., supervisor to caseworker, caseworker to parent).

**Research Design/Data:** This presentation will provide qualitative data from a small sample of 5 agencies that piloted the R3 strategy. Real-world examples of how R3 can enhance the positive culture of an agency and emphasize the role of caseworkers in assisting families toward meeting their goals will be described. The consultation and fidelity monitoring process will be highlighted.

**Key Findings:** Qualitative interviews from agency leadership and supervisors suggest increased positivity in interactions between agency staff and the families with whom they work. Although qualitative data indicate initial hesitation from agency staff in accepting the R3 strategy, participants from all 5 agencies reported positive results and satisfaction with using R3 after several months of training and consultation. Outcomes suggest promise in using evidence-based principles from practices that target caregivers involved in the child welfare system, to inform strategies for every day interactions with caseworkers.
Transitions out of care: challenges and opportunities

Young People with a disability transitioning from Out-of-home Care in Victoria

Speakers & Authors: Philip Mendes

Young people transitioning from out-of-home care are one of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in society. Those with disabilities have particular and complex needs, and face additional barriers compared to other care leavers in terms of accessing assistance. As a result, they are a high risk group for poor outcomes. Phase two of this qualitative study involved interviews with approximately 15 care leavers with a disability to examine their needs and experiences of transitioning from out-of-home care in the Australian State of Victoria. Our findings suggest a number of key policy and practice reforms are required to improve outcomes for this group of care leavers.
Moving On? Researching the characteristics and experiences of disabled care leavers

Speakers & Authors: Berni Kelly, Theresa McShane

Aims and objectives:
This paper will present the findings of a review of national and international research on disabled care leavers. The literature review has been undertaken as part of a current study investigating the characteristics and experiences of disabled care leavers in Northern Ireland. The aim of the literature review was threefold: firstly, to establish the extent of existing empirical research related to disabled care leavers or care leavers with mental health needs; secondly, to review the findings of previous research in this area; and thirdly, to identify gaps in knowledge of relevance to the current study.

Methods:
The review of literature was guided by clear inclusion and exclusion criteria and utilized combinations of a range of search terms to identify relevant literature. The review included research focused on disabled care leavers and care leavers with mental health needs. A range of sources and publication formats were considered, with journal articles and research reports comprising the main body of literature.

Key findings:
The presentation will report on the key findings from the review of literature, highlighting key trends and outcomes for disabled care leavers. The research indicates that disabled young people are over-represented in the leaving care population; experience multiple levels of adversity and exclusion as they move into young adult life; and are likely to require continued support during transition and in young adult life. Yet there is limited consideration of their care leaving experiences in the research literature. The paper will also critically review the range of available research in this area and key methodological approaches utilized. Finally, priority areas for the further development of research on the experiences of disabled care leavers will be presented, including the need for participatory research approaches that seek the views of disabled young people as they transition from the public care system into young adult life.

Keywords:
Leaving care, disability and mental health.
Transitions out of care: challenges and opportunities

'Skydiving without a parachute': A Case Study of youth transitions from out of home care in mainland China

Speakers & Authors: Claire Ting Zhao, John Pinkerton, Stan Houston

The transition of young people from out of home care has received increasing attention internationally. It has been reported that young people in care tend to have poorer outcomes than those who have not been looked after in out of home care. One country in which there has been very little written about these challenging transitions is mainland China.

This paper reports on a study which is trying to interpret the meaning of 'transition from out of home care' through the exploration of the life experience of looked after youth when they are facing the transition. The research is designed as a qualitative case study. Through semi-structured interviews, participant observation and document analysis, the research aim to provide an insight into the experience and expectations of a group of youth coming to the end of their time in residential care in northwest China. The study has a focus on 12 young people and 4 care workers. Opinions from both young people and care workers are collected in order to understand the transition experience.

The experience of transition from out of home care in China shows a similarity to other national transition research. It is clear that education is a very important feature as a key indicator of the likely quality of a young person's life after leaving care. Culture is another factor which plays a significant role in the lives of these young people as they prepare to make their transition into adulthood.
Yasmeen’s case: How cultural values promote the return of female care leavers as adult clients

Speakers & Authors: Rawan Ibrahim, Jude Batayneh

Purpose: The known challenges faced by young people ageing out of substitute care systems are exacerbated in Jordan. The main source of support and value of the individual depends on the collective family identity (Ibrahim, 2010). This follow-up qualitative study examines developments in participants’ lives since the first interview.

Methods: Recognising limitations of single point research, a follow-up study is currently in progress. Purposive sampling is used to recruit 42 care-leavers to participate in semi-structured interviews conducted in Arabic (n=42). Participants are 50% female, between age 23 - 33. A grounded theory analytical framework is employed.

Findings: The distinctive influence on pathways, was found to be the extra challenges and benefits resulting from the cultural context. Jordanian society is family oriented and patriarchal. It has a collective identity with deep-rooted values based on notions of honour. The tradition of supporting strangers lacking their own natural support network contributed to positive outcomes, however the pervasive challenge is embedded in their enforced individuality within a collective society. Generally care leavers are stigmatised and linked to notions of dishonour. The paper presents the case of Yasmeen; a participant in both the first and follow-up studies. Her experience represents the cycle of being ‘cast away’ in an institution due to being born to an unwed mother, and later getting pregnant out of marriage and having her son removed from her and placed in an institution.

Implications: Yasmeen’s case elucidates patriarchal and cultural values that lead to many children being abandoned in the first place, and that also penalises those same children and young women when they leave care and attempt to function in the everyday adult world that forbids them of being part of the fabric of society, and views them as ‘daughters of sin’. Given the shared patriarchal culture evident throughout the Middle East, the results of the study can inform policy and practice development in the region. Additionally, it offers understanding for western professionals working with Middle Eastern communities. Theoretical implications focus on the inclusion of the cultural context within frameworks pertaining to care leavers.
Reclaiming Lost Childhoods: Access to Records and Information about Care Services

Speakers & Authors: Andrew Kendrick, Moyra Hawthorn, Julie Shaw, Samina Karim

A significant number of people have experienced residential and foster care over the past 75 years. Many will have had positive experiences in care. Others, however, may have suffered abuse and neglect. Care leavers and survivors of historic abuse have stressed how important information about care placements and access to records is for their sense of identity and their mental well-being. This presentation will report the findings of an interactive seminar series which brought together care leavers, survivors of historic abuse, child care professionals, archivists, care records managers and historians. Five seminars were held and focused on the topics of: information about care services, access to records, redaction of records, and support services for care leavers. The seminars took the form of presentations, interactive table-top workshops and small group discussions. All the presentations, discussions and workshop materials were recorded, analysed and written up. Care leavers and survivors highlighted the difficulties of tracing information about their care placements and accessing their personal records. Many residential establishments have closed down and records have been lost, destroyed or are difficult to access. Information about foster placements is also very difficult to find. Care leavers identified long delays in accessing their records, frustration at records which have parts blacked out or redacted, as well as the emotional stress of reading their records. We identified examples of positive practice in supporting care leavers through the process of finding out information about their past and helping them to understand their childhood. This included the work of child care professionals and counsellors, child records managers and archivists. Examples of the development of comprehensive databases of care services were shared, and the way in which these can provide a portal for accessing personal records. Understanding was developed about the legal framework for the sharing of information and best practice when care leavers request access to their records. The findings have significant implications for current policy and practice, and the long-term health and well-being of care leavers.
Bridging the gap between research, policy and practice

Child and family assessments: research on parental capacity to change and social work decision-making processes

Symposium Co-ordinator: Emily Munro

Since 2010 the Childhood Wellbeing Research (CWRC), a partnership between the Institute of Education, Loughborough University and the University of Kent, has been commissioned by the Department for Education to contribute to evidence-informed policy development. The symposium presents findings from four CWRC studies, including:

- A literature review on decision-making within a child’s timeframe and the impact of abuse and neglect in the early years
- An overview of research evidence on assessing parental capacity to change when children are on the edge of care
- A study examining early implementation of changes in child and family assessment practices in England
- An empirical mixed methods study examining the uses, costs and contributions that residential parenting assessments make to timely decision making in care proceedings

The symposium will examine strengths and limitations in assessments of children in need and their families, and in social work and court decision-making processes. Implications for social work policy and practice in the context of the Munro Review of Child Protection and the Family Justice Review will also be examined.
Bridging the gap between research, policy and practice

Decision-making within a child's timeframe

Speakers & Authors: Rebecca Brown, Harriet Ward

Evidence concerning the impact of abuse and neglect in the early years points to the importance of taking swift and decisive action when very children are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. The decisions made by professionals who have safeguarding responsibilities are extremely difficult and will have long-term consequences for children's life chances. Moreover intense public interest means that those who make the decisions can be publicly vilified by the media both if they are perceived as having left children too long in dangerous situations or as having removed them unnecessarily from their families.

The findings from a literature review that aimed to bring together key research evidence about safeguarding decisions will be outlined. These include a focus on the following: neuroscience perspectives on children's cognitive, social and emotional development; the implications of maltreatment on childhood and adulthood wellbeing; evidence on the outcomes of intervention by the courts and children's social care; timeframes for intervening and how they fit (or don't) with those for children.

Illustrations will also be taken from a prospective longitudinal study of the decision-making process influencing the life pathways and developmental progress of a sample of very young children who were identified as suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm before their first birthdays and have now been followed until they are seven. The data presented include findings from qualitative interviews with parents/carers and also key practitioners and decision makers within child welfare agencies in England.

This presentation draws attention to the mismatch between timeframes for professional decision-making and early childhood development when very small children are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. Implications for policy and practice are discussed.
Bridging the gap between research, policy and practice

Assessing Parental Capacity to Change when Children are on the Edge of Care: An overview of research evidence

Speakers & Authors: Harriet Ward, Georgia Hyde-Dryden

When children are on the edge of care, one of the most difficult decisions for social work practitioners and the courts is whether parents have the capacity to change their behaviour within a child's timeframe, or whether it is in the best interests of the child to be placed away from home. This presentation will discuss a recent overview of current research evidence on parental capacity to change incorporating a search of the peer reviewed literature and collation of expert knowledge. The overview is aimed at social workers and other professionals involved in assessing whether parents are able to change their behaviours within a child’s timeframe, and brings together key research messages from a number of disciplines not easily available in one location to practitioners. It is intended to assist social workers in delivering robust assessments and legal professionals in evaluating those assessments where a decision is taken to commence court proceedings.

The overview highlights evidence of the range and complex combination of problems that parents face, and the potential long-term negative impact that abuse and neglect can have on children's development and into their adult lives. It underlines the need for assessments of parental capacity to change to reflect the complex reality of child protection cases and draws together research evidence concerning factors either promoting or inhibiting change such as motivation, resistance, ambivalence, engagement and relapse. The overview considers the use of evidence-based tools and standardised measures to inform professional decision-making, and the role of case conceptualisation and conceptual frameworks in the analysis of parents' capability and capacity to change. The research evidence relating to interventions is considered including the evidence for specific parenting interventions. The overview also highlights the importance of social workers understanding how to interpret the evidence base relating to different interventions.
New child and family assessment practices in response to the Munro Review of Child Protection: messages from the pilots

Speakers & Authors: Emily Munro

The Munro Review of Child Protection recommended reducing statutory guidance on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, in order to promote local autonomy, and increase the scope for practitioners to exercise their professional judgement. Proposed measures included: removing the distinction between initial and in-depth assessments of children in need and their families; and removing the requirement to complete these assessments with specified timeframes (10 working days for an initial assessment and 35 working days for an in-depth assessment). In 2011 the Secretary of State for Education issued formal directions to eight local authorities to test more flexible assessment practices.

The Department for Education (DfE) commissioned the Childhood Wellbeing Research Centre (CWRC) to undertake the first independent evaluation of the new arrangements. A mixed methodology was adopted to examine the impact that local determination of timescales for assessments has had upon social work practice and service responses to safeguard children from harm. The research team undertook analysis of all the documentation that the eight trial authorities supplied to the DfE, in order to facilitate exploration of the strengths and limitations of the new models of delivery. This was complemented by in-depth work in three of the trial authorities, which included: scrutiny of assessments and case records; interviews strategic and operational managers in children's social care services and; interviews with social workers.

The paper will explore past practice, the rationale for reform and similarities and differences in professional perspectives about the strengths and limitations of the new arrangements. Findings revealed that reduced prescription has the potential to contribute to the production of more thorough assessments. Firstly, it increases the scope for additional visits to the child, family or extended family network to explain what is happening, build rapport and trust, collect and clarify information. Secondly, it means that there is longer for social workers to assess parental engagement with services and scope for change to inform the assessment process. However, a critical foundation for the realisation of these benefits is the skill and capacity of individual workers and the wider organisational context in which they are operating.
Wednesday, 3rd September | Bridging the Gap (Symposium) | 15.00

Bridging the gap between research, policy and practice

Residential parenting assessments: uses, costs and contributions to effective and timely decision making

Speakers & Authors: Emily Munro, Katie Hollingworth

The Family Justice Review highlighted the need for timely decision-making and high quality assessments in care proceedings. The Review raised concerns about the value added by residential parenting assessments, particularly set against the costs involved. The Childhood Wellbeing Research Centre was commissioned by the Department for Education to undertake a study to examine whether these assessments are a true and reliable test of parenting capacity.

A mixed methods approach was adopted to meet the aims above. A national online survey was distributed to Assistant Directors of Children’s Social Care services to obtain data on: expenditure on residential parenting assessments, policy and practice regarding the commissioning of residential parenting assessments; and perceived strengths and limitations of residential parenting assessments. In-depth research was also undertaken in three local authorities. This included: scrutiny of a random sample of 32 residential parenting assessments concluded in the year ending 31 March 2012 (and accompanying case records); interviews with social workers to explore similarities and differences in professional perspectives on these cases, and to examine services and support provided pre- and post-assessment.

Data from the study are currently being analysed. The paper will present findings from the research and will: explore similarities and differences in patterns of use of, and expenditure on, residential parenting assessments in different local authorities; examine residential assessment recommendations (remain with parents or separation) and subsequent court decisions (align with or deviate from assessment recommendations); and assist with understanding whether judgements of parental capacity made as a result of residential assessments are an accurate predictor of actual parenting capacity once a child returns home (reliability and sustainability of plans).
Evidence-based practice and implementation

Implementing, Evaluating and Sustaining a Research and Principle-based Program model in Residential Care with Children and Adolescents: Learning from the Cornell CARE Program Experience

Symposium Co-ordinator: James Anglin

This symposium will present the latest research findings from the ongoing comprehensive evaluation of the Children and Residential Experiences (CARE) Model, a research-informed, principle-based, multi-component program designed to build the capacity of residential care and treatment organizations to serve the best interests of the children. The CARE model incorporates well-established findings from the social sciences literature into six basic principles that are developmentally-focused, family-involved, relationship-based, competency-centered, trauma-informed, and ecologically-oriented. The model’s aim is to bring agencies’ functions closer to well-researched best practices and to help them achieve organizational and practice congruence in the best interests of children.

The biggest challenge next to implementation is sustaining such principles and practices. This symposium will compare and contrast a four-year quasi-experimental evaluation of 14 agencies with the findings of several qualitative studies, and one case study utilizing administrative data. These studies investigate the impact of the CARE program model on child and organizational outcomes, the process of organizational change, the management of complexity, and the characteristics of leadership required for sustainability. The symposium’s goal is to offer a multi-method assessment and exploration of lessons learned in implementation and evaluation, that provides a roadmap to the sustainability of evidence informed and evidence based models.
Evidence-based practice and implementation

Overview of the CARE Model Implementation and Research Program

Speakers & Authors: Martha Holden

The Children and Residential Experiences (CARE) is a research-informed, principle-based, multi-component program model designed to build the capacity of residential care and treatment organizations to serve the best interests of the children. The six research- informed CARE principles are developmentally-focused, family-involved, relationship-based, competency-centered, trauma-informed, and ecologically-oriented and they support a theory of change (TOC) which outlines the causal pathways by which CARE is expected to improve socio-emotional and developmental outcomes for children. CARE's TOC lays the foundation for quality therapeutic residential care and provides a working model to guide agency planning and evaluation throughout the stages of implementation and sustainability. The six principles are applied throughout the organization to inform adult-to-adult interactions and adult-to-child interactions, guide data-informed decision-making, and set priorities for serving the best interests of the children. By incorporating the principles throughout all levels of the organization and into daily practice, an organizational culture is developed to help sustain the implementation of the principles.

This presentation will provide an overview of how the CARE model is implemented and sustained through research-informed strategies such as organizational and personal self-assessment, data analysis, training, and technical assistance. This strategy includes training that addresses all levels of the organization and provides guidance about how to apply CARE principles in daily practice. Organizational technical assistance helps agency leadership and supervisors build commitment to the CARE principles, develop and communicate the vision to establish congruence to the CARE principles throughout the organization and facilitate, reinforce and sustain that vision. Through a process of self-reflection, agencies establish structures and processes for improving collaboration, identifying barriers to integrating and sustaining CARE principles, and planning strategies for resolving those barriers, and facilitating practices to encourage data utilization.
Wednesday, 3rd September | Evidence-based Practice (Symp) | 15.00

Evidence-based practice and implementation

Year 4 results from the quasi-experimental study of the CARE program

Speakers & Authors: Charles Izzo, James Anglin

The current paper presents preliminary results from the Year 4 data of our 14-site evaluation of Children and Residential Experiences (CARE), a program that helps residential care agencies follow a set of evidence-informed principles in order to improve their child care practice and overall child well-being.

We present a theory of change (TOC) that forms the framework for our measurement and evaluation strategy. We then describe our quasi-experimental design and the methods used for measuring change across several dimensions within our agencies. These include quantitative survey instruments assessing staff beliefs about child development and effective child care practices, staff use of effective child care practices, youth perceptions about relationships with staff, youth social and emotional adjustment and dimensions of organizational functioning that are known to affect service quality. We also collected data on serious behavioral incidents from agencies' administrative databases. We will describe characteristics of the agencies, child-care staff, and youth who participated in the study. Study results will include a description the patterns of change that were evident over the four year assessment period. Findings will be presented in aggregate, and also separately by agency and by demographic subgroup so that the variation in findings can be seen. The variation in outcomes across agencies will be discussed with regard to the different events and conditions occurring in the agencies that influenced the ways in which implementation occurred. We will also highlight the challenges of conducting a sound evaluation within the complex and changing environment of residential childcare agencies.
Evidence-based practice and implementation

The Process of CARE Implementation and the Managing of Complexity in Residential Care with Children and Adolescents

Speakers & Authors: Martha Holden, Frank Kuhn, James Anglin

There is a developing international consensus about some of the core elements of what is being called "therapeutic residential care", and a variety of models have been designed to offer a framework to guide agency staff in responding sensitively to young people suffering from complex trauma and a range of developmental and societal challenges. The CARE program model, which has been implemented in over 40 agencies in six countries, has engaged in evaluative research that has utilized various outcome measures, including the child Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), the Organizational Social Context measure (OSC), a worker knowledge, beliefs and assumptions inventory, and youth perception survey instrument (YPS). Some of these instruments are standardized and well-validated, while others are in the process of becoming so.

This presentation will complement a discussion of the quantitative results of such measures with findings from qualitative analyses of the experiences of implementation drawn from a grounded theory study, the direct experiences of agency leaders, and the assessments of technical facilitators supporting ongoing implementation of the CARE model. Initial findings reveal some common elements across agencies in the "cycle of implementation", the importance of understanding and assessing adult mindset development across all staff levels and functions, and the relevance of complexity theory for analyzing agency administration.

The cycle of implementation can be seen as a specific instance of the "active learning cycle" which in this case encompasses elements of "buying in", "embracing", "understanding conceptually", "working through", "experiencing effectiveness" and "gaining confidence". The work of Robert Kegan and Lisa Lahey (2009) has proven its relevance by offering an understanding of adult mindset development that supports the tasks of CARE implementation and sustainability. It is evident that learning to implement a principle-based program model requires an ability to respond to complexity. Principles of therapeutic care can be seen to be closely aligned with principles of complexity because residential care with children and youth is not rocket science: it's far more complex than that!
Evidence-based practice and implementation

A case study in using critical incident administrative data to measure implementation and sustainability

Speakers & Authors: William Martin, Michael Nunno, James Anglin

Although quasi-experimental and experimental designs to test the efficacy and utility of program and treatment models on therapeutic organizations and ultimately child well-being are currently given pre-eminence, single case studies using both qualitative and quantitative methods can illustrate the subjective experiences of both staff and children within the organization. Using selected existing and long-term administrative data adds an important evidentiary dimension necessary for knowing the impact of program and treatment models on organizational culture and climate especially when those treatment and program models rely on building trauma-sensitive environments.

As part of the CARE program model's multi-method research and evaluation strategies, one agency that had implemented both of Cornell University's Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) prevention and management system and the CARE program model agreed to examine existing archives of administrative and quality-improvement data collected routinely over the past fifteen years. The agency selected serves children from ages 8 to 18 years in both therapeutic residential, shelter, and community settings and has a long-history of monitoring the quality of its services through consistent and extensive data-collection that make up external agency reports and organizational learning for its middle and upper management personnel.

As part of the overall symposium, this workshop will examine this one agency's administrative data for evidence that supports or nullifies the hypothesis that an effective crisis management system (TCI) in tandem with a principle-based program model (CARE) can decrease the frequency of physical interventions, emergency hospitalizations, runaways, police calls, and or negative discharges. The literature has speculated that low frequency levels of physical interventions, emergency psychiatric hospitalizations, runaways, police calls, and or negative discharges can be seen as markers for whether the culture and climate of a therapeutic environment is congruent with a trauma sensitive and developmentally informed treatment or program model. Added benefits are that this data was readily available to the team, consistently defined, accurate and gathered for at least two decades, thus lending to a natural pre-post implementation design. A popular software package using pre and post implementation trend analysis was employed.
Education of children in care and schooling as a protective factor

Experimental and Correlational Research to Improve the Educational Outcomes of Children in Care

Symposium Co-ordinator: Robert Flynn

Aim and objectives:
This symposium will consist of five papers from three countries, Sweden, Denmark, and Canada. The papers will present the results of a range of experimental and correlational studies aimed at improving the often problematic educational outcomes of children and adolescents residing in out-of-home care. The papers will cover the following topics: from Sweden, the findings from a study of paired reading; from Denmark, the design of a new, mixed-method randomized trial of the effects of tutoring; and from Canada, a study of the gender effects of a randomized trial of direct-instruction tutoring, as well as a joint presentation of the findings from two parallel studies of the educational trajectories of children in care aged, respectively, 5-9 and 10-15 years. The overall aim of the symposium is to present new knowledge that will contribute to improving the educational status of young people in care. The specific objectives are to present empirical findings on intervention-oriented as well as observational studies of the educational outcomes of young people in care and to draw out the implications of these findings for improved practice and policy.

Methods:
The papers in the symposium included both quantitative and mixed methods.

Research designs:
The studies included randomized control-group and single-group pre-pre-post designs as well as longitudinal latent-class analyses.

Key words: educational interventions, educational trajectories, children in care
Education of children in care and schooling as a protective factor

Effectiveness of a group-based tutorial direct instruction program with a Canadian-Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal sample of children in care

Speakers & Authors: Julie Harper, Fred Schmidt

Children in foster care are frequently behind in educational achievement (Flynn, Ghzal, Legault, Vandermeulen, & Petrick, 2004) and perform below grade level (Trout, Hagaman, Casey, Reid, & Epstein, 2008 for a review). Vacca (2008) found that children in foster care perform seven to eight percentile points lower in achievement test scores when compared to children in the general population. This study evaluated the effectiveness of a direct instruction literacy and math program (“Teach Your Children Well”; TYCW) in a small group format to educationally disadvantaged children in foster care. Across the two years of the study, 101 children in long-term foster care, 78.2% of which were Aboriginal Canadian, between grades 1 and 8 inclusive, participated in this randomized control trial intervention. Half were randomly assigned to the 30-week experimental TYCW condition, while the other half served as waitlist controls. Children were assessed at baseline and post-intervention on word reading, spelling, sentence comprehension, and mathematic skills using an academic measure of functioning, the Wide Range Achievement Test Forth Edition (WRAT4). An analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) demonstrated a statistically significant increase in standard scores on reading decoding, spelling and mathematic skills for those who received the tutoring. Meaningful effect sizes (small to moderate range) were also found in support of the tutoring intervention across these three domains. Furthermore, the results also indicated that condition predicted improvements in word reading for those with elevated levels of school instability, and a trend towards those with high inattention symptoms, as measured by the Conners’ ADHD/DSM-IV Scales (CADS). The implications of these findings as they relate to improving educational achievement among foster children are discussed.
Children living in foster care are a particularly vulnerable group of children that are at high-risk for experiencing a multitude of difficulties, including poor academic performance and achievement. Although the academic underachievement of foster children has been well-documented for decades, very few attempts have been made to address the problem. This is the second study to come out of the RESPs for Kids in Care research project, which represents one of three known randomized controlled trials aimed at providing an academic intervention to foster children with a view to improving their basic skills, increasing their chances of graduating from high school and enrolling in post-secondary education. The unique contribution and intent of the current study was to evaluate the differential gender effects of a foster parent-delivered tutoring intervention on the foster children's academic skills and mental health. The focus of this investigation was original and exploratory because the potential role of gender in moderating the impact of a tutoring intervention had never been examined in tutoring research conducted in the general population (Ritter et al., 2009) nor in that carried out among young people in care (Courtney, 2008; Flynn et al., 2012; Harper & Schmidt, 2012; Harper, 2012).

A mixed-method approach was used to explore these differential effects and the main hypothesis of the project, that the foster children in the experimental group would demonstrate greater gains in reading and math than the children in the control group, between pre-test and post-test, regardless of gender. The results were promising: the foster children in the experimental group demonstrated significant gains in their basic reading and math skills after receiving the foster-parent delivered one-on-one tutoring, with some evidence of differential gender effects across the academic results.
Results from a Swedish Trial of Paired Reading Tutoring with Children in Care

Speakers & Authors: Hilma Forsman, Bo Vinnerljung, Eva Tideman, Marie Sallnäs

In this presentation, we report results from a Swedish replication of a successful British trial involving foster carers in a paired reading tutoring intervention, aiming to improve foster children's literacy skills. The project involved 81 foster children age 8-12 and their carers, whom read together 20 minutes a day, 3 times a week for a period of 16 weeks. The evaluation was carried out as a pre-post design without a comparison group using national age-standardised literacy tests. In order to provide further insight into how the intervention works, qualitative interviews were conducted with fifteen foster carers with different experiences in program compliance. The results revealed significant gains in the children's vocabulary and reading age. In average their reading age had improved with 11 months. Reading reports indicated that 90% of the participants had implemented the programme in an acceptable way. The interviews confirmed that the intervention can provide a model for competent reading and result in improved child-carer relations. Rigidly following the method could however lead to conflicts. Completion of the intervention seemed to be conditioned on the children's joy in reading, which in turn may require adjustments in the day-to-day delivery of the intervention. Also carers had to see benefits with the paired reading in order to be able to motivate the child. The results suggest that it is possible to engage foster parents in the improvement of foster children's literacy skills, and that the British paired reading method is transportable to other national contexts.

Key words: paired reading tutoring, trial, foster children
A Randomised Trial of Educational Support Interventions for Children in Care

Speakers & Authors: Misja Eiberg

This new study evaluates two different educational support interventions for children in foster care aged 6-13. The study is conducted as a randomised controlled trial (RCT) with two intervention groups and control group, and it is anticipated that a total of 192 children in foster care will be enrolled in the study (approximately 64 children in each group). Both interventions are aimed at enhancing academic achievement and cognitive development, but with different approaches since one intervention is school-based and the other is a home-based intervention.

The school-based intervention is inspired by the Swedish SkolFam program. On the basis of thorough assessment of the child’s cognitive and academic difficulties and strengths a psychologist writes up an intervention plan with an 18 month perspective in cooperation with a special education teacher and the child’s primary teacher(s). The intervention plan targets both academic and pedagogical goals, and during the intervention period the plan is reviewed every three months by a team consisting of the psychologist, the special education teacher, the primary teacher(s), the foster parents, and if necessary the child’s social worker.

The home-based intervention is a tutoring intervention provided by the foster parents in the foster home, and the programme is inspired by studies such as the Canadian Kids in Care project. In this intervention the foster parents attend a full day seminar about tutoring techniques, learning theory and motivation. After the seminar the foster parents tutor the children in homework activities, such as reading, approximately 2 hours a week for 40 weeks.

Outcomes are measured in regard to school attainment, cognitive development and well-being, and effects are compared across intervention approaches. All data is collected with standardised instruments and include questionnaires such as SDQ, school performance tests in Danish and math, and psychological tests such as WISC IV. Measuring for baseline starts in August 2014, and post-intervention outcomes are measured after 18 months (starting January 2016). The study concludes in 2017. This presentation focuses on the research design including recruitment process.
Wednesday, 3rd September | Education (Symposium) | 15.00

Education of children in care and schooling as a protective factor

Educational trajectories of Canadian children in care in primary school and the early years of secondary school

Speakers & Authors: Kelly Weegar, Andrea Hickey, Tessa Bell, Elisa Romano, Robert Flynn

It is well known that children and adolescents in care often experience significant academic difficulties; however, little research has been conducted to assess which variables predict long-term academic performance. The Ontario Looking After Children (OnLAC) project involves annual data collection with the Assessment and Action Record (AAR), mandated by the Ontario government for use in all 46 Children's Aid Societies in Ontario, Canada, with young people who have been in care for one year or more. The current study will use OnLAC data from the AAR to identify trajectories of overall educational performance as well as performance in specific subjects (i.e., mathematics, science, reading and other language arts) in children and adolescents in care over a 4-year period. Specifically, we will track the educational performance of a large sample of children from 2009, when they were 5-9 years of age, to 2012 when they were 8-12 years old. Likewise, we will also examine academic trajectories from 2009 to 2012 in a different sample of 10-15 year old children and adolescents living in out-of-home care. Analyses will be conducted by means of the SAS PROC TRAJ procedure, which identifies distinctive trajectories for variables of interest as a function of increasing age. We will then use multinomial logistic regression to investigate time-stable and time-varying predictors of the identified educational performance trajectories, including variables from different levels of the ecological model, such as youth-level (e.g., placement type, attachment to foster parent) and family-level factors (e.g., positive parenting practices, number of children in the home). We expect that several distinct educational trajectories will emerge (e.g., poor versus good educational performance over time) and that variables from each level within the ecological model will be significantly associated with trajectory group membership. The findings will provide a more comprehensive developmental picture of the factors impacting educational performance in both primary and secondary school, with a focus on variables that can promote better functioning for children and adolescents in care.
Foster care: different paths and their implications

Formal and Informal Kinship Care and Support

Speakers & Authors: Valerie O'Brien

Track: New paths for foster care

Key words: Kinship care, informal kinship care, Ireland.

This paper focuses on the critical issue of support for formal and informal kinship care. Central to the conceptual analysis is the
- Need for a more robust policy analysis of kinship care as family support, family preservation and alternative care;
- Need for a greater understanding of the intersection of state, nuclear and extended family responsibilities towards child rearing;
- Evaluation of support and training programmes used internationally to support foster and kinship care.

It is based on documentary analysis of international literature, policy papers and training programmes surrounding kinship care.

The challenge for professionals and policy makers is to recognize the uniqueness of kinship care and to build conceptual models, support and training programmes in which strengths, complexities and best practices are fitted coherently.
Foster care: different paths and their implications

Reunification-processes - from long term foster care to the birth family

Speakers & Authors: Judith Pierlings

Aim and objectives of the presentation: Present the project carried out to expand the existing data base on processes involved when reunifying foster children with their families of origin, the key findings and concrete recommendations for reunification processes in practice.

Methods: The project complies with the standards of qualitative research. To gather relevant data, it draws on a range of different interview types, analysis of available youth welfare records and participant observation.

Research design: Sample of 20 cases is analysed in the scope of the data collection, including planned and unplanned reunification processes, cases with a high likeliness of successful reunification and still open outcome. Sample is selected based on theoretical sampling. Various contrasting elements are explored. Data is collected based on a multi-perspective research design. A retrospective part of the data collection addresses the history of the reunification. A prospective part takes into consideration the ongoing processes (decision to reunify, preparation and process of reunification etc.)

Data: is documented in written form, summarised in chronicles of support trajectories, which are analysed as follows: various readings, open coding; development of a categorization system; process analysis and comparison of cases, definition of topics and general conclusions

Key findings:
Often it is unknown to parents how long the child is supposed to remain in care. It is unclear how they may develop their role as a parent, maintain the relationship with the child or participate in decisions concerning the care arrangement. Cooperation with parents has to be significantly intensified

Lack of transparency in the decision-making processes leads to high levels of uncertainty among the involved, during the period of the foster placement and regarding the arrangements required when the child is to be reunited with the birth family.

Specific needs and signals from children and adolescents during individual development phases are of substantial importance, but are taken into consideration very differently by professionals. A study which accompanies processes needs to submit to unforeseeable changes in a very complex field of research. It demands a high degree of flexibility from researcher.

Key words: Reunification, multiperspectivity, retro- & prospective data collection
Cooperation with birth mothers in foster care: which factors play a role?

Speakers & Authors: Marijke Robberechts, Johan Vanderfaeillie, Femke Vanschoonlandt, Skrallan de Maeyer, Frank van Holen

Good cooperation between birth and foster parents is associated with more stable foster placements. However, respectively 70% of birth parents and 66% of foster parents find this cooperation difficult. In Flanders conflicts between birth and foster parents are the second most important reason for breakdown. Knowing which factors optimize cooperation is essential.

In this study 239 foster care workers of long-term placements were surveyed four months after the start of the foster placement. The dependent variable was the relationship between birth mother and foster parents, estimated by the foster care worker on a five point Likert scale. Independent variables were grouped in categories: (1) child characteristics: age, gender and number of previous family foster care placements, (2) characteristics of the foster placement: type of foster family, (not) court ordered placement and reason for placement, (3) parental characteristics: (not) having a partner, (4) attitude of birth mother towards placement and (5) parental involvement: contact frequency and its evolution.

Univariate statistical analyses showed that only four variables were significantly associated with cooperation between birth mother and foster parents: child's age, type of foster family, attitude towards placement and contact frequency. Next multiple linear regression analysis was used with all four independent variables and cooperation as dependent variable. Results showed that the independent variables explained 51.5% of the variance. However, in the final model only type of foster family, attitude towards the placement and contact frequency were significantly predicting the cooperation. After control for the variables type of foster family and contact frequency, attitude towards placement was the strongest correlated with the cooperation.

Cooperation between birth mothers and foster parents is important. Promoting a positive attitude towards the placement of the birth mothers from the start of the placement and promoting contact between foster children and their mother will support the cooperation between birth mothers and foster parents.

Key words
Foster care, mothers, cooperation
Returning Abused and Neglected Children to Their Parents: Issues and Outcomes

Speakers & Authors: Elaine Farmer

Aims and methods of the study
Whilst we know an increasing amount about admission to care and children's placements, there is still relatively little research about returning children to their parents from care.

This government-funded research investigated the outcomes of reunification and factors associated with successful returns by means of a two year follow-up of a case file sample of 180 children returned to a parent from care in 6 local authorities and through interviews with a sub-sample of parents, children and social workers. Multivariate analyses were used to examine the key factors associated with successful and unsuccessful return outcomes.

Key Findings
Almost half of the children (46%) were abused or neglected during the return. Children of substance misusing parents were at high risk of being abused or neglected (78%); whilst a few (16%) children remained at home despite ongoing maltreatment. By the end of the two-year follow-up period, 47% of the returns had broken down and a third of the ongoing returns were of poor quality. Many children (62%) were then returned home again and half of these returns also failed.

Statistical analyses using logistic regression showed that a change in family membership since the child had entered care, foster carer assistance with returns, adequate preparation for and support during reunification, parental motivation to care and the involvement of another agency or professional in monitoring children were all related to return stability. Previous physical abuse to the child and previous failed returns were associated with reunification breakdown. Outcomes varied widely by local authority, particularly for the older children, suggesting considerable variation in practice.

This paper will examine the circumstances in which children were reunified, the extent of maltreatment once home, the interventions provided and how children fared. It will also highlight the factors that contributed to good outcomes in terms of return stability and the quality of the reunification for children and will draw out the circumstances in which returns were likely to be problematic in order to draw lessons for policy and practice.
Foster care: different paths and their implications

How does reunification work: The nature and predictors of reunification in Australian out of home care

Speakers & Authors: Elizabeth Fernandez, Paul Delfabbro

Central to a reunification focus in out of home care is the acknowledgement of the importance of a child’s family to their future, and the need to reunify children as soon as it is safe to do so. This paper reports comparative findings from a national multi-jurisdictional study that examines three year longitudinal data from three States on patterns of reunification and associated factors.

A detailed assessment involving case file reviews and placement tracking of over 1300 children was carried out to identify predictors of reunification. The data were examined using Kaplan-Meier survival analysis and Cox-Proportional hazards.

The results show that reunification rates vary across States due to some differences in legislative and policy frameworks, but that overall trajectories are similar in that most reunifications occur within the first 12 months after entry to care. The findings further showed that children placed in kinship care often return to their biological families more slowly, and that family rejection, abandonment or neglect are the most consistent family risk factors associated with a lower probability or reunification. Analysis of placement movement data also showed that levels of placement instability appear to be much lower than a decade ago. The reasons for these trends and associations, as well as their policy and practice implications are discussed.
Health and wellbeing of children in care

Abuse and neglect in foster and residential care in the UK

Speakers & Authors: Nina Biehal, Linda Cusworth, Jim Wade

Aim
To report the first representative survey of maltreatment in care in the UK, including:
- incidence of allegations and confirmed maltreatment of children in foster or residential care;
- the nature of the maltreatment experienced;
- outcomes for the children;
- the difficulty of substantiating allegations and the dilemmas this poses for professionals.

Design and methods
- Survey of all UK local authorities;
- A detailed follow-up survey which collected extensive qualitative and quantitative data on cases of confirmed abuse or neglect.

Data
- Incidence of allegations of maltreatment and confirmed cases in three successive years;
- Details of the maltreatment of 146 children in foster and residential care.

Key findings
The vast majority of children in foster and residential care in the UK experience safe care. However, over 2,000 allegations of abuse and neglect in care placements were made across the UK in each year of the study, with 21-23 per cent of these confirmed.

The proportion of fostered children involved in confirmed maltreatment was tiny, ranging from 0.25-1% across the countries of the UK. This nevertheless warrants serious attention, since our evidence suggests that that there are likely to be 450-550 confirmed cases of abuse or neglect in foster care across the UK each year. Over 40 per cent of allegations in foster care could not be proved or disproved due to a lack of evidence, posing serious dilemmas for professionals. There was also a 'grey area' regarding the boundary between poor standards of care and actual abuse or neglect. The proportion of substantiated cases was slightly higher in residential care (ranging from less than one per cent to three per cent across the UK).

Abuse and neglect may occur in any type of care placement, including both long-term and kinship foster care. The confirmed abuse and neglect in foster care reported ranged from minor indiscretions and isolated incidents of physical abuse by carers under stress to the prolonged emotional or sexual abuse of children. Inappropriate use of restraint and physical abuse were most commonly reported for residential care (but detailed evidence regarding this setting was more limited).
Health and wellbeing of children in care

Are family group conferences good for children's mental health? -the first results from a longitudinal study

Speakers & Authors: Svein Arild Vis

Introduction: In child protection, children have a right to participate when a decision is made about where the child shall live. This right is not always fulfilled. The key barrier towards achieving greater involvement of children in decision-making processes is when they are not invited to meetings. One reason that children are not invited to take part in discussions about foster care or residential care is that social workers think this is upsetting and possibly harmful for the child. In Norway, family group conferences are sometimes used to determine where the child shall live. Then, the child is always invited. This provides an opportunity to study the impact such meetings have upon children.

Aim: The purpose of the research is to study short-term changes in mental health symptomatology of children who participate in family group conferences. The first hypothesis is that children show elevated levels of mental health problems before the meeting. This is expected because children in contact with child protection in general have more problems. The second hypothesis is that there is no change in mental health symptomatology after the meeting. A third alternative hypothesis is that changes in mental health are dependent upon the child's satisfaction with the conference.

Methods: The design is a longitudinal cohort study. Information is collected from the child, the parents and the social worker. Mental health symptomatology is measured using the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ). Child evaluation of the participation process use a questionnaire developed specifically for the study.

The sample consists of 60 children aged 11-18.

Results: Data is still incoming. The analysis is therefore not yet ready.

Implications: If the second hypothesis is correct, that participation in discussion at family group conferences does not impact mental health symptomatology the implication is that there is no reason to be worried that attendance at conferences is harmful for children. If the results show that the child's satisfaction with the meeting co determine development of mental health problems the implication is that we need to look more closely at how family group conferences are conducted.
Health and wellbeing of children in care

Therapeutic residential services for children under 12 years - A shared needs model of intervention

Speakers & Authors: Michael Cashin, Vanessa Smith, Stephen Mondy, Romaine Moss

CatholicCare Diocese of Broken Bay, a large non-government agency in Sydney, Australia, provides intensive therapeutic residential and foster services to young people removed from their families due to child protection concerns. CatholicCare has developed a therapeutic residential model of care to specifically support children under 12 years of age who enter the care system, under a 'shared needs' placement model. Children under the age of 12 years are typically cared for in foster care placements, but the high risk and challenging behaviours of some children mean that they are not suitable for such placements. CatholicCare has acknowledged the complexity of supporting younger children in shared placements, and has trialed a model to respond to the issues of risk, further traumatisation and isolation for children. The program focuses on assisting children and their families to manage their primary trauma experience, disrupted attachment, and the subsequent behavioural issues with regulation, using a therapeutic framework that gives rise to a model linking attachment, self-regulation and competency (the ARC model). CatholicCare therapeutic residential care teams work pro-actively with statutory case management services to support children and birth families as they work toward restoration or a move to other placements such as foster care, home-based care or an alternative residential environment. Particular emphasis is placed on establishing meaningful community connections for children. This paper will provide participants with an overview of the service model, including: location and environmental considerations, carer selection and supports, service culture and therapeutic frameworks, and a review of data collated as part of a commitment to evidence-based practice. A case study is used to illustrate the impact of the model and the relationships between the model and social pedagogy is discussed.
Health and wellbeing of children in care

Who are the foster children? How best to assess them?

Speakers & Authors: Elisabeth Backe-Hansen

There is great concern among researchers as well as practitioners that children and young people are not sufficiently well assessed when they move into a foster home, and that this increases the probability of mismatch and subsequent breakdown. The issue is particularly pertinent because we know from a large body of international research that mental health problems are alarmingly prevalent among foster children. A recent Norwegian study of 450 foster children aged 6-12 at placement, showed that 50-60 per cent of them had such problems. Comorbidity was common as well.

The aim of the presentation is to present results from a Norwegian survey of 314 foster care placements, where caseworkers were asked to describe how the children had been assessed prior to placement, and what they knew about them and their networks, strengths, problems, and needs. The survey showed that knowledge about physical, mental and dental health was lacking in between 40 % and 67 % per cent of the cases. The study also showed that more than half of the children were referred to school psychologists or child psychiatric units after placement. Once referred around half of them received services as well. Thus, our survey, supplemented with data from a survey of almost 300 foster parents, gave grounds for concern.

Two issues in the research literature concern when during the placement process necessary assessments are feasible, and how comprehensive such assessments should be. Although the ideal would be to conduct the assessments before placement, this is often not possible to do because of several extraneous factors like deadlines for formal decision-making, the high prevalence of emergency placements, lack of knowledge of the child on the part of the social workers etc. Thus it is important to do this as quickly as possible after placement. The second issue then concerns how thorough it is possible and ethically acceptable to be, seen in relation to what caseworkers have the time to do, what other resources are available, and what services are available as a result of the assessment. Possible courses of action will be discussed.
Residential care and treatment interventions fault

Aggressive behaviour among young offenders in a Malaysian youth justice institution: A mixed method study

Speakers & Authors: Nazirah Hassan, Andrew Kendrick

Penal institutions in Malaysia are in a state of crisis due to overcrowding and understaffed facilities. More than 3,000 young offenders are incarcerated in juvenile justice institutions each year. First-time offenders are not segregated from repeat offenders and the resulting composition of the institutional population may affect the residents' behaviour and social relationships. This can be a significant factor in shaping residents' experiences of incarceration.

This study examined the relationship between aggressive behaviour and the risk of recidivism amongst young offenders in a juvenile justice institution in Malaysia. The project focused on one hundred and four young offenders aged 16 to 19 years old, in one juvenile approved school. The research collected quantitative and qualitative data using a mixed-method approach. All participants completed the Buss-Perry Aggression Questionnaire (AQ) and a screening version of the psychopath Checklist (PCL-SV). In addition, eight focus group interviews were carried out which involved fifty-six residents. The findings showed that more than half of the offenders (65.4%) could be classified as highly aggressive. The AQ identified four domains of aggression: physical, hostility, verbal, and anger. The study found that young offenders typically displayed higher domains of aggression (i.e. physical and hostility). In the focus group, the young men identified a number of factors which affected their behaviour within the institution. These included the need for self-defence, peer pressure and resistance to staff. Use of the PCL-SV was a reliable predictor of the risk of recidivism, regardless of the form of aggressive behaviour displayed.

This presentation will discuss the main findings of the research project. The findings are discussed alongside references to empirical criminological studies on penology. The presentation concludes with some recommendations on alternative solutions which may improve institutional outcomes.
Driving Outcomes: Resilience and Young People Living in Residential Care

Speakers & Authors: David Berridge

This presentation concerns an evaluation of a small-scale social experiment: providing driving lessons for a group of young people living in residential homes in Bristol, England. Driving lessons are taken for granted by many parents for their children but, traditionally, are something that corporate parents (local authorities) in England have not provided for young people in care. The research is relevant to the theoretical literature on young people's trajectories and especially the field of resilience: those achieving successful outcomes despite experiencing major adversity. Educational achievements of children in care and employment prospects are often poor. Potentially, providing driving lessons might have a range of benefits consistent with the psychological, sociological and social work theoretical and empirical literature, which the paper explores.

The research took an exploratory, qualitative approach. The six young people who participated were approached for semi-structured interviews, as well as two service managers with overall responsibility and three heads of the homes in which young people lived.

Overall findings were very positive. The lessons were a significant part of young people's lives. They enjoyed the lessons and made good progress with the driving but the theory test was more of a challenge. This may be linked to the educational and cognitive difficulties experienced by many children in care. For two young people the driving lessons were directly linked with employment opportunities. Professionals and residents referred to pride in achievement, gains in self-esteem, maturity and independence. These can lead to positive chain reactions identified in the resilience literature.

Young people accessed a wide variety of support in their residential units: this can encourage future relationship with trusted adults. Interestingly, driving instructors were often appreciated for the qualities that many of us would take for granted: being respectful, not pre-judging, punctual and phoning to change appointments. Clearly, driving would not be seen as a panacea for complex personal and social problems. Yet this modest social experiment suggests that driving lessons could be of considerable benefit and there is a moral obligation to provide them for care leavers in any case.
Residential care and treatment interventions fault

The group climate in open and secure residential care and the relation with aggression incidents

*Speakers & Authors: Carolien Konijn, Chantal van Rijswijk, Annemarie van de Vall, Jantine van Den Tillaart, Ellen Eltink*

Spirit, a youth care organization in the Netherlands, disposes amongst others of an open and secure residential care groups for adolescents and a youth prison. The study we like to present at the conference examines the group climate in these different settings of youth care. Main question is: Is there a relation between the youth care setting and the group climate, in the experience of the adolescent clients? And how can the group climate be improved, if necessary?

About 180 young people between 12 and 18 years, have filled in the Prison Group Climate Inventory (PGCI). This questionnaire has been designed previously for use in a prison for adult delinquents to assess open and closed (repressive) group climate (Van der Helm, Stams & van der Laan, 2009) and was customized for use with adolescents in open and secure care. The climate questionnaire assesses four dimensions: (1) ‘responsivity from group workers’, (2) ‘growth’, (3) ‘organization’ and (4) ‘relationships and atmosphere’.

This climate questionnaire is also customized for application at school (School Class Work Climate Inventory / SCWCI). The pupils at the secure youth care have not only filled in the PGCI but also this SCWCI at school. So the study addresses also the relations between the group and the educational climate in a secure care setting.

In the research groups the amount of aggression incidents are being registered. The relation between the four dimensions of the group climate and the amount of aggression incidents on the residential care are being assessed.

On the conference the results and the implications of the study are being discussed. Also the improvements of the group climate which will be implemented before the summer of 2014 are being presented. This study is an example of how quality of youth care is developed in daily practice, in co-operation between researchers and practitioners.
Residential care and treatment interventions fault

Which profile of pretreatment characteristics predicts a higher working alliance with girls in residential care?

Speakers & Authors: Marie-Helene Ayotte, Nadine Lanctot, Marc Tourigny

The working alliance, a concept that refers to the emotional bond between clients and practitioners and to the agreement on treatment goals and tasks, is an important mechanism in treatment. Given the importance of the working alliance to achieve positive treatment outcomes, it is important to better understand the factors that contribute to a good alliance. The present study aimed to determine which configuration of pre-treatment characteristics predicted a higher working alliance between adolescent girls in residential care and youth care workers.

This study was part of the “Montreal Longitudinal Study on Adolescent Girls in Residential Youth Centers” (Lanctôt, 2011). The sample was composed of 182 adolescent girls who were placed in residential care. Girls' self-reported pre-treatment characteristics (behavior problems, trauma-related symptoms, interpersonal problems and attitudes towards change) were assessed soon after admission in treatment (Time 1) and the working alliance was assessed three months later (Time 2) by both girls and their designated youth care workers. All girls of the sample remained in care between Time 1 and Time 2. Latent class analysis revealed three different profiles of girls at admission: “low problems”, “internalizing” and “multiple problems/externalizing”. Findings indicated that girls with the “internalizing” profile were 7.9 times more likely than girls from the “multiple problems/externalizing” group to report a higher working alliance. However, girls' pre-treatment profiles did not predict youth care workers' assessment of the quality of their working alliance.

The results of this study have interesting implications for practitioners in residential care. Indeed, findings suggest different strategies depending on the configuration of pre-treatment characteristics at admission. Practitioners assigned to girls with an “internalizing” profile could realistically aim to establish a working alliance early in the treatment process since these girls are more prone to report a higher alliance after three months of treatment. For girls with a “multiple problems/externalizing” profile, however, a motivational approach and a focus on behavior problems may be important first steps before attempting to establish an alliance.

Keywords - working alliance, girls, residential care
Voices of children, youth and families

Børns forestilling, forventning og forståelse om inddragelse

Speakers & Authors: Mimi Petersen, John Steen Johansen


Begrebet barndom knytter til omsorg og beskyttelse og sætter dermed fokus på børns rettigheder mere end at betragte børn som genstand for disse rettigheder. Der er gjort mange bestræbelser på at beskytte børn mod misbrug og omsorgssvigt og vi er kommet langt på det område.

Papiret vil fremlægge nogle af resultaterne af et tre-årigt forskningsprojekt om brug af Sikkerhedsplaner i en kommune i Danmark ud fra børnenes forståelse og perspektiv om inddragelse. En sikkerhedsplan er en forebyggende foranstaltning (f.eks. at forebygge anbringelse udenfor hjemmet) og intensivt myndighedsarbejde, hvor der iværksættes bl.a. familiebehandlingsindsatser. Sikkerhedsplaner er en del af metoden Signs Of Safety.

En del af den kvalitative undersøgelse har haft til formål at, undersøge børns forståelse af og deltagelse i beslutningsprocessen. Det empiriske grundlag er interview og dialog møde med grupper af børn, i alderen 3 til 15 år. Flere studerende fra socialrådgiveruddannelsen i København og socialrådgivere i praksis har været involveret i indsamling og bearbejdning af data.

Papiret vil bl.a. belyse:
- Hvordan børn bliver involveret i processen
- Hvordan de ser på deres egen rolle
- På hvilken måde sikkerhedsplaner har skabt / er med til at skabe trivsel for børnene
- Hvordan de øvrige involverede (fagpersoner, forældre og netværk), ser på arbejdet med sikkerhedsplaner.
Titel: Aktionsforskning i en kommunal kontekst

Speakers & Authors: Mette Larsen, Sofie Danneskiold-Samsøe

Videnscenter for Familiepleje (VIF) er et kommunalt videnscenter forankret i Københavns Kommunes kontor for familiepleje, hvis formål er at øge kvaliteten i anbringelser af børn og unge igennem aktionsforsknings- og metodeudviklingsprojekter. I oplægget argumenterer vi for, at aktionsforskning, der tager udgangspunkt i praksis, undersøger og analyserer denne og efterfølgende vender tilbage til praksis med råd og anbefalinger, har særligt potentiale til at bidrage til en direkte og vidensbaseret forandring af praksis. Samtidig ønsker vi at diskutere styrker og barrierer ved at være forankret som videnscenter i den kommune, hvis praksis undersøges og forøges ændret.


Nøgleord: Aktionsforskning, kommunalt videnscenter, inddragelse af børn som medforskere
A comparative study of the usage of different risk assessment in Danish municipalities

Speakers & Authors: Kresta Sørensen

This paper will address the use of risk assessment models in six different Danish municipalities. The paper will contribute with an analysis and discussion of differences and similarities between the different models which is Integrated Children's System (ICS), Signs of Safety (SoS) and models or forms developed by the municipalities who are in this study. The analysis will treat the following two key elements 1) which risk and protective factors the caseworkers weight in the risk assessment and 2) whether the different models ensure a holistic assessment (which is required by law in Denmark) in the different cases. I will in this paper also discuss whether it is the actual model that helps to ensure a better quality of the assessment, or whether other factors such as work organization, a good professional leadership and work culture are significant.

The paper will be based on existing research in this area and the empirical data I have collected. The empirical data will be mixed methods in terms of both quantitative and qualitative data and analysis. The data consist of an internet-based survey distributed to social workers working with risk assessments of children and families at risk in the six participating municipalities and semi-structured interviews which is a follow up on the survey.

My preliminary results shows that the method does not ensure a good quality of the risk assessment based on the social workers own judgment. The results also show that social workers using both ICS and the municipality models are still basing their assessments on risk factors whereas social workers using the SoS model to a much greater extend have a focus on protective factors.

Keywords: risk assessments models, vulnerable children and families, risk- and protective factors, holistic approaches.
Socialt arbejde og velfærdspolitikker

Myndighedssagsbehandleres erfaringer med Integrated Children's System

**Speakers & Authors:** Cecilie K. Moesby-Jensen

Socialfaglige metoder anvendes i stigende omfang som en del af myndighedssagsbehandleres praksis på forvaltninger, der beskæftiger sig med socialt arbejde med børn og unge i udsatte positioner, og her er den mest udbredte metode Integrated Children's System (ICS). I denne præsentation diskuteres det i hvilket omfang de intentioner, der har været med at implementere ICS også indfries. Dette gøres ved at se nærmere på sagsbehandlernes erfaringer med selve undersøgelsesskemaet (§50).

De forskningsresultater der diskuteres, er fremkommet på baggrund af et igangværende 5-årigt praksisnært, kvalitativt og eksplorativt case studie, der er baseret på følgende datagrundlag: Observationsnoter fra 4 måneders deltagerobservation i en socialforvaltning; transskriptioner fra semi-strukturerede individuelle interviews med 16 myndighedssagsbehandlere og 5 socialfaglige ledere samt organisatorisk materiale.


Forskningsresultaterne kan bl.a. bidrage til en diskussion af dokumentationspraksis og vidensindsamling, herunder, hvordan sagsbehandlerne skal afdække, håndtere og dokumentere væsentlig viden. Endvidere kan de bidrage til en diskussion af, hvordan der skabes større overensstemmelse mellem det praksisnære sprog og det mere teoriafhængige sprog, der benyttes i skemaet.
Socialt arbejde og velfærdspolitikker

Reflections on a tool - revisions on 'the age specific focus themes' in ICS and what this means for the assessment tool

*Speakers & Authors:* Helene Oldrup, Anna-Katharina Højen-Sørensen

This paper considers one tool in Integrated Children's System, ICS, namely 'the age specific focus themes' (de aldersopdelte fokusområder), translated and adapted to Danish from the English Core Assessment Records. The tool is designed to support social workers' risk assessment, intervention strategies and evaluation, when improving outcomes for vulnerable children and youth. In the Danish context, this tool has been updated in 2013 to include new knowledge on Child Development. It now includes a greater focus on the importance of children and young people's own experience and perspective, and a greater focus on the importance of the child's social arenas outside the home, such as school, friends and leisure time. This paper presents the revisions made such as greater focus on including children's own perspectives and contexts outside the family such as school and leisure time. The paper critically discuss what this means for the tool, 'the age specific focus themes'.
Lay persons as decision-makers in Swedish child protection

Speakers & Authors: Staffan Höjer, Torbjörn Forkby, Andreas Liljegren

Decision-making in child protection in the social services in Sweden are generally based on an investigation and assessment from professional social workers. But when it comes to the actual decisions the professional discretion is circumvented by politically appointed laypersons functioning as members of child protection boards (CPC). The presence of lay persons follows a long tradition and still lay persons hold, directly or indirectly, the decision making power. Directly, they make the most drastic decisions such as out-of-home placements, indirectly they delegate other decisions to professionals.

The aim of this paper is to present and discuss the decision making in Swedish child protection by lay-persons. We will focus on three aspects: (i) the representation of the lay-persons; (ii) the actual decision-making process at the boards (iii) the function of this system in relation to children and families as well as to social work professionals.

In a three-year research project the function and governance from lay persons was studied. A national survey to 467 lay-persons was used to explore their representation, views on their decision-making and relations to the professional group. The actual practice of three CPCs in different municipalities was followed by direct observation during nine months.

The result shows that lay-persons in Swedish child protection are older and more educated than the average population and other local politicians. They almost always follow the proposals of the social workers, but they have developed different ways of governance in relation to the professional group in order to influence practice. For children and families the board represents a possibility of having their voice heard again. For social work the lay-person system, on the one hand is a challenge in their call for professionalization, professional discretion and status. On the other hand the child protection boards legitimize the decisions and social workers may not be as questioned for these risky, uncertain decisions. In the paper we will also discuss the decision-making made from “common sense” rather than professional knowledge and its possible implications for vulnerable children.
Social work and welfare policy

How to supervised visitation in child protection context? Result from a study on the practices of social workers (Quebec, Canada)

Speakers & Authors: Côté Carole, Poirier Marie-Andree, Sellenet Catherine

The principles of the child protection law in Quebec (Canada) are clear, the first goal of intervention is to maintain or return the child in the family. Thus, when a child is placed in foster care, everything is implemented to help maintain links between the foster child and the parents. However, it happens that in certain specific situations, maintaining contact between parents and their children should be in the presence of a third party (Supervised visitation or supervised access). Supervision of contacts between parents and child in the context of youth protection is a clinical practice that demands from social worker a lot of knowledge and skills. Despite this finding few scientific studies have explored this particular practice. The aim of this communication is to present the results of a study done by a group of social workers and a team of academic researchers on promising practices in the context of supervised visits.

The study was made from several sources of information: a review of the theoretical and scientific literature, an analysis of real situations from video extract (N=12) and individual semi-structured interviews with social worker (N=14). Social workers involved in the process are recognized in their communities, to have developed knowledge and specific skills in this field of expertise. We will discuss the theoretical and experiential knowledge related to: 1) assessment of the nature and level of risk that justifies supervision, 2) identifying a typology of supervised visits by level of assessed risk and objectives, and 3) systematization of certain knowledge (attitudes, postures) and knowledge (concrete action tools) specific to different context supervised visits.
Beyond Contact: Work with Families of Children Placed Away from Home in Four European Countries

Speakers & Authors: Janet Boddy, June Statham, Helene Join-Lambert, Inge Danielsen, Esther Geurts

This presentation examines the nature and purpose of work with families of looked after children in four European countries: England, Denmark, France and the Netherlands, aiming to identify areas for shared learning in relation to this challenging area of policy and practice. The research, which was funded by the Nuffield Foundation in the UK, involved a 'state of play' analysis of parallel country case studies. The case studies comprised reviews of policy and academic literature, combined with key stakeholder interviews, allowing a triangulation of perspectives and sources. Subsequently, partners from all four countries took part in stakeholder seminars in each country, deepening understandings and providing an additional layer of 'check and challenge' within and between countries.

Policy in all four countries - including England - makes reference to work with families when children are in care, but policy frameworks say little about how parent and family involvement might be achieved in practice. This situation was changing in Denmark, France and the Netherlands where recent legislation has placed increased emphasis on birth parent involvement, and accompanying guidance addresses family involvement. In England, by contrast, recent changes in legislation are removing statutory duties for local authorities to promote contact between children and birth parents.

Work with families of children placed away from home was described as a difficult and neglected area of practice in all four of the study countries. Nonetheless, the study illuminated examples of well-developed and effective practice in all countries that highlight the potential to learn from experiences elsewhere in Europe. At the same time, the research clearly indicates the value of going beyond a focus on 'contact' - a focus which dominates English language policy and literature - to distinguish between different aims and approaches to family involvement, and think about how and why parents and other family members are involved in children's lives at different times and in different circumstances. Overall, the research highlights relationships between care populations and policy understandings of the purpose of work with families, including understandings of children's and/or parents' rights.
Discretion and the use of expert opinion in care order cases

Speakers & Authors: Line Marie Sørsdal

Discretion is a central element of legal and bureaucratic decision-making in the welfare state. Although discretion is necessary in order to make suitable individual decisions, it also creates possibilities for unequal treatment (Lipsky, 1980). More importantly professional discretion can threaten our democratic control over the implementation of laws and policies (Molander et al., 2012). This study explores professional discretion in child protection work in the Norwegian county social welfare boards. In Norway, if the child protection service decides that a child needs to be taken into care, the case has to be petitioned to the (regional) county social welfare board. In 2013 the 12 county social welfare boards in Norway decided on a total of 1135 care order cases, and of these 31 have been made public (by the electronic archive Lovdata). A content analyses of these written decisions from Lovdata are undertaken. The aim of the analysis is to examine what type of evidence and knowledge the county social welfare board uses in care order cases, and how different types of knowledge are weighted and balanced in decisions on whether or not to take a child into care.
Swedish child welfare: a goldmine for private entrepreneurs?

Speakers & Authors: Tommy Lundström, Gabrielle Meagher, Marie Sallnäs, Stefan Wiklund

In the beginning of the 1980s doors were opened for private entrepreneurs in Swedish child welfare. Today the majority of residential homes are privately (mostly for-profit) operated, and private providers are involved in the delivery of multiple types of child welfare services. In the context of the comparatively generous funding of welfare services in Sweden, the field has been described as a goldmine for private entrepreneurs. The extent of private provision in child welfare represents a historical shift in how services for vulnerable groups are provided. There is a lack of knowledge about why these changes have occurred, how they vary between subfields and how they have affected the support side of care. The aim of the presentation is to analyze the structure of the field of residential care with special focus on the process of marketization and the role of private companies in the provision of care.

1. How is the landscape of residential care structured and what is the position of private companies in different types of care?

2. How and why did marketization happen and what are the consequences in terms of profits, state control and supply of care?

Our analysis is based on official statistics/documents and register data. Findings indicate that the opening of the field has led to a mixed economy where the private companies share has constantly grown, while public providers in different organizational forms still provide services. Private equity companies are entering the field but small, often family owned, companies still have a position. Levels of profit are high especially for big companies. In line with international trends, an extensive audit apparatus has been established on the central state level to oversee the mixed economy. Marketization of child welfare can be described as part of a general privatization trend in Sweden, in which the shift of public financing of care from the state to the municipalities and the opening of the field for new actors through changes in law have played an important role. Implications for clients and quality of care are discussed.

Key words: child welfare, marketization, residential care
Social Reintegration of Girls in Residential Care: An Organizational Outlook

Speakers & Authors: Satarupa Dutta

The ultimate goal of every residential child care organization is to ensure for the girl an independent and self-sufficient future adulthood. In this study, social reintegration signifies the process of re-entry of girls in residential care back into community life.

RESEARCH DESIGN
Using Bronfenbrenner’s ecological perspective, this study analyses the diversity in social reintegration policies and practices of 20 residential child care homes in the Indian metropolitan cities of Mumbai and Kolkata. Case studies of these organizations, selected through purposive sampling were developed to qualitatively understand their varied structure, behaviour and administration vis-à-vis transforming environmental factors and macro-level strategies.

FINDINGS
The sample organizations differed widely in their nature of orientation, size and model of care. Their directives regarding the age and selection criteria for intake, care facilities, age of discharge and social reintegration process for the girls were also extensively divergent. Though, all organizations emphasized on social reintegration of the girls, their perceived meaning and value to the process affected their arrangements ranging from furnishing basic provisions for education and vocational training to more permanent rehabilitation methods such as adoption, foster care, family re-unification, marriage and employment. The key findings revealed that:

- The age for social reintegration of the girls varied from 0 to 23 years.
- 80 per cent organizations focused more on reintegration of orphan and homeless girls, rather than girls with single or both parents, guardians or relatives.
- In 40 per cent organizations social reintegration of older girls after 18 years was sketchy, informal and practically non-existent.
- Only 20 per cent organizations provided the girls with long-term psychological support and emergency assistance post social reintegration.
- In all organizations not only internal child care approach played a crucial role in the social reintegration process of the girls but environmental factors like networking with companies for job placement, availability of sponsorship and funding, civil society support and state legislation and policies also had a critical impact on the organizational behaviour.

IMPLICATIONS
The multiple facets of social reintegration as explored in this study can be helpful in assisting organizations develop reintegration policies and guidelines to enhance their effectiveness. It also highlights on certain aspects of government legislation which needs to be re-assessed.
What happens after leaving care? Selected findings from an Irish sample

Speakers & Authors: Conor McMahon, Robbie Gilligan

Aims and Objectives:
This paper presents findings from an ongoing study of a sample of 48 care leavers who aged out of care during a 5 year period (2007 to 2011) with the objective of tracking their progress from time of discharge and up to a number of years post-care.

Methods and Research:
The research design utilises a mixed method approach involving the gathering of both quantitative and qualitative data. Data is gathered from documentary analysis of case files to establish the baseline picture prior to leaving care and from follow up interviews with aftercare workers (conducted in early 2014) to capture major developments in the young people's lives since leaving care. It is planned to undertake interviews with a sub-sample of the young people, but results to be reported to the EUSARF conference will not include data from these yet to be completed interviews.

Key Findings:
In this presentation, findings from the initial phase of the study will focus on the educational plans/aspirations of the young people prior to leaving care at 18 years (as recorded in the minutes of the Statutory care planning meeting prior to exist from care) and relate these to educational, training and work experience of the young person as known to the aftercare worker at the point of interview in early 2014.

Key Words:
Care, Leaving Care, Education/Training/Work.
Transitions out of care: challenges and opportunities

Kinds of Support Provided for Care Leavers in Saudi Arabia: Strengths and Limitations

Speakers & Authors: Ahmed Albar

The aim of this study is to review the provided care and support provided for care leavers (foundlings) in Saudi Arabia for the purpose of discussing their strengths in helping care leavers meet their needs and highlighting the main draws that need to be addressed. The author conducted a triangulation multi-site case study utilizing mixed methods approach (qual and quan). Care leavers from different cities were the main participants. And ideal house, which is a new project established for care leavers has been evaluated. Findings show that care leavers receive valuable and generous services and support. The project of programme of 'Ideal House' shows that care leavers have been supported to continue their education and helping then get jobs. Yet, some of them are still struggling and experiencing instability and expressed their needs to be supported financially. The study states the importance of preparation and follow up programs and linking some of the current challenges facing care leavers with earlier experiences.

Keywords:
Care Leavers, Foundlings, Ideal House, Provided Care
Transitions out of care: challenges and opportunities

A way forward for public and private companionship? A Collaboration Model between Municipalities and Voluntary Organizations concerning a better transition to adulthood for young people in care

Speakers & Authors: Kirstine Karmsteen, Sanne Bruun

This study evaluates the collaboration between a number of Danish municipalities and private voluntary organizations as part of the state-funded after-care initiative "Systematic offers from voluntary organisations" (2011-2015). The aim of the initiative is to help young people previously in care to a better transition to adulthood. The project is expected to provide a different and more relevant kind of support to young people that earlier have been in care, and who have not been offered or have not accepted the offer of an after-care program at the municipal level.

The study aims at clarifying the collaboration between the municipalities and the voluntary projects through a comparative case study. Through the use of field observations and in-depth interviews, we analyse how the partnerships work and in what ways they are being challenged. Making a theoretical bridge between rational instrumentalism and social constructivism, we offer a new and more focused approach. The theory of Strategically Alliances serves as the starting point, but this approach is synthesised with Kjell Arne Røvik's theory of Translation of Organizational Ideas within an organization. By prioritising an in-depth strategy, the aim is to make "verstehen" and not "erklären". Our contribution therefore is an understanding of the dynamics within the collaboration that moves beyond existing causal inference studies.

The case selection is based on four collaboration projects. In three of the cases, we study a voluntary organization and how it collaborates with three different municipalities. Our concern is to explore the contents of a successful collaboration model. The fourth case that we want to study is a failed partnership. Using this approach we will be able to compare both successful and failed collaboration that can help clarify the central variables across cases and illuminate non-observable dynamics across the cases.

Our preliminary findings suggest that organizational restructuring in the form of replacement of leaders or staff in the voluntary organization as well as in the municipalities, is a main barrier in the collaboration between municipalities and voluntary organizations.
Wednesday, 3rd September | Poster Reception | 17.00

Transitions out of care: challenges and opportunities

Young People Transitioning from Out-of-home Care in Victoria: Strengthening Support Services for Dual Clients of Child Protection and Youth Justice

Speakers & Authors: Philip Mendes

A significant proportion of young people leaving out of home care also experience involvement with the Youth Justice system, exposing them to further risks and reducing their likelihood of full social and economic engagement in mainstream society. However, little is known about the experiences of this dual order client group as they transition from care. This presentation reviews the findings of a research project based on a partnership between Monash University and seven non-government child and youth welfare agencies in Victoria, Australia. Interviews were conducted with a group of care leavers in Victoria (aged 18 to 26 years) who had also experienced involvement with the Youth Justice system. The involvement of the young people in out of home care, education, youth and adult justice systems is detailed; additionally, findings in relation to mental health issues, substance use problems, independent living skills, and other post-care outcomes are explored. Finally, the young peoples' perspectives on the statutory systems and their journeys are also presented. Findings point to areas for policy reform and improved interventions with dual order Child Protection and Youth Justice clients, with a view to achieving improved outcomes and trajectories for this high risk group.
Voices of children, youth and families

Prevalence, concomitance and evolution of physical and psychological violence against children: Results of three populational surveys

Speakers & Authors: Clement Marie-Eve, Helen Jones

In Quebec (Canada), three large-scale populational surveys documented the annual prevalence of family violence in children's lives. Conducted in 1999, 2004 and 2012, these telephone surveys reached a total of 7,426 maternal figures. Violent behaviours toward children were measured using the PCCTS. The results show that after having risen between 1999 (48%) and 2004 (53%), repeated psychological aggression returned to its original level (49%) in 2012. Minor physical violence consistently decreased between 1999 and 2012, falling from 48% to 35%, while severe violence remained stable (6%). These three forms of violence affect boys in particular and vary according to children's age. Lastly, the results demonstrate that the concomitance of physical and psychological violence remains high in the three surveys, especially in the case of severe violence. In terms of minor violence, the results concur with the trends observed in North America. However, they are particularly worrisome as they demonstrate that the use of severe and concomitant violence continue to affect many children; results that reflects Child Protective Services statistics in Canada. They stimulate the debate surrounding family assistance services and policies.
Health and wellbeing of children in care

The Healthcare Experiences of Young People Leaving Residential Childcare Institutions in Bangladesh

Speakers & Authors: Md. Tuhinul Islam

This paper has drawn from my doctoral project. The aim of the study was to explore the healthcare and well-being experiences of a group of young people from their perspective who had lived in three different types of institutions in Bangladesh: one run by an NGO (for sex workers' children), two run by the government and two faith-based orphanages (madrasah) run by the community.

Qualitative methods were employed for data collection, using in-depth semi-structured interviews with 133 young people (aged 12-26) who had left the care system and yearlong observation of these five institutions where they had lived.

The study has highlighted that children from the madrasah were certainly happier and appeared healthier than their counterparts in the other institutions, even though they lacked medical facilities. Interestingly, the research has drawn attention to the reality that for some young people, material benefits (e.g. good food and clothing) mattered less to their developing a sense of self and well-being than we might have anticipated; instead, 'spiritual food' (religious belief and spiritual guidance) and 'community spirit' were found to be significant, especially those living in the madrasah. The young people who had a religious upbringing did especially well in terms of education and careers in the future. Relationships with staff and other peers were critical again, as was contact with birth families, in order to keep children well, physically and mentally. The study suggests that medical treatment and nutritious food are not the only things necessary for health and wellbeing, rather a number of factors are interrelated to promote wellness in a person: emotional health, mental health, healthy social relationships, safety and security, encouragement and interdependency, and most importantly, spirituality and religious beliefs. Thus the findings of this study are quite challenging in a research context dominated by minority world conceptualisations.

The findings posit that crucial lessons for the minority world could be learned from this study, namely attention should be paid to faith and religious beliefs in children's upbringing; and building relationships with adults, peer groups, parents, and community for best health outcomes.
Institutionsanbringelse og behandlingsinterventioner

Udviklingen i kriminalitet for børn og unge anbragt på den sikrede institution  
Sølager 1986-2006

Speakers & Authors:  Lene Mosegaard Søbjerg

Med udgangspunkt i data fra ca. 1000 unge anbragt på den sikrede institution Sølager i perioden 1986-2006 undersøges det, hvordan de tidligere anbragtes recidiv og kriminelle karriere-forløb har udviklet sig efter anbringelsen. Formålet var at analysere, hvorvidt en anbringelse på en sikret institution var starten på en kriminell karriere, og om der var en sammenhæng mellem den begåede kriminalitet umiddelbart efter anbringelsen, og den kriminalitet de tidligere anbragte begik op til 20 år efter anbringelsen.

Der er indhentet data fra det Centrale Kriminalitetsregister (CKR), som indeholder data om alle kriminelle forhold begået af de unge. Data er opdelt i fire kategorier: personfarlig, alvorlig og mindre alvorlig kriminalitet samt ingen begået kriminalitet.

68 % af de tidligere anbragte unge recidiverede i løbet af de første to år efter anbringelsen.

Den kriminalitet, de tidligere anbragte begik i den første toårige periode efter anbringelsen, var en forholdsvis god indikator for, hvilken type kriminalitet de tidligere anbragte begik på længere sigt. Blandt de unge, der begik personfarlig eller alvorlig kriminalitet i løbet af de første to år efter anbringelsen, fortsatte mere end 70 % med at begå samme type kriminalitet de efterfølgende 10 år. For unge, der afholdt sig fra at begå kriminalitet i de første to år efter anbringelsen, fortsatte 50 % i samme spor og begik ikke ny kriminalitet i den undersøgte periode, som strakte sig op til 20 år efter anbringelsen.

Samlet set viser analysen, at en anbringelse på en sikret institution ofte er indledningen af en kriminell karriere, som kan være vanskelig at bremse. Undersøgelsen kan derfor indikere, at forebyggelse og tæt opfølgning på unge efter en anbringelse kan være afgørende for mulighe-den at bryde en ond cirkel, der indledes med en anbringelse på en sikret institution.
Foster care: different paths and their implications

Home or care? Pathways and outcomes for maltreated children in a multi-ethnic cohort

Speakers & Authors: Linda Cusworth, Jim Wade, Nina Biehal

Aim
To introduce a longitudinal, mixed-methods project (2014-2016) investigating whether outcomes for children who become looked after by local authorities due to concerns about maltreatment (abuse or neglect) are better or worse than for similar maltreated children who remain at home, supervised under a Child Protection Plan.

Design and methods
- Secondary analysis of baseline data
- Online survey of social workers
- Interviews with foster carers and parents to assess child development and well-being at follow-up

Data
- Baseline data from the Born in Bradford (BiB) cohort study
- Bradford Council’s administrative databases on children known to have experienced maltreatment, and children admitted to care
- Data from follow-up interviews and assessments

Summary
It is widely considered that outcomes for children in care are generally poor. Research has pointed to poor education outcomes, high rates of mental health problems, disproportionate involvement in substance abuse and crime, and the over-representation of care leavers among the unemployed, homeless and prison populations. However, most studies to date have been unable to disentangle the effects of being in care from the impact of the difficult experiences (in most cases, abuse or neglect) that led to their admission. One of the reasons for this has been the difficulty of collecting data on children and their family backgrounds before they are taken into care.

The BiB cohort study provides a fantastic opportunity to investigate the effects of being in care in relation to the effects of abuse, neglect and family difficulties, because it provides information on children's family circumstances before they entered care.

One of the toughest decisions that Children's Services have to make is whether to support maltreated children at home or take them into care. This multi-disciplinary study will be useful to policy-makers and practitioners as it will provide important new information on the circumstances in which support at home, or alternatively entry to care, can best promote the safety and development of children who have experienced abuse or neglect. It will also help to advance scientific understanding of the impact of placement in care on abused children.
Health and wellbeing of children in care

Youth’s adjustment in residential care: how do rights’ perceptions and group identification can be related to it?

Speakers & Authors:  **Eunice Magalhães, Maria Manuela Calheiros**

**Aim/Objectives:** this presentation will be focused on how youth’s perceptions about their rights in residential care and their identification with the group in care can be related with their adjustment.

**Methods:** three studies were performed; the first two studies were done to obtain a new measure on youth's rights perceptions. The third study provided evidences about the scale validity/reliability as well as on the relationship between rights’ perceptions, group identification and youth's adjustment.

**Research design:** documental analysis was performed in the first study to identify the rights dimensions, which were explored in the second study, through focus groups. Lastly, a cross-sectional and national study was developed to assess group identification, youth's adjustment and rights' perceptions.

**Data:** an examination of three documents on children and youth's rights was performed with a content analysis; then the dimensions were explored with 29 adolescents. The collected data was analyzed from a grounded theory perspective. Finally, 420 adolescents (11-18 years old) from 59 institutions filled out the Rights Perceptions Scale (a 14-items scale developed in the present study); Group identification scale (13 items; adapted from Tarrant’s scale) and The Reynolds Adolescent Adjustment Screening Inventory (32 items).

**Key findings:** the Rights Perceptions Scale is a short, valid and reliable scale to be used in this context and it assesses five dimensions: Participation and Protection, Autonomy, Respectful system practices, Normalization and Privacy and Social Image. Important implications in terms of youth's adjustment (i.e., Antisocial behavior, Anger control problems, Emotional Distress and Positive Self) as related with their identification with the group in care and their perceptions about the fulfillment of these rights in the residential setting will be discussed. Considering that this is a population that typically reveals behavioral and emotional problems, that there is a social image usually devalued of these youth, and that residential care is a protection service that should provide all necessary conditions for a healthy development, we will discuss the results in terms of its relevance for research and practice.

**Keywords:** youth's adjustment, group identification, youth's rights
Transitions out of care: challenges and opportunities

Participating processes during the transition to adulthood for young Swedish care leavers

Speakers & Authors: Ingrid Höjer, Yvonne Sjöblom

In Sweden, there are no special programs supporting young people when they leave a placement in out-of-home care. Therefore, young care leavers often have to make the transition from care to adulthood alone, and over a much shorter period of time compared with peers without care experiences. This group is at risk of facing severe problems in the transitional phase from care to independent living, a fact which is not acknowledged by the Swedish welfare system. In this presentation we will focus on young people's perception of participation in the transition from care to adulthood.

The overall aim of the study "Life After Care" was to find out what support young care leavers need, what support they ask for and what factors might promote resilience in the care leaving process. 111 structured telephone interviews were performed with managers of child welfare units in West Sweden, and in the Stockholm region (75 local authorities). Additionally, structured and semi-structured telephone interviews were performed with 65 young people who had left a placement in out-of-home care within a time limit of 3 months to 3 years. All interviews have been transcribed and analysed with quantitative and qualitative research methods, using the SPSS and the NVIVO data programmes.

Results show that the young people's capacity of resilience often was connected to the level of participation in the care leaving process. In cases where the administrative procedures outweighed the voices of the care leavers, and they felt excluded from decisions that effected their future life, the transition to adulthood was more complicated. Compressed care leaving, when there was no time for participation, was perceived as particularly negative. When young people were invited to take part in decisions made by social workers, foster parents and residential staff, the care leaving process was more successful. Participation created a feeling of being in control, being listened to, and being a partner in a dialogue with adults. Thus, participation could evoke positive "turning points", and change a negative trajectory to a positive life course.

Key Words: Participation, transition to adulthood, care leaving,
Voices of children, youth and families

Security in the Interparental Subsystem Scale (SIS): psychometric study with a sample of Portuguese adolescents

Speakers & Authors: Carla Silva, Maria Manuela Calheiros

This study examined the psychometric properties of an adaptation of the Security in the Interparental Subsystem Scale to a sample of Portuguese adolescents. Since emotional insecurity is conceptualized as a mediator between interparental conflict (IC) and children’s adjustment, discriminant and concurrent validity of the SIS were assessed by examining, respectively, associations between the SIS dimensions and adolescents' exposure to destructive IC and their psychological adjustment.

Participants were 229 adolescents (60% girls), 5th to 9th graders, aged between 10 and 18 years old (M age = 13 years, SD = 1.76), recruited in six public middle and secondary schools, from 32 different classes. IC and adolescents' emotional security in the interparental relationship were measured through self-report measures. 32 class director teachers (one for each class of participating students) evaluated adolescent's internalizing and externalizing problems in the school context, by completing the Teacher Report Form.

To identify the factor structure of the SIS Scale in our sample, a holdout method was tested with a cross-validation randomizing the full sample into two sub-samples (Sample A: N=112; Sample B: N=117). In Sample A, an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) using Principal Axis Factoring (PAF) was conducted, and a CFA was applied in the Sample B with Maximum Likelihood Estimation.

The EFA resulted in a six-factor model, accounting for about 53% of the total variance explained, consisting of the dimensions “emotional reactivity”, “constructive family representations”, “conflict spillover representations”, “avoidance by inhibition”, “avoidance by withdrawal” and “involvement”. Dimensions’ Cronbach alpha ranges from .47 (involvement) to .85 (emotional reactivity). Confirmatory factor analyses indicated that this six-factor model provided an adequate fit to the data. The discriminant validity analysis revealed that most SIS dimensions significantly discriminate between adolescents exposed to higher vs. lower levels of IC. Regarding the test of concurrent validity, results show a significant positive association between emotional reactivity and adolescents' externalizing symptoms in the school context.

These findings suggest that the SIS scale is a reliable tool for assessing adolescents’ emotional insecurity in the interparental relationship within the context of our sample.

Keywords: Emotional insecurity; psychometric properties; adolescents
Voices of children, youth and families

The role of emotional security in associations between Interparental conflict and adolescents' self-representations

Speakers & Authors: Carla Silva, Maria Manuela Calheiros

The harmful effects of exposure to destructive interparental conflict (IC) on multiple child outcomes have been well documented. However, less well understood are the effects of IC on other aspects of children's psychological well-being such as self-representation (SR; i.e., the set of attributes they use to describe themselves). Although associations between IC and children's SR have been reported, little is known about the processes that explain, and the conditions that influence, those associations. Particularly, no studies have yet been conducted focusing on analyzing the role of emotional insecurity (i.e., children's emotional cognitive and behavioral responses to IC) in this relationship, especially with adolescents.

Based on the Emotional Security Theory (EST), this study examined the mediating and moderating role of adolescents' emotional insecurity in the interparental relationship in the link between IC and their SR.

229 adolescents (60% girls), 5th to 9th graders, aged between 10 and 18 years old, recruited in public elementary and secondary schools participated in this study. IC, adolescents' emotional security in the interparental relationship and SR were measured through self-report measures.

Consistent with EST, destructive IC predicted adolescents' emotional insecurity. Also consistent with previous research, IC predicted more negative SR in all evaluated domains (i.e., instrumental, social, emotional, opposition, intelligence and physical appearance). Adolescents' signs of emotional insecurity also predicted more negative adolescents' SR. Regarding the proposed mediation model, results show a significant indirect effect of IC on adolescents' emotional SR, through their negative emotional reactions and withdrawal strategies in response to IC. As for the moderating role of emotional security, results suggest that adolescent's constructive representations and avoidance by inhibition reactions act as buffers of the negative effects of IC on adolescent's SR.

This study provides evidence on the mediating and moderating role of adolescents' emotional insecurity in the interparental relationship in the path between IC and their SR. Findings highlight the importance of considering children's exposure and responses to IC in the construction of SR. Implications and recommendations for research and practice will be discussed.

Keywords: Interparental conflict, emotional insecurity, self-representation
Voices of children, youth and families

Alyxia’s Journey from Languishing to Thriving: Making a Difference from a Youth’s point of view

Speakers & Authors: Marilyn Wall, Morag Demers, Alyxia Hendricks, Meagan Miller

The Assessment and Action Record (AAR) is the main service-planning and outcome monitoring tool used in the province of Ontario (Canada) with children and youth who have been in out-of-home care for at least a year. The AAR has been mandated since 2006 by the Ontario government for use each year with more than 7,000 children and youth in care in the province. This presentation will describe, in concrete terms and by means of an actual case study spanning 8 years, how the AAR was used to gather information to guide interventions with a female adolescent in care (now a young adult) who has now attained an impressive degree of resilience. The data from the AAR informed the young woman’s annual plan of care and was an important element in her impressive developmental trajectory. We will present, in the form of longitudinal graphs, the evolution of the young woman’s developmental assets, relationships with her caregivers and child welfare worker, placement satisfaction, foster parenting, shared familial activities, self-esteem, and academic success. By means of a video presentation, the young woman will share her thoughts and feelings about completing the AAR annually during the 8 years that she was in care. We will also describe how the collection of Ontario AAR data since 2002-2011 on large numbers of young people in care has influenced Ontario policy development and initiatives related to achieving better educational outcomes for young people in care. (238 words)
New Directions in European Child and Family Welfare

Speakers & Authors: Silvio Premoli

The Child & Family Welfare (CFW), the set of social care services for vulnerable children, adolescents and families is changing, by reason of a decline in resources and promising innovative practices. Looking carefully at the European CFW scenario, a series of recurring and common “directions” are emerging as the ripe fruit of 20 years of exchanges, thanks to the influence of the CRC and to the European Union integration policies (Grietens, 2010; Premoli, 2012).

This research was based on 3 years bibliographic research and outcomes from research-trainings in the field.

The emerging new directions in CFW, identified by the research, are:

• a Global Perspective to understand the evolution of the CFW, placing it in the overall planetary transformations
• the Social Pedagogy Perspective, to appreciate the whole person, whether a member or a professional, overcoming the structural incompleteness of CFW services
• the CRC-focused Perspective and the Child Rights-Based Approach
• the Family Preservation and Family Bonds Protection, oriented to consider the family as a whole, without opposing children's rights and parents' rights, in the light of the best interest of the child principle
• the In Search of Resilience, Strenghs and Beauty Approaches, enhancing the factors of resilience, strengths, beauty, and joining a common non deterministic vision of human development
• the Child Participation Approach to understand the perspective of children and young people and encourage their leading role in definition of decisions that affect them
• the Intercultural Approach, essential in a pluralistic world
• the Joint Approach, highlighting the need for professionals, with different education and disciplinary points of view, to work jointly and in a shared way
• the increasing interest about Evaluation, Quality and Research

The heart of this slow but radical transformation of the social work with vulnerable children, young people and families is the adoption of a Child Rights-based Approach, especially those rights enshrined in the CRC.

The CRC, indeed, is not just a law, but it has to be translated into social policy and into social pedagogical and care intervention purposes, as well as into a code of ethics for social workers.
Education of children in care and schooling as a protective factor

Inter-agency policies and practices to support Western Australian students in foster care

Speakers & Authors: Amy Schmidt

Effective collaboration between schools and child protection agencies is critical to improving educational outcomes for students in foster care. While American studies have identified significant barriers to collaboration, including poor communication, confidentiality restraints and role ambiguity, this topic is under-examined in the Australian context. The present case study addresses this research gap by investigating inter-agency collaboration from the perspective of child protection workers with The Department for Child Protection and Family Support (CPFS) in Western Australia. Participants described surprisingly strong working relationships with educators, guided by shared protocols for education planning and information sharing outlined in a jointly established Memorandum of Understanding. This presentation will focus on how these protocols and other structural factors influence inter-agency collaboration and impact the educational support available to Western Australian students in foster care.

The study's design was grounded within an interpretivist theoretical framework and included two stages of data collection: policy document analysis, and semi-structured individual interviews with eleven CPFS Caseworkers and Education Officers employed in metropolitan, regional and remote locations in Western Australia. Participants expressed that the provision of annual Documented Education Plans and joint case conferences for all students in foster care strengthened inter-agency communication and education planning accountability. However, considerable tensions stemmed from limited access to supplementary educational supports within both systems and a lack of mutual role understanding. Another key finding is the concern among participants that some educators would benefit from a better understanding of the impact of trauma on learning and behaviour. Further conceptualisations of these findings, based on Whittington's (2003) Two-Stage Model of Collaboration, consider how structural factors, practitioner identity, and the involvement of foster carers influence the collaborative process.

While the size of the study limited its scope to child protection workers, the perceptions of educators, foster carers, and students in foster care are also essential to a solid understanding of collaboration between these stakeholder groups. Nonetheless, insights into cross-system relationships offered in this presentation have the potential to enhance inter-agency collaboration and inform the development of future school and child protection agency partnership initiatives.
Evidence-based practice and implementation

Evaluating positive behaviour as an interactional strategy to address therapeutic goals: A conversation analysis

Speakers & Authors: Margot Jager, Andrea de Winter, Janneke Metselaar, Erik J. Knorth, Sijmen A. Reijneveld, Mike Huiskes

Aims: Dialectical behaviour therapy (DBT) is a promising intervention for adolescents with severe emotion regulation problems. Most research on this intervention has focused on its effectiveness for various client groups, but less attention has been given to the client-therapist interaction. A better understanding of the interactional practices that actually occur during therapy, may help to further improve the intervention. In this study we will analyse how a crucial activity in DBT, namely reinforcing clients' positive behaviour (e.g. skilful, adaptive, non-self-destructive), is used as an interactional strategy to realize therapeutic goals.

Design, methods and data: Three individual therapy sessions between one client-therapist couple were transcribed, and analysed in detail using conversation analysis. The weekly sessions were part of DBT, an outpatient treatment in a child and adolescent mental healthcare organization. The therapist in this study was trained in cognitive behaviour therapy and DBT. The client was a 19 year old girl diagnosed with an eating disorder and depressive symptoms.

Key findings: Behaviour was positively evaluated predominantly through an interactional structure which consisted of four basic elements: behaviour, compliment, account, and response. This structure is normative in the sense that especially the account-part is made interactionally relevant. This becomes apparent in the therapists’ preference for client agreement with the account, and hence the compliment worthiness of the behaviour. Disagreements were negotiated before the interaction at hand could be continued. When agreement about the evaluation was reached, the interactional structure was being continued, or partly worked through again.

Implications: The conversational practice of evaluating positive behaviour is utilized to create shared understanding about therapeutically relevant goals, norms and values. This is important in this type of therapy because it aims at replacing negative behaviour with positive behaviour, both types acknowledged as such by both client and therapist. This study shows how therapeutic goals are interactionally managed between client and therapist. In time this may even lead to an internalization of these goals, norm and values by the client, which may be of great importance for the effectiveness of treatment.

Key words: adolescent-professional communication, dialectical behaviour therapy
Health and wellbeing of children in care

Social images of institutions of residential care

Speakers & Authors: Joana Patrício, Maria Manuela Calheiros, Margarida Garrido, Diniz Lopes

The literature on residential care for children and youth suggests that there are negative social images associated to this type of service. However, there are few systematic studies developed specifically to assess these images. This study aims to explore these social images from a sample of 176 participants with and without personal and professional contact with this type of service. The results obtained from an open-response questionnaire asking participants to describe 5 attributes of institutions of residential care indicate that they are described mainly with positive attributes, but also with negative attributes; and the attributes used to describe them differ according to the target's age (child vs youth). The results obtained also indicate that the social image of the institutions of residential care is organized in three different profiles reflecting the association of specific attributes (one profile with positive characteristics related to the safety, boundaries and stability provided by these institutions; other profile with positive characteristics related to the emotional warmth and stimulation provided by these institutions; and other profile with negative characteristics related to the lack of emotional warmth, to the artificial environment and to the rigidity of these institutions).

Key words: social image, residential care, institutions, attributes
Health and wellbeing of children in care

Social images of children and youth in residential care

Speakers & Authors: Maria Manuela Calheiros, Joana Patrício, Margarida Garrido, Diniz Lopes

The literature on residential care for children and youth suggests that they are associated to a negative social image with impact on their well-being. However, there are few systematic studies developed specifically to assess these images. This study aims to explore these social images from a sample of 176 participants with and without personal and professional contact with this population. The results obtained from an open-response questionnaire asking participants to describe 5 attributes of children or young people living in residential care indicate that they are described mainly with negative attributes, and that the traits used to describe the children and youth differ according to the target’s age (child vs youth). The results obtained also indicate that the social image of the child and youth in residential care is organized in different profiles reflecting the association of specific attributes. These results highlight the importance of raising awareness in the general population and professionals for the existence and risk of these negative social images.

Key words: social image, residential care, children and youth, attributes
A randomized trial of the effect of monetary incentive on survey response for vulnerable children and youth

Speakers & Authors:  Jan Pejtersen, Turf Jakobsen

Introduction: Non-responders in questionnaire surveys may introduce bias and lower the validity of the studies. A Cochrane review has identified trials evaluating different ways of increasing response rates. The odds of responding on postal questionnaires were almost doubled using monetary incentive, and the odds were higher when the incentive was given with the questionnaires compared to only given after participants had responded. However, to our knowledge none of the studies concerned vulnerable children and youth. The purpose of the study was to investigate if a monetary incentive can increase the response rate on questionnaires for vulnerable children and youth.

Method: Data were taken from an intervention study aiming at creating network for different groups of vulnerable children and youth aged 8-23 years. The groups comprised: children in foster care, former foster youth, children of mental ill parents, children of parents with alcohol abuse and children raised in violent families. Questionnaire surveys concerning behavioral and psychosocial problems were performed before and after the six month intervention. The questionnaire included the five domains of the strengths and difficulties questionnaire (SDQ): conduct problems, emotional symptoms, hyperactivity, peer relationships, and prosocial behaviour. The response rates were 54% in both surveys. A follow up survey was performed one year after the intervention. To study the effect of incentive on survey response for this group of vulnerable children, the 270 participants were randomly allocated to receive a questionnaire together with a € 13 (100 dkr) voucher for the largest supermarket chain in Denmark or to only receive a questionnaire.

Results: The preliminary results showed that monetary incentive increased the response rate of the survey.

Keywords: SDQ, survey response rate, RCT
Barns psykiske helse i forbindelse med konfliktfylte samlivsbrudd

*Speakers & Authors: Rød Per Arne*


Det ble gjennomført dybdeintervju med barna enkeltvis, samt intervju med den av foreldrene der barna fikk fast bosted. Intervjuene foregikk fra 0,5 år til 8 år etter at domstolen hadde bestemt bosted og samværsordning.

Resultatene fra denne undersøkelsen viste at de fleste barna hadde emosjonelle reaksjoner i mange år etter samlivsbruddene. Reaksjonene fremkom som aggresive, engstelige, depressive og emosjoner knyttet til skyld og skam. For noen av barna var vurderingen at de var i behov for individuell behandling, for andre vurderte en at barna var i behov for støttetiltak. Noen få barn syntes lite påvirket av det de hadde vært gjennom.

Samlet tyder denne undersøkelsen på at konfliktfylte samlivsbrudd påvirker barns psykiske helse i et større omfang og over lengre tid enn noen tidligere studier har konkludert med. Dette har konsekvenser for forebygging og behandlingstiltak for disse barna.
Wednesday, 3rd September | Poster Reception | 17.00

Bridging the gap between research, policy and practice

Evidence based implementation of guidelines for child and family care in the Netherlands

Speakers & Authors: Karlijn Stals

The aim of this poster presentation is to discuss about an evidence based blueprint for implementation of guidelines in the Netherlands. This blueprint contains an optimal mix of knowledge: based on research, clinical expertise and client preferences.

In a very short period of time, fourteen guidelines are being developed for the Dutch field of child and family care, by the professional associations. These guidelines provide recommendations on how to handle within child and family care regarding topics like ADHD, out-of home placements, residential care and more. The guidelines are meant to improve the quality of care by reducing undesirable variations in the care given by professionals. All guidelines are evidence based, following the definition by Sackett (1996): with input from research evidence, clinical expertise and client preferences.

Developing a guideline is one thing, implementing that same guideline is another. Vulnerable children and their parents can only benefit from the potentials of these guidelines when professionals adopt the recommendations and succeed to integrate these in their daily practice. Moreover, not only professionals need to adopt the guidelines, there is an important role for employers, trade association, education, inspectorate and financiers as well.

The presentation will be about a case example: the implementation of fourteen guidelines in the Dutch child and family care system. In this case example, mixed methods were used: literature study provides the research evidence on how to implement; quantitative and qualitative data from different surveys among organizations of child care provide the clinical expertise on how to implement and qualitative interviews among parents provides the client preferences in this matter. All these findings provide a blueprint for evidence based implementation of guidelines for child and family care in the Netherlands.

Key finding to share in this poster presentation are that it is crucial to combine the different sources of knowledge: research, practice and client preferences. Not only for the development of guidelines, but also for the implementation of these guidelines. We will share recommendations from all types of knowledge and show how these can complement each other.

Key words: evidence based, implementation, guidelines
Voices of children, youth and families

Parents' expected barriers in accessing psychosocial care for their child: common and associated with parents' educational level and children's ethnicity

Speakers & Authors: Marieke Nanninga, Sijmen A. Reijneveld, Erik J. Knorth, Danielle E. M. C. Jansen

Aims: Parents with a child suffering from psychosocial problems frequently encounter barriers to psychosocial care for their child: estimates vary from 35-61%. Perceived and expected barriers may hinder access, but evidence on expectations of barriers is lacking. The aim of this study was to examine parents' expectations of barriers when considering to seek psychosocial care for their child, including the associated child and family factors. We also examined differences in expectations between parents of children enrolled and not enrolled in psychosocial care.

Design, methods and data: We obtained data via questionnaires on a cohort of 1,331 children (response rate 56.6%) in the north of the Netherlands, ages 4-18 years. Data were collected at enrolment in preventive child health care, child and adolescent social and mental health care. We obtained similar data on 463 children (response rate 70.3%) not enrolled in psychosocial care. Expected barriers were measured with a modified version of the 'Barriers to Treatment Participation Scale' and analysed with descriptive and logistic regression analyses.

Key findings: Of all parents 68% expected one or more barriers to psychosocial care. On average 2.7 barriers were expected. Barriers of the category 'perceived relevance of treatment' were most often expected (M=2.0, SD=0.8, range=1-5), followed by 'treatment demands and issues' (M=1.8, SD=0.8), 'relationship with the therapist' (M=1.8, SD=0.8) and 'stressors and obstacles competing with treatment' (M=1.5, SD=0.6). Overall, more barriers were expected by low-educated parents and for children of non-Dutch ethnicity. Parents of children enrolled in psychosocial care expected more barriers compared to parents of children not enrolled. Further differences will be presented at the conference.

Implications: Most parents expect barriers in accessing psychosocial care for their child, especially parents with low educational level and with children of non-Dutch ethnicity. The help-seeking process should be facilitated in particular for these parents, if they are willing to use care, but do not reach it due to barriers they expect.

Key words: psychosocial problems, barriers to psychosocial care
Voices of children, youth and families

Looked After Young People at Risk of Offending: Their Views of a Mixed-Gender Placement

Speakers & Authors: Jennifer Copley, Daniel Johnson

Aims
There is limited understanding about the use and benefits of single- and mixed-gender residential placements for looked after and accommodated young people. The current study aimed to start consideration of this topic by exploring young peoples' experiences of living in a mixed-gender residential placement.

Changes to residential child care placements, from single-gender to mixed-gender, highlighted limitations in research and guidance on the use and management of single- or mixed gender placements. These changes are in contrast to some publications which note a continuing need for access to single-sex provision, with concerns raised about mixed-gender placements impacting on offending behaviour and being able to meet the different needs of vulnerable girls and boys.

Method and research design
Thematic analysis was used to elicit key themes. These key themes were discussed in relation to areas important to young people, areas that warrant further understanding and practical implications regarding the use and management of mixed-gender placements.

Data sample
Semi-structured interviews were completed with four boys and three girls, aged 14-16, who were living in mixed-gender residential units in an education and care centre in the West of Scotland.

The education and care centre offers residential, foster and secure accommodation to young people who have experienced a range of behaviour difficulties and adverse experiences.

Key Findings
Thematic analysis, using an inductive approach, elicited one global theme; Gender should be considered, but is not a priority; and four organising themes; Mixed gender living is normal and beneficial; Living with other people is difficult, regardless of gender; Gender has its place and Other issues are more relevant. The analysis highlighted the relevance of gender focused research and exploring service users experiences.

Exploring young people's experiences provided a starting point to the question of 'single- versus mixed-gender placements'; providing vital insight into areas that warrant further exploration and areas of development that may improve the management of mixed-gender residential placements and the support offered to young people within such environments.

Key words: Residential child care, young people, gender
Evidence-based practice and implementation

From practice to principles - Capitalising learning from 15 years of child protection development in Albania

Speakers & Authors: Rachel Harris, Ian Milligan

Countries in many parts of the world seek to improve their protection of children by developing a rights-based nation-wide system populated with local, culturally sensitive services. There is an impetus to move away from “disconnected projects towards a more systematic policy development and programming that considers the child and family in a more holistic fashion…” (UNICEF, 2011).

Yet the challenges of implementing a system in countries with few resources and limited professional capacities are considerable. In the case of Albania, the legacy of communist rule and isolation from other countries means that systematic child protection and welfare started from a low base. There was an absence of personal social services and civil society organisations. Such child welfare provision as did exist was in the form of large children’s homes, while foster-care was unknown. Over the last 15 years, Terre des hommes (Tdh) Mission in Albania has worked on a range of programmes to improve the welfare of children, through a focus on the development of community-based child care services, capacity-building and working in multiple partnerships with families, professionals, local and international NGOs and state actors. This abstract concerns a ‘Capitalisation of Learning’ Process undertaken for Tdh that sought to review the history of programme development in Albania, identify key achievements, and synthesise learning into principles and methods.

The Capitalisation involved reviewing an extensive body of documents, as well as research from Albania on child-trafficking, transnational protection of children (Shuteriqi et al, 2006) and establishing Child Protection Units. Stakeholders engaged with the Capitalisation via interviews and focus groups in Albania, and a workshop with key Tdh staff in Budapest.

An interactive timeline of key events in the development of the Albanian child protection system will be presented. We will also outline the working principles identified by the Capitalisation, namely:

• ‘Evolution’ or being open to changing focus.
• Valuing evidence (to convince children at risk, for accountability, and to inform practice and policy).
• Commitment to partnership working.
• Considering the whole system.
• Remaining in touch with practice while thinking strategically.
Health and wellbeing of children in care

Relation between CBCL syndromes and PTSD diagnosis according to CPSS among children in care

*Speakers & Authors: Visitación Fernández, Jose Antonio López-Pina, Maravillas Castro, Mavi Alcántara, Concepción López-Soler*

The aim of the present study was to evaluate the relation between syndromes identified by the Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL) (Achenbach, 1991) and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) diagnostic criteria (APA, 2000). The Child PTSD Symptom Scale (CPSS) (Foa, Johnson, Feeny, & Tredwell, 2001) was administered and diagnosis was evaluated according to the psychometric criteria proposed by Jaycox and colleagues (Jaycox et al., 2002, 2009; Kataoka et al., 2003, 2011), which states that CPSS scores equal to or greater than 18 indicate evidence of severe PTSD symptomatology. The analysis was performed by using contingency tables.

The total sample consisted of 86 children and adolescents (ages 6-17 years), with 44 (51.2%) males and 42 (48.8%) females, who had suffered intrafamilial child maltreatment, were separated from their parents and were under child protective services of the Comunidad Autónoma de la Región de Murcia (Autonomous Community of the Region of Murcia) in Spain.

Results showed that among females, 75% of those ages 8 through 12 and 66% of those ages 13 to 17 met for PTSD according to the applied criteria and presented two or more syndromes defined by the CBCL. Among males, 57% of those ages 8 through 12 and 67% of those ages 13 through 17 met for PTSD and presented two or more CBCL syndromes. The children and adolescents of our sample who presented severe PTSD symptomatology also presented more psychopathological problems.
Foster care: different paths and their implications

Overview of programs aiming to increase the involvement of birth parents in foster care

Speakers & Authors: Marijke Robberechts, Frank van Holen, Skrallan de Maeyer, Femke Vanschoonlandt

For many years the principle of ‘inclusiveness’, i.e. keeping birth families involved with their children while in foster care, is accepted theoretically in child welfare practice. This parental involvement is associated with greater motivation to change, a better understanding of developmental needs of foster children by the birth parents, the ability to take responsibilities as a parent and a reunification that goes sooner and easier. However, parental involvement is not easy to establish. In this review we searched for programs aiming to increase parental involvement in foster care and for their effectiveness.

A literature search was performed. Databases and search machines were searched using the following search terms: foster care, parental involvement, participation, engagement and birth parents. Articles were selected if at least one of the search terms were present in the title, abstract or keywords and the article described a program to promote parental involvement. Only seven articles were selected, describing eight programs.

The eight programs were divided in four categories: practical guidance of birth parents, emotional guidance of birth parents, increase parental participation and combinations of the above. Only two programs used robust designs to evaluate their effectiveness. Some other programs only asked participants to evaluate the usefulness of and their satisfaction with the program.

Few programs were developed to support the involvement of birth parents in foster care and the effects of the programs were small. Programs focusing on practical guidance were positively evaluated by the birth parents. Focusing on the parental participation, by giving the birth parents a place in the decision process, was found to be effective. The effects of emotional guidance of the parents, aiming to help them accept the foster care placement, were small. The combined model showed a large drop-out and low attendancy.

This review clearly indicates a need to develop an evidence-based program to support parental involvement.

Key words
Foster care, parental involvement, birth parents
Health and wellbeing of children in care

What is the relationship between local authority placement type on the mental health of independent migrant children? A systematic review of the evidence

Speakers & Authors: Aoife O'Higgins

Aims and Objectives: Independent migrant children suffer from high levels of mental health problems. On arrival in high-income countries they are placed by relevant authorities in different types of accommodation, including foster care, group homes or shared housing.

This review investigates the relationship between placement types and mental health outcomes of independent migrant children in high income countries.

Methods: Nine databases and several websites were searched. Any empirical study that incorporated an analysis of mental health outcomes of independent migrant children by accommodation type was included. Quantitative and qualitative studies were both included. Only published studies in English from high-income countries were included.

Key findings: The search returned 245 studies. The quantitative element of the review selected eight papers for inclusion. Findings included: independent migrant children living alone had the poorest mental health outcomes compared to those living in high support arrangements. Youth living with friends and family of the same ethnicity had better outcomes. While these findings all point in a similar direction, the limitations of the methodologies mean that further research is required to determine whether placement can have an impact on ameliorating mental health outcomes. Findings from the qualitative strand are preliminary only. These complement findings from quantitative studies as they provide in-depth data about migrant young people's expectations and experiences of placements and their understanding of mental health as well as coping strategies. By linking quantitative and qualitative data, this review brings us closer to understanding the unique impact that placement can have on mental health of independent migrant children.
Health and wellbeing of children in care

Prevalence of emotional and behavioral disorders in a Spanish sample of children and young people in residential care. Exploring the use of therapeutic services and family background.

Speakers & Authors: Carla González, Eduardo Martín, Amaia Bravo, Jorge Fernandez Del Valle, María Vicenta Alcántara

International investigations indicate consistently the frequency of mental health problems in children placed in residential child care, compared to the general population of the same age. Figures range from 40 to 80%, which means four times more than the average figures for general population.

Despite the high proportion of children in care with mental disorders, there is not data about this matter in Spain. This study aims to fill this knowledge gap, describing main data about the prevalence of emotional and behavioural problems and socio-familiar and personal factors related to these needs.

This presentation shows data collected in a sample of 1,226 cases from 6 to 18 years old, placed in residential child care in several autonomous communities of Spain. Information about the use and referrals to therapeutic services has been collected, as well as family and personal background, focusing our interest on mental health antecedents and risk factors.

The main aim of this presentation is to describe prevalence of emotional and behavioural disorders of children in residential care, including the analysis of risk factors in the family background, particularly antecedents of mental health problems and suicidal behaviours, as well as intellectual disability.

Preliminary results show that 48.7% (n=585) are receiving therapeutic treatment (psychological, psychiatric, and/or pharmacological treatment). There are other results with clinical relevance: 7.5% (n=89) have suicidal behaviour and 16.5% (n=198) have intellectual disabilities. These data show a high number of children placed in residential care that are receiving mental therapeutic treatment and the need to implement detection and referral systems to address their needs.
Health and wellbeing of children in care

Children in and out of care, and their health and wellbeing - using data from a Danish longitudinal Study

Speakers & Authors: Alva Albaek Nielsen

The aim is to introduce the Danish survey CiC, and the opportunities it holds for researchers in and outside of Denmark.

Children in Care - a Danish longitudinal Study (CiC), is a survey of all children born in 1995 who are, or have been, placed in foster homes or residential institutions in Denmark. CiC has three waves, when the children are 7, 11 and 15 years old. Next wave will be in 2014, when the children are aged 19. The survey contains questionnaires for the children, mothers, foster parents, residential staff, and social case workers, to enable a broader perspective on the life and challenges of children in, and out of, care.

In order to provide a perspective, we compare with The Danish Longitudinal Survey of Children’ (DALSC), which follows a representative sample of 6,000 randomly selected children from the 1995 cohort. The CiC and DALSC children are surveyed the same years, with questionnaires to a large extend repeating questions.

Some of the newest results on CiC focus on among other things self-reported health of children aged 15, and the help which these children experience to receive from social case workers regarding their health.

Results show that
- A greater amount of children in and out of care have troubles with either over- or underweight and have a troubled focus on food.
- Almost a fourth of children out of care don't eat breakfast, and rarely eat fruits or vegetables. However they don't eat junk-food more often than their peers.
- A fifth of children out of care rarely do exercise.
- Children in and out of care experience their health as worse than their peers do.
- More than a third of children in and out of care smoke cigarettes on a daily basis.
- More than a fifth of children in care, and 13 pct. of children out of care have experienced abuse within the last half year.
- More than a fifth of children in care find it hard to talk to their social worker regarding their care place and 16 pct. find it hard to talk about health issues.
Empowerment and Gender violence prevention of girls in residential care through peer mentoring experiences

Speakers & Authors: Mireia Foradada Villar, Josefina Sala Roca, Laura Arnau-Sbatés, Marta Bertrán Tarrés, Andreu Villaba Biarnés

In a previous study we found that life project of many of girls in residential care is motherhood without considering a professional or vocational career. Many of girls in residential care become adolescent mothers, some of them are victims of mistreatment by their partners and most of their babies end up needing to be protected by social services.

The aim of this communication is to present preliminary data about attitudes and conceptions about sentimental relationship and gender violence of girls in residential care from their perspective. These data is part of a pilot study about the impact of peer-mentoring in gender violence prevention and empowerment in girls in residential care.

An exploratory qualitative design was used. 8 girls in residential care and 8 female university students that participate in a peer-mentoring project were interviewed. Girls were asked about their attitudes to gender violence, social networking and life projects. Both the girls in care and university students agree that infidelity and lying are the types of behavior that they wouldn't forgive their boyfriends for. Some of the girls in care add they wouldn't forgive to be beaten and university student wouldn't forgive lack of respect.

Nearly all girls in care have boyfriend and even though they are older, less than half of the university girls have boyfriend. The university girls usually use condoms within their sexual relationships, while most of the girls in care use contraceptive pills.

Girls in care recognize different forms of gender violence; nevertheless they justify the boyfriends' attempts to limit their freedom (going out with friends, checking their facebook account, mobile, etc.). In fact mentors reported dependent behaviors of girls in care (asking boyfriend permissions to go out, reporting every act they do to their boyfriend, allowing them supervising their friends, etc.) and maltreatment behaviors in their boyfriends (not allowing them to speak or use the mobile, to go out from the residence with other girls, etc).

This study concludes it is urgent to implement preventive programs against gender violence in residential care.

Keywords: gender violence, residential care, sentimental relationships
Transitions out of care: challenges and opportunities

Turning Points to Higher Education among Care Leavers

*Speakers & Authors: Benjamin Strahl, Tehila Refaeli*

Children who grew up in care institutions tend to have many difficulties in the years after leaving care, including challenges related to their low education achievements when they were still in care. Pathways to higher education are therefore challenging to the point of being impossible. Therefore, it is important to discover the factors that predict the integration of care leavers in higher education.

The aim of this study is exploring events that could be identified as “turning points” in the biographical stories of the care leavers, who were successful in their integration into higher education. We attempt to understand the various components of these events making them positive turning points.

**Method:** We used a biographical approach in collecting and analyzing qualitative interview data. As part of a German-Israeli research project, we conducted 28 biographical interviews with care leavers who had successfully enrolled in higher education. We chose two interviews for the current presentation, one from Germany and one from Israel, where a life event led eventually to integration in higher education.

In analyzing the substance of the turning points in the stories of two care leavers, we identified four critical components contributing to the process of integration in higher education: 1. A significant life event that occurred, which created an opportunity for a change in the life course. 2. This opportunity is connected to a biographical learning process of the person. 3. This opportunity is accompanied and prepared for with the help of significant others. 4. Ongoing personal support following the event and the biographical learning process in order to create a lasting change. Therefore, instead of the idea of a “turning point” as a single event, we claim that it is necessary to look for a “turning point process” in the life story of care leavers who had successfully enrolled in higher education.

The implications for practice highlight the importance of creating opportunities for positive changes for young people in care, but also the need for ongoing support to preserve the effects of these changes.

**Key words:** care leavers, transition to higher education, turning point
Improvement of residential youth care by matching needs and services of the clients

Speakers & Authors: Carolien Konijn, Resy Broekhoven, Annemarie van de Vall

Spirit, a youth care organization in the Netherlands, has evaluated the match of the residential youth care services to the needs of the clients. On that basis improvements have been implemented. The study was motivated by a big financial cut and the insight that children with attachment disorder need more continuity and stability than Spirit had offered the children.

Matching needs and services is carried out as follows: a random selection of the clients who had finished residential care at Spirit facilities in 2012 has been analyzed by psychologists and behavior scientists. In a consensus meeting of these professionals need groups for the young clients have been identified. In a following meeting, the care that matches those needs based on evidence based knowledge and practice based evidence has been indicated. In a third meeting the proposed care has been compared to the current care. Improvements that need to be carried out to match the services to the identified needs of the children have been discussed, not only with professionals of Spirit but also with co-operating professionals of mental health care organizations and the funder of Spirit. The gap between research, practice and policy was bridged this way. The discussion was based on facts of the clients and their needs, and not so much on views and values alone. Mutual understanding emerged.

An implementation plan has been carried out. Examples of the aimed improvements: (1) Foster parents are supported by therapists of a mental health care organization so children with relatively severe (mental health) problems can stay living in a family situation in stead of being taken into residential care. (2) Training of residential group workers and foster parents to improve their trauma sensitivity so the treatment of children with maltreatment and abuse experience can be changed for the better. (3) A parttime residential care program with interventions for children, parenting support and family counseling that enables the children to return to their family in three months time.

On the conference our experiences with the matching needs and services procedure and the following implementation activities are being discussed.
Outcome monitoring in clinical practice, organisation development, and youth policy

Speakers & Authors: Tom van Yperen

Aim and objectives - The aim of this study was to explore the state of the art, relevance and potentials of outcome monitoring at different levels: clinical practice, organisation development, and youth policy. The objective was to formulate recommendations to stakeholders for the further development of outcome monitoring in child and youth care.

Methods - The study used qualitative methods to review the literature.

Research design - Literature and case studies on the use of outcome monitoring on the level of clinical practice, organization and youth policy were reviewed narratively.

Data - Included were articles from peer reviewed journals, dissertations, and Dutch case descriptions, covering the years 2000-2012.

Key findings - In clinical practice, outcome monitoring does not seem to contribute to the effectiveness of treatment if clients show improvement from the start. In cases lacking this initial improvement, outcome monitoring does seem to contribute to effectiveness, especially if feedback is provided to both the practitioner and the client, and the practitioner is provided with tools that support clinical improvement.

The literature on the use and potentials of outcome monitoring in the development of youth care organisations is scarce. Case studies from the so called ‘Breakthrough Series’ show that monitoring in general can be a powerful tool for improving the performance of teams and organisations. Whether or not this also counts for outcome monitoring is uncertain.

As to the use and potentials of outcome monitors in the development of youth policy, literature is also very scarce. We found a few Dutch case studies showing that monitor data help to prioritise issues and focus policy interventions. But the scope of the routine measurements in these cases was limited and made it impossible to draw any conclusions on the potentials of these measurements.

The study offers support for the recommendation to use outcome monitoring in clinical practice. Although it is plausible that outcome monitoring can also contribute to a more effective organisation and youth policy, more research is needed to show its potentials.

Key words - Outcome monitoring, innovation, youth policy
Foster care: different paths and their implications

Developing a CRC Rights-based Approach in Foster Care

Speakers & Authors: Silvio Premoli, Frederique Lucet, Ivana Jedud Boric, Mónica López López, Nelli Petrova Dimitrova, Vincent Ramon, Robert Theisen, Bep van Sloten, Madeleine Tearse

APFEL (Action for the promotion of Foster Care at European level) is promoting a research-training project, aimed at identifying and disseminating tools that will put the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child at the heart of professional PRACTICE in Foster Care (FC) for vulnerable children (Premoli, 2012).

The project focuses on the dissemination of a child rights based approach through a training process that will enhance, in the light of the principle of the best interest of the child, the issues of co-parenting, the right to stay in contact with parents when placed out of home, and the voice of the child in particular.

In the EU there’s wide consensus on the relevance of the CRC. Yet, there is too much heterogeneity, in terms of knowledge of the CRC by the general public, also among professionals working with children and children themselves. Some countries are suffering from a lack of implementation of the CRC. This is potentially counterproductive, since the gap between “Law” and practice causes discomfort, confusion and puts professionals at risk (stress, conflict in mediating and assessing situations; lack of clear benchmarks and objectives). Professionals, daily confronted with the complexity and heavy emotional burden of child protection, must be equipped with a common tool box that will guide their practice, giving them a sense of security of being “on the right track” and following common values and goals. The clarity and precision of the “framework” will empower them to observe, to think and intervene in situations encountered in child protection and in particular in FC. The CRC can and should provide such common framework.

The methodology will be based on: analysis of the scientific literature in the field of children’s rights-based approach; context analysis on FC systems in European countries; skill assessment of professionals operating in FC Services; definition of a Conceptual Framework for a CRC-based Approach in FC.

A Training Model will be developed with the involvement of foster care leavers, birth families and foster families.

Key Words: Rights of the Child, Foster Care Professionals Training
Organisational Overhead Costs to Increase Programme Sustainability in the Child Welfare System: A Cross-Cultural Challenge

Speakers & Authors: Lisa Holmes, Lisa Saldana

Decision-makers in leadership roles are often daunted with the task of balancing the cost of operating a child welfare organization, providing necessary services to meet the needs of vulnerable children and families, and introducing new programmes to the agency that will provide long-term cost savings. Part of the challenge includes understanding resources that are necessary to achieve programme sustainability. Decision makers can both over- and underestimate the level of administrative overhead costs necessary, which in turn might influence the decisions that are made regarding programme adoption.

Administrative overhead costs were assessed as a part of two different projects/research programmes. For the first, a framework to assess organisational overheads has been developed and subsequently piloted across a range of projects as part of a programme of research in England. The second, a large implementation trial in the US, assessed overhead costs related to the implementation of an evidence-based treatment for youth in foster care, with the goal of identifying necessary costs over and above the cost of the intervention. Standardised methods for collection of costs across both contexts will be described. Common overhead expenses will be identified and coded into separate resource categories.

Data were collected using a combination of qualitative informants and direct expense reporting from child welfare agencies or child welfare contracted agencies. Data included qualitative impressions and direct expense logs. Estimates were determined using aggregate data in each of the contexts separately. Both unique and common overhead costs were identified.

Outcomes suggest that organisational overhead costs are critical in determining the operating costs for agencies engaged in multiple, complex, service delivery. Adopting evidence-based practices entails an adjustment in overhead expenses, beyond the addition of the cost of the practice. Costs appear to be impacted less by cultural than system level contexts. This presentation will outline how overheads data has been and can be used to inform strategic decision making about the implementation of programmes across child welfare agencies. Furthermore, the session will highlight how standardised approaches to costing organisational overheads can make a difference to the children and families in receipt of services.
Selvskadende adfærd blandt danske unge - baggrund og indsatser

Speakers & Authors: Katrine Schjødt Vammen, Mogens Nygaard Christoffersen

Denne præsentation fokuserer på unge, der udøver selvskadende adfærd. Præsentationen har til formål at give praktikere en forståelse af baggrunden for selvskadende adfærd samt give bud på mulige strategier, der kan tages i brug for at hjælpe og støtte de unge. Både forskere og praktikere peger på, at selvskade skal forstås som en copingmekanisme, der tages i brug for at håndtere ukontrollerbare og uudholdelige følelser. Disse følelser kan blandt andet stamme fra traumatiske begivenheder i den unges opvækst. For udenforstående kan selvskadende adfærd fremstå som et mislykket selvmordsforsøg. For langt de fleste unge er den selvskadende adfærd derimod en måde, hvorpå de kan undgå at tage deres eget liv. Vi har spurt 2.980 unge født i Danmark i 1984, hvoraf 852 har en børnesag, om de har udøvet selvskadende adfærd. De unge er også blevet spurgt ind til, hvorvidt de har været udsat for forskellige former for mishandling, andre traumatiske livsbegivenheder samt, hvorvidt de har modtaget social støtte i barndommen. Vi arbejder i projektet med to forskningshypoteser. Den første hypotese er, at risikoen for at udøve selvskadende adfærd stiger, hvis den unge har været udsat for mishandling og andre traumatiske begivenheder i barndommen. Den anden hypotese er, at risikoen for at udøve selvskadende adfærd mindskes, hvis den unge har modtaget social støtte i barndommen. Begge hypoteser blev bekræftet. Unge der har været udsat for fysisk mishandling og seksuelt misbrug i barndommen har en forhøjet risiko for at udøve selvskadende adfærd, mens unge der har modtaget social støtte i barndommen i lavere grad udøver selvskadende adfærd. Vores resultater bakker samtidig op om forståelsen af, at selvskadende adfærd er en copingmekanisme, der tages i brug for at håndtere ukontrollerbare og uudholdelige følelser. Der eksisterer velafprøvede behandlingsmetoder rettet mod selvskadende adfærd. Samtidig taler vores resultater for at inddrage social støtte i en behandlingssammenhæng.
Developing guidelines for youth care in the Netherlands: the Guideline Severe Behavioural Problems

Speakers & Authors: Marjan de Lange, Leoniek Kroneman

The aim is to inspire how to bridge the gap between research, policy and practice. In the Netherlands we achieved this by developing the Guideline Severe Behavioral Problems. This guideline is based on research-, practice- and client-based knowledge. Testing it in practice lead to improvement of the guideline.

The Guideline Severe Behavioural Problems gives practical guidelines on five main themes:
1. Diagnostics of severe behavioural problems;
2. Effective interventions in diminishing severe behavioural problems;
3. Effective strategies in raising children with behaviour problem in residential care;
4. Use of CBT by group care workers in residential care;
5. Maintaining children's school career

The guideline was developed by creating an optimal mix of evidence-, practice-, and client-based knowledge. We used literature study and explored the knowledge, experience and opinions of experts, professionals and clients in different sessions. Furthermore we tested the practical use of the guidelines in 6 teams. Three professional associations, who are the owners of the guideline (psychologists, educationalists and social care workers) commented on the guidelines from their perspectives.

This approach resulted in practical guidelines for professionals that incorporate both state of the art knowledge and practical experience. The resulting products are: the guidelines themselves, a theoretical foundation, schematic hand-outs and a summary for clients. In the Netherlands the guideline can be used in youth care after authorisation by the three professional associations (the owners of the guideline).

In the poster presentation we will show how professionals and clients influenced the development of the guideline. We'll discuss some practical recommendations clients gave about shared decision making and we will show how testing the guideline in practice lead to more practical recommendations. We'll finish the poster presentation with some notes on the implementation of the guideline.

Keywords: guidelines, severe behavioural problems, evidence based practice
Foster care: different paths and their implications

How an organisation can provide a supportive environment for foster families

Speakers & Authors: Posch Christian, Line Grove Hermansen

SOS Children's Villages is an international organisation focusing on children without parental care. For 60 years SOS Children's Villages has practiced family based care; during the last 15 years SOS Children's Villages has also developed various models of foster care beside the core model on a global level (e.g. US, Japan, Finland, Norway, Columbia). No matter which model, the task for an organisation is to provide a supportive environment for the families. The objective of the presentation is to explore different ways to do so, as well as present standards to guide the actions.

Concretely the aim of the presentation is to:
1) Highlight the similarities and the differences of the models and the specific relations of the foster families to the providing organisation
2) Explore the possibility to live like a form of "normal" family or as a professional foster family and the dependencies, asking the question: How does the relation of the caretakers to the providing organisation and to the state authorities inflict on this?
3) Present the standards and guidelines to support the field of alternative care, which are used by SOS Children's Villages - first and foremost the 'UN Guidelines for alternative care' and the 'Quality4Children standards'

The method is analysing of existing reports of SOS foster family systems and in depth interviews with all kind of people working within these systems.

The presenter holds a Ph.d. in psychology and has worked with SOS Children's Villages since 1986. Among others he has been project director of "Quality4Children".
Holistic approach for the inquiry, diagnosis and management of cases of child abuse and neglect: National Protocol of inquiry, diagnosis and management of cases of child abuse and neglect

Speakers & Authors: George Nikolaidis, Angeliki Gyftopoulou, Aikaterini Kyriakou, Daphne Stamati

Thus far, there is lack of coordination and interconnection of agencies and professionals as regards the investigation, diagnosis and management of Child Abuse and Neglect cases. This reduces the effectiveness of cases’ management and creates weaknesses in the formulation and implementation of new interventions.

The National Protocol of inquiry, diagnosis and management of cases of child abuse and neglect is designed to promote an interdisciplinary, coordinated and collaborative approach, providing clearly stated guidelines to a network of professionals who work with children on a daily basis (pediatricians, child psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, teachers) and professionals who work specifically in the field of child abuse and neglect.

More specifically, the Protocol aims to provide information for the legal framework, the process of recognizing and reporting child abuse and neglect, the role of each professional involved and to build an effective network of action for the authorities, organizations and professionals involved in a suspected or substantiated child abuse and neglect case. The methodology of the development of the Protocol consisted of bibliographic research on good practices in English speaking countries regarding aspects of recognition, reporting, intervention and managing child abuse and neglect (handbooks and protocols for different professionals), a review of the existing Greek legal framework and expert review teams assessing the drafted protocol and its applicability.

Along with the Protocol a manual will be developed (“The manual for the protocol of inquiry, diagnosis and management of cases of child abuse and neglect”) encompassing step by step guidelines for professionals using the protocol, according to their specialty and a four type scheme: physical abuse, sexual abuse, psychological abuse and neglect.

Overall, the development of a homogeneous policy regarding child maltreatment is expected to ensure more cases of Child Abuse and Neglect are recognized and reported and to establish a collaborative process that will secure the safety and well-being of abused children, while avoiding the danger of secondary victimization during the process of investigation and intervention.
Evidence-based practice and implementation

Child Abuse and Neglect: An overview of Surveillance Systems in Europe, USA, Canada and Australia

Speakers & Authors: Chara Tompra, Maria-Anastasia Tsana, George Nikolaidis

Globally, one of the key priorities in addressing the phenomenon of child maltreatment— which is considered a major public health problem— is to develop national child maltreatment data collection and monitoring systems. In Greece, however, up to now, no such systems exist. The necessity for recording and tracking cases of child abuse and neglect (CAN) and measuring its incidence in order to implement intervention and prevention policies, has led to an effort to set up a national system for reporting CAN.

The study's main objectives were to identify existing national practices and procedures regarding systematic maintenance of CAN records in Europe, USA, Canada and Australia (mostly electronic databases and registries), the type of data collected and the persons who have access to these systems.

A literature review was conducted aiming to identify existing child maltreatment surveillance systems in Europe, USA, Canada and Australia. The search included published and unpublished literature (grey): scientific journals, governmental websites, internal departmental reports and policy papers.

In most countries, records of CAN reports are maintained by child protection or social services agencies. In Europe, most countries do not have a National Surveillance System for CAN. In Australia only 3 States do. In the USA, most states maintain centralized databases of CAN investigations. In Canada, only a few provinces maintain statutory CAN registers while others have a centralized database of child protection cases.

The type of data collected varies but commonly includes demographic information about the child and its family, the incident, the perpetrator and any investigation's findings. Access to registered data also varies, but in general, it is permitted for people with a direct interest in a case, health or mental health professionals, child care and child protection workers, law enforcement or legal professionals.

As social and child protection services come into contact with a wider variety of cases, they are a valuable source of qualitative and quantitative data, even though the data is limited to reported cases.
Education of children in care and schooling as a protective factor

Academic Functioning of Children Involved with Child Welfare Services: Progress & Future Directions

Speakers & Authors: Jaime Wegner-Lohin, Nico Trocme

Children involved with child welfare services are at increased risk of poor educational outcomes when compared with their non-maltreated peers both across Canada and internationally. The 2008 Canadian Incidence Study for Reported Child Abuse and Neglect (CIS-2008) indicates academic difficulty as the most prevalent child functioning concern for children involved in maltreatment-related investigations. In 2008, school aged children were involved in an estimated 160,533 child maltreatment-related investigations conducted in Canada, with an estimated 41,815 (26%) investigations noting a concern of academic difficulty. In this presentation, descriptive data from the CIS-2008 will be used to provide a profile of investigations involving children with noted academic difficulty to gain a better understanding of which children are most likely to demonstrate poor education outcomes. Current program and policy initiatives targeted at monitoring education outcomes and improving access to educational opportunities for Canadian children involved with child welfare services will be presented. Implications and recommendations for improving educational outcomes for children involved with child welfare services in policy, practice and research will also be discussed.
Birth mothers’ experience of compulsory adoption in the context of youth protection in Quebec (Canada)

Speakers & Authors: Poirier Marie-Andree, Page Geneviève, Piche Anne-Marie, Turcotte Geneviève

In Quebec, Canada, about 300 children are adopted from care annually. The majority of these adoptions take place through a foster-to-adopt program. This program allows a child at high risk for abandonment to be placed with a family who wishes to adopt him before he is legally eligible for adoption.

According to Charlton et al. (1998), the most intrusive intervention that the state can have in the life of families is when adoption takes place against the wishes of the parents. Adoption in Quebec exists only in its plenary form, meaning that the adoption judgment severs definitively the original filiation and the child ceases to belong to his birth family. The social and legal process leading to child adoption is a difficult experience for birth parents (Smeeton et al., 2010). In this context, it is essential to understand this process, in particular, from the point of view of an all-too-often forgotten actor: the birth mother. Indeed, despite few studies, we must recognize that birth parents are the least understood members of the adoptive triad, compared to adoptees and adoptive parents (O’Leary & Baden, 2005).

The research design is qualitative and exploratory. We will conduct semi-structured interviews with mothers (N=15) whose child has been declared eligible for adoption following the intervention of the child protection. The analysis will be realised using the grounded theory. This theory allows to go beyond the simple description of the phenomenon and it enables to organize the data in order to provide some explanations on the experience of mothers.

The collect is in progress, the preliminary results presented will focus on the perspective of mothers regarding, how they are informed of what is expected of them and the available services, the consequences on their failure to take action, how they are involved in decisions regarding them or their child, and their need for support and assistance during and after any measure involving the placement and adoption of their child.
Foster care: different paths and their implications

Foster care profiles: A guide to identifying at-risk placements

Speakers & Authors: Isabel M. Bernedo, María D. Salas, Miguel Angel García-Martín, María J. Fuentes

Research on foster care shows a growing interest in knowing what factors exert influence on success or failure of the placements. Several studies have analysed the variables that influence the outcome of family foster care. The main variables addressed by these studies were behaviour problems and impulsivity/inattention in foster children, affective relationships, parenting style, and level of burden in the foster parents. This study aimed to determine whether distinct profiles can be identified among foster placements with common characteristics, and also sought to define a predictive function for the success or failure of foster care. Participants included foster children and their respective foster families. The sample comprised 104 non-kinship foster children in long-term foster care (56 boys and 48 girls) whose mean age at the time of data collection was 11 years. These children were being fostered in 86 families, corresponding to 71 foster fathers and 86 foster mothers. Access to foster families and information about the foster placements was authorized and provided by the Child Protection Agency in Andalusia (Spain). Foster carers gave informed consent. All the foster families agreed to participate in the study. A quantitative methodology was used during both the collection and the data analysis. A k-means cluster analysis identified three clusters, corresponding to high-, moderate-, and low-risk placements. The variables that formed part of these clusters were behaviour problems and impulsivity/inattention in foster children, level of burden in the foster parents, an authoritarian parenting style, and criticism/rejection by the foster parents. A discriminant analysis confirmed the differences between the three clusters and enabled us to create a function for classifying cases in each group. These results can be used to identify at-risk placements and may help to avoid situations that could undermine the foster child's development. The findings could also be useful in terms of assessing the suitability of foster families, as well for identifying their training needs.
Education of children in care and schooling as a protective factor

Slipping Down Ladders and Climbing up Snakes: The Educational Experiences of New Zealand Bachelor Degree Students who were in Foster Care as Teenagers

Speakers & Authors: Iain Matheson

From countries as diverse as Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, New Zealand, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States, there is a growing body of research literature on the education of children and young people in residential and foster care. We now have a better understanding of: the educational challenges that these individuals face, the competing underlying explanations, and some of the more promising policy and practice initiatives that are making a difference. However, despite this, we still know very little about the small proportion that go to university.

This paper reports on qualitative doctoral research undertaken with seven New Zealand bachelor degree students who were in foster care as teenagers. Using informal conversation interviewing, the study explores their experiences of primary schooling, secondary schooling, university, foster care, leaving care, family, partners, friends and the community, as well as feelings, motivations, views and attitudes.

The study found that participants came into care with considerable cultural capital, were educationally resilient, were able to make important educational relationships and take advantage of opportunities presented to them. They mainly came into care as teenagers having already done well in their earlier schooling. All went on to complete their high school education at what they considered to be good schools. All embarked upon a professional degree; mainly in social work, education or law.

Multiple foster care placements and, with some important exceptions, limited educational support from foster carers and social workers was not a barrier to them getting to university. While educationally resilient, most were less resilient in other areas of their lives. However the level of support from teachers and/or other school personnel was high and in two cases exceptionally high. Once at university, the majority did sometimes struggle, although there was usually support from former foster carers, long-term partners, and in some instances parents.

While the research has particular education and child welfare policy and practice implications for New Zealand, the findings will also be of relevance to practitioners, managers, researchers and policymakers from other countries.

Key words: Education, Foster Care, University
Bridging the gap between research, policy and practice

Transition from State care to the non-government sector: the Australian experience in New South Wales

Speakers & Authors: Vanessa Smith, Stephen Mondy, Michael Cashin, Romaine Moss

In Great Britain and Scandinavian countries, State intervention into the lives of families with child protection issues is conducted through local jurisdictions - at the level of Local Authorities or Municipalities. In Australia (a Federally based system of governance) child protection issues are governed at a State-based level. Each State in Australia is a separate jurisdiction setting its own “rules” for State-based intervention. In 2008, the Wood Royal Commission in New South Wales examined the statutory framework of provision of services to children removed from their families due to child protection concerns, and concluded that the statutory response to service provision to children and young people removed from their families should be ceded to the Non-Government sector over time. Of particular concern was the transition for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples - 'first peoples'. This poster examines the issues associated with the transition of services from the statutory sector to the non-Government sector. In particular, how outcomes for children and young people and their families by growing and delivering a quality, sustainable, non-government service system for NSW has been delivered through partnership. This paper will examine the policy and practice implications of: new entries into the care system, transition of non-Aboriginal children and young people, and transition of Aboriginal children and young people. Challenges and barriers to implementation will be discussed.

Key Words: Best practice, Collaboration and partnerships, permanency.
Residential care and treatment interventions fault

Personal Narrative and Oral History: Contrasting Perspectives of Historic Abuse and Residential Child Care

*Speakers & Authors: Julie Shaw, Andrew Kendrick, Moyra Hawthorn, Samina Karim*

The objectives of this presentation are to illuminate how the study of personal narratives and oral history has the potential to make a valuable contribution in capturing the lived experiences of children who were placed residential care in the past, and the experiences of those who worked in children's services. In the context of revelations about the historic abuse of children in care, it is vital to gain as complete a picture as possible from the perspectives of these two groups of people. Two sources of information will be used for this presentation. Firstly, we will gain the narratives of adults who experienced care as children from interviews, personal testimony to government enquiries and autobiography. Secondly, we will draw upon the findings of a recent oral history study which explored children's services workers experiences of residential child care from 1960 to 1975. A number of themes emerge which highlight both positive and negative aspects of residential child care in the past. These include a lack of individual attention provided in an era where child-centred practice had not yet begun to emerge, and the impact that this had on the lives of children in care. We will highlight the institutional imperatives that predominated at that time and which created potentially abusive environments. Conversely, adults who experienced care and children's services workers also reported high standards of care and positive experiences. The freedoms associated with a pre-risk averse era were also described, and contrasted with the contemporary creation of ‘emotionally sterile environments’ where staff members are afraid to show children appropriate affection. The presentation will conclude that considering the different perspectives and experiences of both adults who experienced care as children and children's services workers is vital in gaining a balanced understanding of the nature of residential care services in the past This has important implications for how we address the issue of historic abuse in care, and how we provide safe and secure services in the future.
Looking Back and Moving Forward: A Human Rights Approach to Historical Abuse in Care

Speakers & Authors: Moyra Hawthorn, Andrew Kendrick, Julie Shaw

Although there has long been concern about maltreatment of children in care, and there have been isolated reports of abuse of children in public care for many years, it is only over the past 20 years or so that there has been focused attention on this issue in a number of countries around the world and it has become a matter of wider public attention. The historic abuse of children in care has been responded to in a number of different ways: apologies, confidential committees and fora to acknowledge the experiences of victims/survivors; inquiries to investigate accountability, and a range of approaches to reparation. While the rights of victims/survivors of historic abuse in care are central, there a number of other stakeholders in the process and it is important that their position is taken into account.

This presentation will describe an 'InterAction on the Historic Abuse of Children in Care' - a model of facilitated dialogue developed by the Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland (CELCIS) and the Scottish Human Rights Commission (SHRC). The InterAction has brought together the victims/survivors of abuse, providers of care, local authority social work; Scottish Government; and religious organisations, to identify the key issues in order to achieve justice for the victims/survivors of historic abuse. Through round table dialogue, consultation, discussion and debate, the participants have addressed issues of apology, acknowledgement and accountability. They have developed an Action Plan to take forward these issues and to gain commitments for progress.

This presentation will briefly explain the background to the Interaction and discuss the process, the challenges and the opportunities presented of adopting a human rights approach to historic abuse. It will highlight the preparation that was needed to ensure active participation, the tensions between participants, as well as the trust which developed and which underpinned progress towards the Action Plan. It will draw out the implications both for Scotland and for other countries in addressing this the historic abuse of children in care.
Bridging the gap between research, policy and practice

Opening the black box of care for youth with emotional and behavioural problems: Development and application of a taxonomy

Speakers & Authors: Els Evenboer, Anne-Marie Huyghen, Jolanda Tuinstra, Sijmen A. Reijneveld, Erik J. Knorth

Background and aim. Characteristics of care and treatment for children with emotional and behavioural problems may help to improve the effectiveness of care. A care taxonomy that is capable of classifying the most salient care aspects may help to reach this, for instance by creating an opportunity to empirically connect the care offered with the client needs before and the outcomes after care. The aim of this paper is to present a taxonomic instrument, the Taxonomy of Care for Youth (TOCFY), including first results of its application in the Dutch setting.

Methods. Four organisations - providing basic child health care, youth mental health care, and child and family social care - participated in the study. An empirical development procedure consisting of a literature review, expert interviews, analysis of intervention descriptions, analysis of care records, expert meetings, and a pilot study resulted in a classification tool, called TOCFY. The validity, inter-rater reliability and feasibility of TOCFY were assessed. Thereafter the ‘content’ domain of TOCFY (see below) was further elaborated, using a topical experts’ evaluation methodology to create a set of main- and subtypes of distinct care interventions enabling a comparison of care for youth across providers.

Key findings and implications. TOCFY comprises six domains, i.e. content, judicial context, duration, intensity, recipients, and professional expertise. The first domain, content of care, shows up in two versions. In the version for practical use - TOCFY/P - organisation-specific labels of interventions are being applied, facilitating face validity and manageability for professionals. 91 Interventions could be discerned. The reliability and feasibility was considered to be fairly good. The experts’ evaluation of the ‘content’ domain of TOCFY showed that the total number of interventions within and across the care organisations could be reduced to 47 distinct types of interventions. With the help of this version for research purposes - TOCFY/R - a systematic overview of distinct main- and subtypes of interventions was generated for the area. The information gathered by using TOCFY provides opportunities to map the care provided in a region, and to investigate the fit between young clients' needs presented, care received and outcomes attained.
Voices of children, youth and families

Participative Practicies in Child and Youth Care

_Speakers & Authors:_ Peters Ulla

The paper will present insights into practices of participation in child and youth care based on a research on talks between parents and professionals in situations of high risk for the best interests of the child.

The main thesis, in regard to the findings presented, is to understand participation as a fragile collective practice enacting rules and frames for communications and interactions, which can be - especially in a process of changes in the system - threatened by conflictual structural and formal requisites. Taking into account existing research and results, the paper highlights the main features and dimensions of participation as a normative, relational and "strategic" category.

The theoretical background interlinks organizational (neo-institutionalist) and collective action theories (pragmatism) to broaden the understanding of processes and actions that enable and hinder participative practices.

The research is a qualitative case study based on the transcription of 16 recorded talks in a special residential setting, where parents and their children live for 1 to 6 months for a deepened and profound assessment of their situation and in regard to a pending withdrawal of the children. The recorded talks are a structural part (i.e. drawing a balance of the situation) of the assessment. The talks were analyzed with the documentary method (Bohnsack).

Main findings are that the implementation of participative practices in child and youth care has seldom taken into account organizational and environmental aspects but is rather dealt with as a normative frame (i.e. children rights), which is widely recognized and seems to need no further considerations. Professionals develop - which can be shown - strategies to balance complex, conflicting and paradox missions in interactions and communications with the parents and children. Participative practices are often situational events in these processes and do and establish a lasting culture and procedures that mirror, reflect, broaden and sustain participative attitudes, practices and organizational framings.

One recommendation to politics and to professionals is to put more emphasis on the pathways from practices to structures and to structural arrangements with promote participative practices or as a consequence to a holistic vision of a "participative care" (Roose).
Health and wellbeing of children in care

Wellbeing and Residential care quality in Portugal

Speakers & Authors: Rodrigues Sónia, Iglésias Joana, Barbosa-Ducharne Maria Adelina, Jorge F. Del Valle

The wellbeing of children and young people in danger is one of the purposes defined in the main documents guiding the Portuguese government intervention and the services and policies towards prevention and protection of children in risk and need of care in Portugal (including children and young people in residential care).

The main aim of this study was to characterize the levels of subjective wellbeing of young people in Residential Care (RC), and to analyse its relation with comprehensive dimensions of this context, from the young people point of view evaluation and perception.

Sixty-one youngsters, with ages comprised between 12 and 20 years, participated in this study. They were all living in five different RC contexts, Temporary Care Centres (CAT- Centros de atendimento temporário) and Homes for Children and Youth (LIJ- Lares de infância e juventude).

Data were collected through the Life Satisfaction Scale and ARQUA-P interview for children from 12 years onwards, which integrates the ARQUA-P System for Comprehensive Evaluation of the Portuguese RC.

Results indicate average positive levels of life satisfaction (LS) in young people in RC, although significantly lower than LS levels reported by normative adolescents. The youngsters living in small institutions, for more than one year and who are male, report higher levels of LS, when compared with those in medium or large institutions, for less than a year and feminine gender. The perceptions that they hold regarding the dimension of the RC context are positive. Youngsters living in small institutions, for more than one year and who are boys, evaluated significantly better the RC context than those in medium or large institutions, for less than a year and who are women. LS correlate positively and significantly with several dimensions of Quality of the RC context. No differences were found at the level of LS according to the typology of care centre. The average duration of care in the 2 kinds of institutions was not significantly different.

Implications are drawn from these results for research in RC and some guidelines are highlighted in regard to intervention aiming quality of RC in Portugal.
Innovation and technology: Clinical applications and program development in an RTC

Speakers & Authors: David Slesinger

Influence of technological advancements in the design, cost and, availability of mobile devices that have the capacity to access the internet, social media, or play video games cannot be ignored, particularly when the trend for younger users grows and traditional forms of communication (using print, conversations, etc.) decrease. Evidence for technology assisted treatments have demonstrated mixed efficacy in specific populations (ASD, ADHD, CDBD) but research is only beginning to emerge in populations with Specific Learning Disorders. This study is an exploratory investigation into the utility and benefit of mobile video platforms (LearnPads) to improve the achievement scores of subjects identified with Specific Learning Disorders in Reading and Mathematics at a residential treatment center. In a quasi-experimental design, the experimental group is provided a standard instructional intervention including 1:1 instruction plus an enhanced exposure to interactive educational video based game activities. Subject groupings are non-equivalent, but matched across cognitive and diagnostic criteria and assigned randomly to control or experimental groups. Residential treatment centers offer a unique opportunity to impact learning and growth of clients that have significant emotional and behavioral problems that interfere with their ability to achieve in community based educational settings and function effectively in their family and community. This project is one of several applications of technology being implemented at an RTC to improve the lives of children and their families.
Deinstitutionalization of child care system in Lithuania: two steps forward, two steps backwards

Speakers & Authors: Dalija Snieskiene

The aim of the presentation: to describe recent joint NGO, policy makers and researchers actions for the deinstitutionalization of child care in Lithuania.

The paper is based on embedded case study design. Data for this study was collected from different reports as well as from 30 interviews with stakeholders, leaders of institutions, professionals and foster parents. The paper present the main periods, processes, actors and results of child care deinstitutionalization in recent two decade period.

The deinstitutionalization of child care started in 1995 with the PHARE Kent- Kaunas- Tallin project when the first analysis and recommendations as well as methodological assistance were provided. But from this time, the proportion of children going to substitute care and mostly to institutional care was growing because of poverty and neoliberal state attitude to the development of social services for children and families.

The period in 2006 started with EU funding for renovations of child care institutions and plans to decrease number of children in one institution.

The new period of child care deinstitutionalization started from 2012, when some NGO, researchers, stakeholder organizations and public servants from ministries actively participated in the development of new strategies in this field.

Key findings: activities of NGO's and researchers involving media started educational processes of the society, but at the same time developed active oppositional pressure for politicians from organized leaders of residential homes (institutions). The distribution of state budgets and use of EU foundations supports the structure of former institutional child care as self sustaining system. The projects financed from EU for NGO's encourage elected municipalities for innovations in this sector.

Professionals and leaders of big residential homes understand the need for changes, but do not believe in any state actions, because the services sector for child and family care do not developing as it should be. Foster families feel underestimated and discriminated in the child care, but believe to the professionalization.

Deinstitutionalization of alternative child care system in Lithuania opens double effects of EU foundations as supportive for old system and innovations. Keeping the best practices and need for very intensive education of the society and professionals with allocating state budgets for developing new services.

Key words: deinstitutionalization, substitute child care, double effect
Foster care: different paths and their implications

Challenges of fostering Roma children in Croatia

*Speakers & Authors: Ivana Jedud Boric, Ivana Maurovic, Antonija Zizak*

Foster care in Croatia has relatively long tradition: first foster families were registered in 1902. Since the beginning of new millennia foster care has been recognized as the desirable out-of-home placement, which resulted in various scientific and professional projects, public campaigns and development of foster careers associations. However, there are some critical points that need further improvement: uneven development of foster care in different region; insufficient number of foster families for specific groups of children (young children; children with emotional and behaviour problems, children with disabilities, ethnical minorities, especially Roma children); need for development of specialized/ treatment foster care; insufficient support to foster parents by social services, improvement of national data base on fostering, etc.

In 2013 research was conducted in order to examine foster care of children under the age of 7 years from foster carers' perspectives. Qualitative approach was applied. Data were collected through interviews with foster carers and afterwards processed using thematic analysis. Within the themes that were brought up by the foster parents, fostering of Roma children was recognized as a issue that needs further attention in research and in practice. Foster parents pointed out several difficulties regarding foster care of Roma children: children most often come to foster care with severe health problems and neglected; birth families are burdened with many social problems such as poverty, problems with alcohol, aggression; foster parents often act as carers for parents too. In some cases foster parents are reluctant to foster Roma children due to potential problems with their birth families- even if they do foster Roma children in most cases they refuse to allow parents to visit children in their homes.

Above mentioned challenges call for new strategies in order to enable quality foster care of Roma children and adequate support to foster parents.

*Key words: Roma children, foster care, Croatia*
Voices of children, youth and families

Growing conscious and responsible citizen

Speakers & Authors: Elisabetta Kolar

In the last years rules have appeared meaningless while consensus towards criminal organizations has increased among young offenders. This is the background of a project about legal education developed by a NGO, "La Quercia" (Trieste), affiliated to "LIBERA Associazioni Nomi e Numeri contro le mafie" and USSM (Trieste). The project, which involves about 15 young offenders a year (above all probationers), has a circular structure that can be summed up in three key words: meeting, knowledge and work.

Meeting: people who fight against all kinds of mafia; groups of peers who are involved in the same program.

Knowledge: newspapers, books, videos, local and national conferences and the audition of mafia victims’ relatives are used to understand the meaning of laws.

Work: the young offenders are involved in the organization of local and national meetings and in the community interventions (in the confiscated mafia properties). After a period of time they witness their own experience and they involve other young people in the program (active citizenship).

The professionals along with young offenders evaluated what went well. According to constructivism (N. Parton, P. O’Byrne, 2000; C. Bezzi, 2011), the practitioners pointed out the dialogue which allowed to recognize the meaning of the experiences, to evidence the change of young offender’s mind or behaviour (when and why) and to underline how a young offender faces difficulties successfully. The following outcomes sum up young offenders’ evaluation about their experience.

All young offenders involved in this project recognized the important emotional and relational impact of this experience. They became more conscious about the meaning of their offence and the consequences on the victim and their consensus towards laws and legal behaviours increased. Moreover young offenders appreciated the opportunities to meet and debate with peers and adults, the recognition of their own skills, the chance to involve other young people at risk of delinquency in the project and to become witnesses in the conferences and in informal relationships. Giving young offenders a voice, involving them in the evaluation and in the practices of active citizenship are the most important aspects which have to be considered in juvenile policy.
Inside the shelter, outside the margin - yet a survivor

Speakers & Authors: Päivi Känkänen

This participatory ethnographic study focused on two applied art projects were organized with young persons in foster care in 2009 - 2010.

In child welfare services the structures are often very institutionalised. Two factors were central in generating control-free spaces through arts-based activities:

1) The metaphoric shelter of art. Various arts-based activities (e.g. shadow theatre, writing of rap lyrics, wearing costumes and making short films) created an important "metaphoric shelter" and "symbolic distance" for the youth to deal with issues important in their lives. This distancing made it possible to deal also with very personal and delicate issues in a safe and productive way.

2) Ambivalence in interaction. It was also crucial that the adults took the young persons' expressions of ambivalence seriously and through arts-based methods helped them to work with their different contradictory emotions and indeterminacy in the activity. This supported the young persons in becoming active agents and authors in the activity. The expressions of ambivalence and indeterminacy became socially recognized as catalysts for agentive transformation.

For some children and young people, practices that draw on activities or artistic self-expressions may even present the only approaches or means to self-expression that, in turn, awakens their emotional memories. The control-free space that we saw generated collectively in these workshops offered a channel through which to tell one's own story. For example the movements, sounds, shapes and colours in the shadow theatre or the rap lyrics gave a concrete form to otherwise inaccessible experiences and emotions.

Key words:
child welfare, arts-based practices, arts-based research, the metaphoric shelter of art
Voices of children, youth and families

Growing Up in Italy

Speakers & Authors: Giulia Barbero Vignola, Cinzia Canali

CRESCERE (“growing up” in Italian) is a longitudinal study coordinated by Fondazione Zancan that involves a sample of children and families in the North-Western Italy.

The main goal is to understand how children grow and develop in the critical transition from childhood to adulthood. What are there factors that promote a positive growth and protect from harm? How can we support parents, teachers, policy makers and all people involved in the developmental tasks of children?

The method is mainly quantitative. Children are monitored over time, from 11 to 18 years old, by systematically using scales and questionnaires aimed at both children and parents. For a sub-sample of children some medical checks are included, so as to monitor their physical development.

Research Design: The longitudinal study is carried out through annual surveys including questionnaires and clinical checks. The sample aims to reach 1.000 children born in 2001, selected from the municipal lists of residents.

Findings: Preliminary findings on a sample of 400 children from the first wave are presented, focusing on adolescents’ identity, relationship with school, relationship with family and peers, bullying.

As regards bullying, two in three children said they had experienced at least one act of bullying in the last six months, while 52% admit they had bullied others. The most frequent forms of bullying are verbal, while physical bullying is less common. Only a minority report having experienced physical violence (12%). Cyberbullying seems to be a relatively uncommon phenomenon, only 5% of children reported having been annoyed via computer, email and Facebook.

As regards learning and school, the study analyses in depth school wellbeing of children in terms of motivation, attitude towards school. Motivation towards studying is negatively associated with the presence of risky situations: motivation is weaker among children of foreign origin, among children with separated or divorced parents, among children with learning problems.

School is a key developmental context in adolescence. Some adolescents have achieved a stable and mature school identity, others are still searching for it.
Contact Family Service in Children's Eyes

Speakers & Authors: Tiina Lehto-Lundén

The focus of my presentation is contact family services part of the Finnish child welfare services.

The aim is to shed light on children's experiences of contact families and their everyday lives. These children are customers of the child welfare services.

Research on children's experiences will help illustrate various factors that may be significant for a child, such as the everyday life and parenthood in the contact family. The results will broaden the understanding of the significance of the contact family as well as of the factors that could protect a child living in vulnerable circumstances.

The methodological approach of the study is empirical research, wherein existential phenomenology serves as both the research philosophy and the theoretical framework for the study.

Contact family services are included in the actions of Finnish child welfare. It is written in the law as one of the support measures. The contact family services involve contact families providing support on a voluntary basis. In reference to earlier research and evaluations, the primary use of these services is to give relief to parents who, in most cases, are single.

Child welfare emphasises the family perspective, but this also means that children as individuals may be overlooked. Studying the children's experiences is essential for uncovering something unique and significant about the phenomenon. It is impossible to improve the service system and the professional practices of child welfare without making children's actual experiences known.

Data will be collected by interviewing the children. The use of children as informants needs to be carefully thought out, and other methods in addition to the interview, such as play, drawing and storytelling, are needed. The study will also include an ethnographical part, which will be carried out in the contact families while the children are present. Data will be later gathered in a city in Southern Finland.

This presentation is based to my early, planning staged dissertation research, which I'm doing in Helsinki University.

Key words: Child welfare, contact family, experiences, phenomenology
Residential care and treatment interventions fault

The Role of Forgiveness in the Historic Abuse of Children in Care

Speakers & Authors: Samina Karim, Andrew Kendrick

The purpose of this presentation is to highlight how the concept of forgiveness can be applied in the context of the historic abuse of children in care. Over recent years, historic abuse has been a contentious and topical issue. Some countries have developed comprehensive responses with apologies, truth-telling commissions and compensation and reparation schemes. Other countries have barely acknowledged the problem.

This presentation will discuss how the concept of forgiveness is crucial to the understanding of the experiences of victims/survivors of historic abuse and the ways of achieving justice for them. It will be based on a review of theory and research which draws from sociology, anthropology, theology and psychology as well as social work and psychotherapeutic approaches.

It will explore the role of forgiveness in models of transitional justice which have been linked to the responses to historic abuse. Inazu (2009) distinguishes four forms of forgiveness in the context of transitional justice: personal forgiveness; group forgiveness; legal forgiveness; and political forgiveness. Forgiveness is multi-dimensional and a process rather than a single action (Worthington 2005), and requires reciprocity between the ‘injured’ and the ‘injurer’ (Griswold 2007). The personal implications of forgiveness (and non-forgiveness) for individuals who have suffered trauma or been abused will be explored, particularly in the context of therapeutic approaches (Macaskill, 2005). It will also explore how religious frameworks of forgiveness have particular significance in the context of historic abuse of children in care because of the role of religious organizations in providing institutional care.

The implications for the development of responses to historic abuse, both at the individual and state level, will be addressed, and how this impacts on current services for children in care.

References
Serious Youth Violence and Policing in the UK: the perspectives and experiences of Black and Asian Young People growing up in two poor East London Neighbourhoods

Speakers & Authors: Anthony Gunter

The issue of gun and knife violence in London (and other major UK cities) looms large within media, academic as well as policy discourses, and statistically affects black male youth disproportionately as both victims and perpetrators. The debate on serious youth violence is linked to the seemingly perennial (during the past forty years at least) debate concerning black youth (race), crime and policing. Similarly, the concerns about radicalisation and violent Islamic extremism post the July 7th London bombings has similarly resulted in British Asian Muslim youth coming under both the media and counter terrorism policing spotlight. Amidst policy, practice and policing agendas about gangs and ‘home grown terror’, this paper will draw on data from a five year ethnographic research study that places black and Asian young people’s voices at the heart of the debate about gang violence, terrorism and policing in the UK.

The research was undertaken within two youth projects - a gang intervention project and the other project was part of the ‘Prevent’ initiative to counter radicalisation and Muslim violent extremism - based in two separate East London neighbourhoods. Data was gleaned from participant observation (the author was engaged as a community based youth worker/researcher) and via semi-structured interviews with 62 young people that addressed the themes of policing, youth violence, terrorism and community based youth work interventions. This paper will assert that many of the black and Asian respondents reported that the issues of gang violence and terrorism are exaggerated by the media and the government; and that the police use these issues as an excuse for their continuing harassment and unfair targeting of innocent black and Asian youth.
Evidence-based practice and implementation

Dropout Prevention in Germany - Evaluation of a Social Information Processing Training Program

Speakers & Authors: Marie-Christine Vierbuchen, Clemens Hillenbrand, Tobias Hagen

Dropping out of high school is related to a number of negative outcomes (e.g. social economical, physical and mental health, job). In Germany, there is a high prevalence of dropout. In 2010, about 6.5% (53,000) from one age group left the school without a diploma from at least the low school type „Hauptschule“ (Bildungsbericht, 2012).

There is no evidence-based and evaluated program to prevent dropping out of school in Germany. We developed, implemented, and evaluated a program based on the model of social information processing (Crick & Dodge, 1994; Lemerise & Arsenio, 2000) in a randomised controlled trial.

The target group were students at a high risk of dropping out who typically more likely attend low school types („Hauptschule“ or special schools). The problem seems to be more prominent in higher grades (7 to 9).

The main risk factors for dropping out are for example high-risk social behavior, high psychosocial stress, learning disability, emotional disturbance, and low commitment to school.

The goal of our program was to facilitate the resilience and protective factors and reduce the risk factors for dropout. We concentrated on social behavior, psychosocial stress, and class attendance.

The data from a sample of N=373 students is completely collected, and now the statistical evaluation is in progress. The presentation will provide theoretical background, research design, findings and future implications for dropout prevention in Germany.
Challenges and Hope among Looked After Young People

Speakers & Authors: Ahmed Albar

Residential or foster care is the only choice for abandoned children and young people born of unknown parents in Saudi Arabia. As they know nothing about birth family, the expectation of staying for long time in institutions is common among this population (the participants). Moreover, feeling different and stigmatized are big issues among participants owing to their social circumstances and instability while they are in care. Throughout the study, young people asked for change and service improvement. Various concerns, demands and requests were expressed. Such inquiries and wishes are covered in this study to illustrate the major challenges and needs of young people. Looking at good practice within and outside Saudi policies and practices are presented. Good examples of such practice are more likely to improve the Saudi care system for these people, if implemented thoughtfully. To reduce the likelihood of misinterpretation and to strengthen the data gathering and analysis, both qualitative and quantitative methods have been used.

KEY WORDS:
Attachment, Resilience, Good Practice, In Care, Social Circumstances
Voices of children, youth and families

Adolescent Firesetting; An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of Adolescent Males in Secure Care

Speakers & Authors: Claire Reilly, Daniel Johnson, Jennifer Copley

Objectives
This study explored and analysed the experience of young people who have participated in frequent firesetting behaviours.

Background
Adolescent firesetting is costly and potentially fatal but relatively little is known about the behaviour, particularly from the perspective of those engaging in it. The literature has previously focused on prevalence or theoretical frameworks but there is a paucity of research on young people's experience and the meaning they attribute to the behaviour. Developing a greater understanding of this can inform theory development and intervention programmes.

Method
Data was gathered from semi-structured interviews of three adolescent boys residing in secure care. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis was used to elicit key themes within the data.

Results
The analysis highlighted three super-ordinate themes of 'Fire as Function', 'Function is Normal' and 'Function determines Severity'. These themes suggest the young people within this group perceive the function of the fire as imperative over the physical properties of fire. They described the many functions of fire-setting and related their view that fire-setting is pathological in the absence of function.

Conclusions
Exploring young people's experience of fire-setting has provided an insight into the function of the behaviour for them and the relation of this function to the precepts they apply. This understanding will help design quantitative nomothetic research and provide clinicians with areas to explore within assessment and intervention.
Health and wellbeing of children in care

Peer aggression and bullying in residential care

*Speakers & Authors: Susan Steele, Simon Hunter, Kevin Durkin, Jennifer Copley*

The current research is part of an ongoing PhD being undertaken by the first author. The rationale behind this project is that there is a very limited pool of research which specifically examines peer aggression and bullying within a Scottish “looked after” population. Previous research has generally been qualitative in nature and, internationally, there have been very few quantitative research projects. One notable exception is the work of Sekol and Farrington (2009, 2010, 2011) examining bullying in a large sample of Croatian looked after young people. Monks, Smith, Naylor, Barter, Ireland and Coyne (2009), in their review of bullying in different contexts, discuss the previous focus in research in residential contexts as having been around how organisational structures, procedures and cultures impact on bullying with little exploration of individual psychological characteristics. This research will be an important first step in gathering information in an evidence based manner and aiming to address these issues within the Scottish context.

**Objectives:**

**AIM 1:**
To describe and quantify the nature and extent of peer aggression and bullying occurring within adolescent residential care in Scotland. Data will be gathered on the incidence, prevalence, and forms of peer aggression. Young people’s experiences of peer victimisation will also be assessed. These experiences and behaviours will be examined and described with respect to a number of relevant demographic factors including age, gender, length of placement, number of previous placements and offending behaviour.

**AIM 2:**
To evaluate theory-based hypotheses regarding the associations between social dominance and empathy and both the forms (verbal, physical, indirect, cyber) and functions (proactive, reactive) of aggression and bullying.

**Design:**
The research uses a cross-sectional design which will permit description of cross-sectional associations between the variables of interest.

It will involve the completion of a number of questionnaires by young people in residential care aged 12-18. This is a work in progress. It is hoped that some data will be available for the conference however it is not possible to state at this point.
A cumulative analysis of the likelihood of Danish and English children entering care before the age of 16: policy and practice implications

Speakers & Authors: June Thoburn, Mads Ubbesen, Ruth Gilbert

Aims and objectives
Administrative data on Danish and English children entering care at any point before the age of 16 are used to prompt a discussion of the differential use of public out-of-home care in these (and similar) jurisdictions.

Methods.
The presentation reports on a cumulative quantitative analysis of administrative data on 6 cohorts of care entrants with birth dates between 1992 and 2008 in Denmark, and care entrants (in the same birth cohorts) from 8 English local authorities. The findings are used to inform a discussion of the differential use of out-of-home care in the two countries. Changes in incidence over time for the different age groups are noted. Hypotheses are proposed as possible explanations for differences, and their implications for policy and placement practice explored.

Research design and data sources.
Longitudinal analysis of routinely collected administrative data, informed by analysis of government policy reports and research publications.

Key findings.
The cumulative likelihood (proportion of children in the year group) of children born between 1992 and 2008 having a first entry to care at different ages differs in the two countries, and has changed differentially over time. In Denmark, the probability of entering care has decreased and this is especially so for those whose first entry was before their third birthday. In England the probability of entry to care, especially for those aged 0-2 at first entry, has been increasing. There is a much higher likelihood of first entry to care in Denmark when over the age of 10 than in England. More recent data from both countries indicate that these trends, and differences between the two countries, have continued to the present date. The higher incidence for children entering care past infancy is the major explanation for the higher overall likelihood of entry to care in Denmark than in England (for the 1992-4 cohort the cumulative rate for Denmark just before 15th birthday was 293.4 per 10,000 children compared with 149.1 per 10,000 children in England. The presenters will discuss possible explanations for these differences and their impact on social work decision-making and placement practice.
ARQUA-P: A Comprehensive Evaluation System for Residential Care in Portugal

Speakers & Authors: Rodrigues Sónia, Jorge F. Del Valle, Barbosa-Ducharne Maria Adelina

For almost 8000 children in Portugal today their house is an institution. The Portuguese law still uses the term “institutional care” to describe the residential care (RC) promotion and protection measure for children in danger.

This designation appeals to a model that has been for decades put apart in most of developed nations. It must be noted that 48% of the Portuguese RC institutions are segregated by gender and 99% of babies (under 3 years old) in care are still placed in RC.

From the analysis of the historical evolution and current context of RC in Portugal it’s evident that some ignorance till stands with regard to how these institutions work, the quality of services they provide and their adequacy to the real needs of children living there.

The ideas of quality and assessment are inextricably linked but in order to accommodate subjective, contextual and plural aspects to the concept it’s mandatory the involvement of all people in context (including the children) and the collection of information from different sources and types to benefit from a multiplicity of perspectives and understandings.

We will present a comprehensive research on services’ quality of RC in Portugal, allowing the assessment of current status, measuring the suitability of the services and the match of institutional offers with the real needs of the children in care.

Based on an ecological model and using the ARQUA-P comprehensive evaluation system for residential care (an adaptation of the spanish Del Valle´s ARQUA system), a team of at least two researchers visited the institutions and interviewed children, caregivers, directors, teachers and liaison technicians within the entity that coordinates and oversees these institutions (welfare services).

In the pilot study we evaluate 6 institutions but the final sample will include 80 abroad the country. Various entities with responsibilities in Portuguese RC were also involved (protocol with Welfare National Services and public support from the associations that congregate the RC institutions).

We will present the methodology and preliminary results of this study.

Keywords: Residential care, institutional care, assessment of needs, quality evaluation, residential care system in Portugal
Bridging the gap between research, policy and practice

Effects of global research on local child policies and care practices

Speakers & Authors: Niels Peter Rygaard

Child research faces a challenge: Global migration, urbanization, poverty and the still more stressed family structures cause the abandonment of millions of children, even in “rich” countries - and a host of new developmental dysfunctions in children without sufficient, continuous early care: low self-esteem, loneliness, substance abuse, hyperactivity, social withdrawal, eating disorders, aggression, insufficient learning, etc.

As a co-editor of a special issue of Infant Mental Health J (Vol 35, issue 2, April 2014) with McCall & Groark, Pittsburgh University Office of Child Development, the presenter describes principles of efficient intervention and caregiver education programs for children in public care (orphanage & foster systems in developing countries), based on submissions from researchers worldwide.

Second, the scale of the children-at-risk challenge calls for new, large scale, ways of educating caregivers, and developing public child care systems in research based care.

Assembling an international network of researchers since 2006, the presenter designed two non-profit, 1 year online based programs for foster care and institutions, which were implemented in institution and foster care systems 2008-14 in 12 EU countries by two EU Leonardo program grants of 400.000 Euro, now available in as many language versions: English, Danish, German, Spanish, Italian, Romanian, Greek, Turkish, Russian, Polish, Latvian, and Bulgarian.

The succes of the programs caused presenter to create www.fairstartglobal.com, a volunteer organization so far spreading the program non-profit in yet another 16 developing country language versions. This program is currently implemented in Estonia, in the 8000 Indonesia orphanages, at Nagano University Japan, and in Latin America.

The aim of all programs is to connect researchers, policy makers and caregivers in a worldwide network, thereby contributing to the creation of uniform standards of quality care education for professionals working with children without parental care.

The presentation sums up the recommendations from IMHJ concerning efficacy in intervention programs, as well as demonstration of elements from the online programs - one focuses on care for infants and toddlers, the other also on work with older children and teenagers, offering one version for foster care systems, and one for group care systems.
Voices of children, youth and families


Speakers & Authors: Bente Heggem Kojan, Anita Storhaug, Willy Lichtwarck, Graham Clifford

The paper's objective is to present data and findings from the ongoing project "The New Child Welfare Services" in Norway. We pay particular attention towards the ways in which children and parents experience interventions from the Child Welfare Services (CWS) in Norway. Altogether 715 Norwegian families answered the survey, with questions regarding a series of topics, including their background characteristics and living conditions. Additionally, 96 parents attended in-depth qualitative lifeline interviews which explored their experiences with the CWS. Some parents were interviewed 2 times during the project period. Further, 17 of these parents' children were interviewed about their experiences. Grounded theory methods were used to analyze how the children and parents perceived the intervention. Qualitative data were mixed with quantitative data in the analysis.

We found that the survey revealed high levels of parental trust toward the general work of the CWS. However, the parents were less satisfied with the outcomes and effects of the intervention in terms of it improved the situation for their children. Our findings suggest that categorizing children and parental experiences in terms of positive or negative emotions is difficult because their experiences vary over time, and depends on the relational and cultural context in which the data are being collected. Implications for research methodology are that mixed methods and critical analysis of data are crucial when exploring childrens and parents perceptions of the CWS. Possible implications for CWS practice is increased awareness of the mechanisms promoting child and parental confidence, and how this is related to the effects of CWS interventions.
Routine Outcome Monitoring (ROM) in youth care: Providing practice based evidence by means of web-based questionnaire applications and dashboards

Speakers & Authors: Ron Scholte, Marc Delsing

Evaluation of treatments for youth typically involves group designs with pre- and post-treatment assessment in a randomized controlled trial (RCT). Evidence from these trials, mostly obtained in research settings, provides the knowledge base for evidence-based practice, which has come to be considered as the "gold standard" for clinical practice. Many scholars, however, have noted the existence of a gap between research and practice and have raised concerns about the applicability of evidence-based programs to clinical practice. In addition to data on the effectiveness of treatments under controlled conditions, evidence is needed to show positive outcomes in everyday practice.

In this presentation, we will demonstrate that a promising way to bridge the gap between evidence-based practice and practice-based evidence is to start by routinely tracking an individual client's progress over the course of treatment by means of standardized and validated instruments (e.g., CBCL, Y-OQ, ORS). This practice, which is referred to as Routine Outcome Monitoring (ROM), is rapidly growing in youth care in the Netherlands. Feedback on individual clients' progress can be used to identify possible effective or ineffective strategies and redirect therapeutic interventions if necessary. ROM combined with progress feedback is proven to enhance treatment effects and to reduce drop-out. General application of ROM also provides the opportunity to aggregate data of individual clients at the level of teams, interventions, or youth care organizations, thus enabling comparisons with local, regional, or national benchmarks.

The aim of this presentation is to illustrate the benefits of ROM for evaluating and improving individual interventions as well as intervention programs as a whole. We will show how web-based questionnaire applications and dashboards may facilitate the implementation, and enhance the quality and feasibility of ROM, ultimately contributing to the body of practice-based evidence and bridging the gap between practice, research, and policy. Examples will be presented of the benefits of the continuous application of ROM across several intervention programs in the Netherlands, including several home-based family treatments. Implications for youth care practice and research will be discussed.
Bridging the gap between research, policy and practice

Investing in childhood for growing life: is it possible to improve the conditions of children from migrant and low-income families? An Italian experience of multi-level connections

*Speakers & Authors: Marzia Sica, Tiziano Vecchiato, Cinzia Canali*

This project aims at increasing awareness that investing in early childhood and specifically in children of low-income and migrant families should be at the top of the agenda of Italian policy and decision makers. An increase in awareness will lead to the implementation of innovative solutions devoted to these children, specifically the age group 0-2. At international level the project called *Tfiey - Transatlantic Forum on Inclusive Early Years* is coordinated by the King Baldouin Foundation in collaboration with other Foundations from Europe and North America; Italian activities are coordinated by Compagnia di San Paolo with the support of Fondazione Zancan and other Italian foundations.

**Method:** The project is organised in three levels: international, national and local level. Each level implies activities aiming to reach the widest audience (policy makers, researchers, professionals, managers, advocacy groups...). This presentation will focus on specific research implemented in Italy, in comparison with other European countries.

**Key findings:** Italian figures substantially differ from region to region and among areas of the same region as well. Collected data show unjustified differences in the organization of services, in the allocation of resources, in the distribution of interventions, in the face of needs affecting native and immigrant children. They all have human needs, which cannot be subordinated to the availability and discretion of resources. In 2012, 1.1 million children and young people in Italy were living in absolute poverty. They numbered 720,000 in 2011, with large territorial differences: the share of children and young people in relative poverty ranged from 5,5% in Veneto to 42,3% in Sicily. The share of Italian children 0-6 y.o. at risk of poverty or social exclusion (31,9% in 2012) is substantially higher than the Eu average (26%) and the share of social protection expenditure devoted to family/children benefits is lower in Italy (4,6% in 2010) than on average in the Eu (8%). This critical situation led us to think about innovative solutions for tackling these inequalities. The presentation will focus on the elements taken into account for improving services for children.
Bridging the gap between research, policy and practice

Profiling disabled children and young people living in public care in Northern Ireland

Speakers & Authors: Sandra Dowling, Berni Kelly, Karen Winter

Disabled children, who live in public care, are a vulnerable group who are likely to experience significant disadvantage. Evidence suggests that disabled children are over-represented in the public care system, (DHSSPSNI, 2012; Stalker & McArthur, 2010). However, research is limited and has often employed differing definitions of disability and inconsistent recording systems. This raises questions about whether available statistics offer a reliable picture of this population.

This paper will present findings from a study, which aimed to profile the population of disabled looked after children in Northern Ireland and to describe the experience of being a looked after disabled child. Data were collected using an online questionnaire completed by children/young people's social workers. Findings are drawn from an analysis of looked after children and young people aged 0-18 who met the criteria for the study. This included those with an intellectual disability, physical disability, sensory impairment, ASD and those with mental health needs.

Data collected included demographic information, children's family background, looked after status and reason for becoming looked after, as well as placement type and educational setting. Information on children's contact with child protection was recorded. Data also focused on additional needs through health; in response to risk taking behaviour or contact with criminal justice. Information on any unmet need was also gathered.

Data was analysed using SPSS and sought to draw a detailed description of the population. Data was also interrogated in relation to demographic characteristics (e.g. age, gender and impairment type) in order to highlight contrasts or trends.

Key findings from the study will be presented here. These will highlight the context of looked after disabled children's lives including evidence of multi-disciplinary working, information on safeguarding, placement stability and permanency planning, as well as contact with birth families, additional needs and therapeutic support. The presentation will draw out key points for consideration in respect of the prevailing literature and policy context.
The first Social Benefit Bond in Australia: A new policy setting to improve outcomes for children in care

Speakers & Authors: Linda Mondy

The Social Benefit Bonds framework is an innovative paradigm that brings together governments, non-government organisations, and social investors to fund innovative programs that tackle 'wicked' social problems on a 'payments by results' basis. One of these problems is the poor outcomes for children and young people removed from their families for child protection reasons and cared for by the State in residential care or foster care. In a partnership unique to Australia, UnitingCare has joined with the NSW State government to raise $7 million from private investors to support the Newpin program, an intensive therapeutic process of centre-based and home visiting support that returns young children in State care to their families. The outcomes of the Newpin intervention have been borne out by a number of qualitative and quantitative studies. The particular research design that supports the present funding of the Social Benefit Bond uses a matched counterfactual group who are not receiving the Newpin intervention. Preliminary results from pre- and post-testing using the North Carolina Family Assessment Scale to measure family capacity for improvement and safety will be presented. This paper will capitalise on the emerging policy and evaluation literature concerning Social Benefit Bonds, the extensive media coverage surrounding this pilot, a case study, some early key findings, and insights into the potential for the Social Benefit Bond model to provide a funding model that has great potential for international social care systems. Areas of concern, barriers to implementation, and reflections on ethical issues for social workers and other professionals involved in 'payment by results' work will be explored.

Key words: policy initiative, social benefit bonds, reunification.
Is practice-friendly science possible: a case study?

*Speakers & Authors: Antonija Zizak, Ivana Jedud Boric, Ivana Maurovic*

As it is well known, translating research results into practice in many areas is more difficult than doing research. That is why the gap that exists between research and practice is often described through so called negative metaphors like “strangers in the night”; “chasm”; “less travelled road”; “massy enterprise”, etc. Our experience in applying results gained through project Matching interventions with the needs of children and youth at risk: creating a model into Croatian child care policy and practice is in some way consistent with those ideas. It is going to be presented as a case study of translating research results into practice through building practice-friendly science.

Main goal of the project was to propose a model of interventions based on psychosocial risk and intervention needs of children and youth at risk to develop serious behavioural problems. Main results are connected to the standardization of three instruments for assessment of psychosocial risk and intervention needs for use in Croatian child care system, as well as screening characteristics of children and youth included in existing residential and community based interventions regarding psychosocial risks, strengths and intervention needs. In accordance with research data, some recommendations for improving existing system of interventions were made. Primarily they are related to the need to introduce assessment of positive developmental assets (strengths), as well as acceptance of standardized approach to risk assessment, as a criterion for intervention choice. Further on, they are related to the recognition of very specific intervention needs of younger children, adolescent girls, high risk prone adolescent boys with multiple, combined externalized and internalized behavioural problems.

Generally speaking, while the research is still in progress knowledge translation is less demanding, concentrated on informing practice. When the research ends adoption and implementation of results are expected. So, the challenges of translation are wider and more present afterwards than during research.

**Key words:** translation of results into practice; challenges; practice friendly science
Bridging the gap between research, policy and practice

Children at the boundaries of disciplines and institutions

Speakers & Authors: Päivi Petrelius

How do disciplines, professional cultures, welfare services and professionals build knowledge on children and young persons? What are the consequences of these different epistemological practices and their combined effects on children? How do the practices of professional knowledge-formation constitute the identities and agency of children and young persons?

Children and young persons are positioned as objects of professional assessment and other professional measures. They are being nurtured, educated and protected. The various professionals view them differently - as pupils, clients or patients. There are many different orientations for helping and supporting children. Professionals see children's needs differently.

Because of the situated and partial nature of professional knowledge and orientations the picture of a child or a young person can be sliced up and become incomplete. A single actor cannot see the whole picture. Descriptions by different professionals may be contradictory. It can be difficult for professionals working with children and young persons - as well as for specialists in different disciplines - to construct a holistic view on children and youth. Also the knowledge the children and young people themselves have of themselves can become obscured.

Practices of professional knowledge-formation on children and young persons have epistemological as well as ethical consequences for them. The practices of professional knowledge do not only describe children, they also take part in the constitution of children as social beings and actors. The presentation discusses some epistemological practices and problems that hinder co-operative, participatory, ethical knowledge formation and co-operation. Drawing from the concept and theories of situated knowledge the presentation outlines some epistemological-ethical principles for (co-operative) knowledge formation in the field of supporting and helping children.

Key words:
Epistemology, multi-professional, situated knowledge
Evidence-based practice and implementation

Strengthening the Evidence Base for Practitioners and Service Providers

Symposium Co-ordinator: Judy Sebba

Aims:
The evidence base for policy and practice in children’s services is generally regarded as weak (e.g. Stevens et al, 2009). This symposium focuses on strengthening the evidence base on the education of children in care through attention to methodology in the research. It will also address increasing access to the research findings and using knowledge exchange activities to ensure that services and practitioners can use the findings.

Methods, design, data, findings:
The symposium includes four papers from England and Northern Ireland: Judy Sebba will present an overview of the research designs used in research on children in care to provide the context and justification for looking more closely at methodology. Aoife O'Higgins will present the methodology from a robust systematic review on the risk and protective factors in educational progress. Nikki Luke will describe the approach to statistical analysis of linked data from two national databases complemented by qualitative in-depth work and Karen Winter will report on a randomised control trial of the ‘Letterbox Club’ designed to improve reading of children in care through monthly materials sent to individual children. Through an overview and an understanding of these three studies, the symposium addresses the need for more robust research evidence to inform policy and practice for children in care and draws out ways in which this evidence can be made more accessible to those who need to use it.

Key words: secondary analysis, systematic review, RCT

Evidence-based practice and implementation

An overview of research designs used in studies on fostering

Speakers & Authors: Judy Sebba

Aims and Objectives: The paper draws on the work of Stevens et al.’s (2009) analysis of 625 research studies on child and family social welfare that were funded by five major UK funders between 1996 and 2004. Only 11 of these studies were randomised and non-randomised trials and just 2 were systematic reviews. Of the 82 studies that looked at the effectiveness of interventions or services, 29% relied only on qualitative techniques. While qualitative studies have an important role in helping to identify the ‘how’ and ‘why’ they offer a limited basis for national and international policy-making. This paper reports a similar analysis of the evidence gathered in our series of research reviews on foster care.

Methods: An analysis of research designs used in the studies identified in the seven research reviews published (by August 2014) by the Rees Centre for Research in Fostering and Education. The reviews adopt search strategies similar to those used in ‘standard’ systematic reviewing systems (e.g. Cochrane, Campbell, EPPI). Empirical studies that address the research question are included irrespective of methodology. The methodologies of studies included are summarised in the appendices of each report. The paper will report on the proportion of studies using different designs in order to justify the need for more robust research as reported in the other three papers in this symposium.

Design and data: The research is a secondary analysis of studies in existing reviews of research on fostering. It will categorise the studies according to the types of study identified in Stevens et al. (2009) in order to provide a comparison with those authors’ findings.

Key findings: The findings will be available by end of August 2014. They will provide an important basis for researchers, funders and policy makers to identify gaps in research and assist them in making decisions about future investment in research. They will also provide key messages to policy makers and practitioners about evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of any evidence that might inform their work.

Keywords: research methods, evidence base, policy
The educational progress of looked after children in England: linking care and educational data

Speakers & Authors: Nikki Luke

Aims and Objectives: This study investigates the relationships between young people's experiences in the care system and their educational achievements in secondary school. It uses a combination of large database analyses and qualitative interviews to identify the factors that facilitate or limit educational progress for these young people. We will discuss the challenges involved in accessing data via these two approaches and the potential for the resulting evidence to inform policy and practice.

Methods: This mixed methods study explores the relationship between educational outcomes, young people's care histories and individual characteristics by linking the English National Pupil Database and the data on Children Looked After for the cohort who completed exams in 2013. Outcomes for children with different characteristics and the relationships between outcomes and placement type and stability, school stability and length of time in care were explored. These statistical analyses will be complemented by interviews with young people in six local authorities and with adults significant in their educational careers. These interviews will explore what can be done to improve the progress of secondary school pupils in care and how better coordination of services might contribute.

Design and data: The research involves statistical regression and multilevel analyses of large national datasets, complemented by an in-depth qualitative exploration of young people's educational experiences.

Key findings: Preliminary findings from the database analyses will be available by the end of August 2014. The presentation will cover the key factors at the level of local authorities and individual children that contributed to young people's educational outcomes. Identifying the relationships between care experiences and educational progress will enable schools and services for children and young people to better support their education and improve outcomes. The research will identify ways in which the data collection might be improved to enable better use of it in future to monitor outcomes and inform improvements in services.

Keywords: mixed methods, databases, interviews
Evidence-based practice and implementation

Developing and implementing an RCT that seeks to assess the effectiveness of the Letterbox Club in improving the reading and number skills for primary school children in care

Speakers & Authors: Karen Winter, Paul Connolly, Jennifer Mooney

Aims and Objectives: The paper draws on an RCT that is currently underway in Northern Ireland and that seeks to measure reading outcomes for all children in foster care in Northern Ireland between the ages of 7-11 years who are members of a book gifting scheme known as the Letterbox Club. A number of issues have arisen during the implementation of the RCT that reflect wider debates regarding the development of evidence based research and effective interventions in social work and education. This paper critically reflects on these issues drawing specifically on literature regarding the development of logic models and relevant themes from implementation science literature.

Methods: All children in foster care (kinship and state foster care) in Northern Ireland between the ages of 7-11 years old are members of the Letterbox Club. Over 6 months of the year, and once monthly, each child receives a parcel that contains reading and number materials. During the pre-testing phase in April/ May 2013, 116 children were tested. In November/ December 2013 the first post-test took place, 111 children were tested, a retention rate of almost 96%. The second, and final, post-test will take place in May/ June 2014. Testing occurs using the Neale Reading Analysis this 'waiting list' RCT is measuring reading outcomes in comprehension, accuracy and fluency, as well as a measure of enjoyment of reading. The paper will critically reflect on the logic model underpinning the delivery of the programme and some of the emergent issues regarding its implementation.

Design and data: The research is a 'waiting list' RCT. Key findings: The findings will be available by end of August 2014. They will provide an important basis for policy makers and practitioners in terms of evidence based interventions to bridge the gap in educational outcomes for children in state care.

Keywords: RCT, educational outcomes, children in care
Risk and protective factors for the educational outcomes of children in foster care: An international systematic review

Speakers & Authors: Aoife O'Higgins

Aims and Objectives: Systematic reviews of interventions to support the education of children in care find that there is no explicit theory of change in some of the included studies; this limits the interpretation of evaluation findings. Risk and protective factors directly inform theories of change, they are a core component in the development of interventions; it is thus essential that they should be known. After a brief overview of the findings, this paper will discuss the existing evidence base on the education of children in care, focusing specifically on risk and protective factors.

Methods: In this systematic review, risk (and protective) factors were defined as variables that predispose to a negative (or positive) educational outcome, including achievement, cognitive ability and school functioning. The review included studies of children in any placement type but excluded studies of children in residential care only. It included studies that compared the educational outcomes of children in care to those not in care and synthesised the findings of studies that analysed the relationship between identified variables and educational outcomes. Only studies using standardised outcome measures were included.

Key findings: In examining whether pre-care or in-care factors are primarily to blame for poorer educational outcomes, the review highlights that methodological choices greatly influence the answer to this question. Indeed, sample types, comparison groups, outcomes and statistical methods all impact the findings. Identifying risk and protective factors for educational outcomes is made difficult by the lack of consistent terminology, definitions and the diversity of methodologies used to identify these factors. This creates significant difficulties for researchers and practitioners developing and evaluating interventions to support the education of children in care. Other consequences include the lack of clear and consistent research messages about the evidence base in this field, thus limiting knowledge transfer to practitioners and policy makers.

Keywords: risk factors, systematic review, education
Thursday, 4th September | Education (Symposium) | 10.30

Education of children in care and schooling as a protective factor

Multiple perspectives on education while in care

Symposium Co-ordinator: Rami Benbenishty

International studies indicate that young people growing up in residential or foster care frequently have less academic success than their peers (special issue CYSR, 2012). On the other hand, there are indications from various studies that children's and young people's educational paths stabilise when they move into residential units or foster families (e.g. less truancy), and that they start to have some success (e.g. improved performance). These conflicting findings may reflect the complexity and challenges facing the efforts to educate children in care. These children may arrive with significant learning difficulties and psychological barriers due to past failures. Nevertheless, creating a positive educational climate and developing educational aspirations, along with effective learning skills is an important therapeutic tools that can create opportunities for the future. The symposium will bring together studies from different countries that address various aspects of this issue, using different methods and samples. The juxtaposition of these different perspectives will promote mutual learning and initiate new directions for research.
Education of children in care and schooling as a protective factor

Educational support for young people in care - perspectives from 25 "nominated adults"

Speakers & Authors: Ingrid Höjer, Helena Johansson

The YiPPEE-project, funded by the European Union and running from 2008 - 2010 investigated educational plans and pathways of young people from a public care background. Using a mixed method approach several studies were conducted in five European countries.

In Sweden, 33 young people were interviewed in depth. At the end of each interview the young persons were asked to nominate one adult that had been important for them in relation to support for further education. This presentation focuses on interviews with the "nominated adults".

Even though the 33 young people were selected as showing "educational promise", only 25 of them could appoint a nominated adult. The nominated adults were:

- 3 biological mothers
- 13 foster parents
- 6 teachers
- 1 counsellor
- 2 residential home staff

The analysis is based on transcribed telephone interviews with all of the nominated adults.

The nominated adults who were foster carers stated that there is little support for young people who want to study at a higher level. They wished to continue to be part of the young people's lives, and compared their relationship to that of a biological parent and a child. Some of them said that they arranged everything on their own in relation to housing, education or job seeking for the young person. There was little help from the social services, and also little understanding for the need of such support.

According to the nominated adults, the young people did not always receive proper attention at school. Often the focus was more on their behaviour rather than their educational attainment. They were sometimes treated differently from other pupils, which was yet another barrier to overcome. All three nominated birth mothers mentioned that they had followed the children through the placements, and taken an active interest in their doings. The interviews with the nominated adults confirmed the need for more attention on school performances and also on support in the transition from care to adulthood for young people formerly placed in public care. This result was also in concordance with the content of the in-depth interviews.

Key words: Public care, education, support
School climate, expectations, educational plans and needs of Israeli youth villages

Speakers & Authors: Eran Melkman, Tehila Refaeli, Rami Benbenishty, Anat Zeira

One of the issues receiving growing attention in recent years are the low academic achievements of children in care; achievements well known to impact the integration of care leavers into the labor market and breaking of the 'poverty cycle'.

The goal of this study is to describe the educational climate among adolescents in educational youth villages in Israel, their educational plans, and their perception of their educational needs.

The study sample consists of 1,685 youth in care from 34 youth villages, 1,152, constituting 68.4% of the entire sample, are 11-12 grade students (a response rate of 39.8%). Participants responded to a structured questionnaire in group settings.

Most of the youth have been in the youth village for a period of up to three years. Two thirds of the youth are immigrants or descendants of parents immigrating to Israel from a large variety of countries around the globe. Many of the respondents have a history of special education (in special education schools or special education classes inside regular schools), and of learning disabilities.

In general the youth report high achievements. Assessments of school climate are positive, substantially higher than that in the general 10-11th grade student population. Staff's support and involvement in their studies was seen as high. The vast majority of youth plan to leave care with a full matriculation diploma or intend to complete it in the future (91.8%), to enlist in military or national service (86.4%) and to enroll in university, college or vocational training afterwards (87.2%).

In the discussion we conclude that these findings depart from findings in other settings. We recommend means of improving school climate and addressing the educational needs of youth in care.
Education of children in care and schooling as a protective factor

The Meaning of Education in Care - a Life Course Perspective

Speakers & Authors: Koengeter Stefan, Mangold Katharina, Benjamin Strahl, Schröer Wolfgang

Research on school attainment repeatedly shows poor outcomes in school achievements for young people in care and for those who are ageing out of care (Trout et al., 2008). Furthermore, their educational careers are characterized by delays and detours (Courtney et al., 2010). However, a social work perspective in (residential) care typically does not focus on this attainment gap, but on behavioral problems of young people living care. Learning and education of these young people are considered to be the duty of school, whereas professionals in care are emphasizing the treatment of young people in order to facilitate school attendance. (Gharabaghi/Groskleg, 2010). The findings of our study on young people who left care and made their way to higher education ("Higher Education without Care Leavers") suggests a reverse perspective that accounts for the meaning of education in coping with adverse life events and stabilizing life course. Informed by a life course perspective, the analysis of twenty-eight narrative interviews of young adults who aged out of care reveals the variety of the meaning of education in their life stories and the importance of educational careers for other life trajectories (accommodation, family relationships, leisure activities). The paper first maps the different meanings of education in the life stories of young people who left care and then suggests a typology of educational careers in the context of critical life-course transitions. The paper concludes with practice implications and suggestions how to support the protective factor of education in the life of young people in care and who are ageing out of care.

Courtney, Mark E.et al. (2010). Midwest Evaluation of the Adult Functioning of Former Foster Youth: Outcomes at Age 23 and 24. Chicago, Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.
Thursday, 4th September | Education (Symposium) | 10.30

**Education of children in care and schooling as a protective factor**

**Contradictory dimensions of education in mother-child-institutions - Irritating incoherences between education and motherhood**

*Speakers & Authors: Samuel Keller, Renate Stohler*

A currently running longitudinal research project in Switzerland analyses different perspectives on main reasons for entering and leaving mother-child-institutions and on procedures during the stay. Goal of this study is to define and implement quality in a growing field of residential care. Young mothers and their mostly new-born children often enter mother-child-institutions because of missing possibilities to raise a child in the previous care institution or because child-care-authorities query their ability to cope successfully with motherhood in their precarious life situation.

The study particularly takes into consideration the mothers perspectives by interviewing them twice during their stay and after having left. Besides that, standardised questionnaires gather quantitative data on the mother's and child's situation; professionals' perspective are acquired by group discussions, case questionnaires and analysis of concepts.

Tentative findings reveal a constant presence of education as a normative issue on different levels in order to define problems and objectifiable goals. On the one hand young mothers’ education (school, apprenticeship) is understood to be a main indicator for independency in their best interest. On the other hand potential child removal by child-care-authorities in the best interest of the child is linked to skills concerning parenting, physical and mental presence, mother-child-attachment, cooperation, hygiene, and housekeeping. Additionally, when leaving the institution mothers and children face particular problems which can turn into risk factors in their everyday lives: being a single mother, violent partners, only small or unstable social networks, little economic capital and often unfinished primary education.

Many young mothers don't figure themselves as contemporary (care-leaving) mothers and pupils/students or labourers. Primarily they want to keep their children. Thus, they feel high pressure and desire to be objectively good mothers respectively full-time-mothers.

It depends on concepts and practitioners which part of education and motherhood they lay weight on as important transitions to adulthood. By focussing on two cases we point out and discuss those different meanings, potential conflicts and possible ways to deal with them.
Health and wellbeing of children in care

Foster Care or Residential - Tweedledum and Tweedledee?

Speakers & Authors: Signe Frederiksen, Rikke Fuglsang Olsen

In this paper we offer results of the relative effects of foster care and residential care based on an estimation strategy superior to the strategies of previous studies. We analyze outcomes changes from 16th to 18th birthday in mental health, emergency room visits, education, and crime using data on children born in 1995, who have been placed in out-of-home care for the first time between 13th and 16th birthday, have maximum experienced 3 care environments, and have only been placed in a foster care or residential setting. We show that out matching and differences-in-differences strategy reduces selection bias considerably compared to control strategies such as an OLS, a lagged dependent variable or a fixed effect model. We further qualify our estimations by sensitivity analyses and placebo regressions. Our preliminary results suggest that previous studies have overestimated the negative effects of residential care.
Health and wellbeing of children in care

Experiences of care and wellbeing - the views of young people from foster and residential care in England

Speakers & Authors: Jo Dixon, Nancy Jones, Charmaine Kavira

This paper will present findings from our study of Corporate Parenting for young people in and leaving care in England. The study, which is being carried out by National Care Advisory Service and researchers from York University, looks at how corporate parenting can make a difference to young people in and from care. It explores the risk and protective factors that impact on young people's experiences and progress and how they are supported by the agencies acting as their corporate parents.

The study employed a mixed methods approach with snapshot surveys and case studies and utilised a participatory model with care experienced researchers carrying out interviews with other young people and contributing to analysis and dissemination.

Data was gathered for 579 young people aged between 13 and 21 years to understand what makes a difference. Data was also gathered from over 300 social/leaving care workers to further understand young people's progress and to explore workers' views on the barriers and facilitators to effective corporate parenting.

The research looks at key life areas for young people living in or leaving foster and residential care, including accommodation, education, health, wellbeing and difficulties.

Despite limited policy, research and practice attention to health and wellbeing of care experienced young people in England, there has been a number of recent developments in this area. This paper will look at emerging findings from data gathered on young people's wellbeing and will set this within the context of current policy around health and wellbeing of the care population and earlier research on mental health and life satisfaction of young people in and from care. We will discuss initial analysis that shows whilst overall, young people in our sample have a relatively high sense of wellbeing, there are some interesting group differences. On-going work will explore these differences and will draw on comparative research using the same wellbeing measure for young people in the general population. The policy and practice relevance of the findings will be discussed to understand how practice can best support this area of young people's lives.
Health and wellbeing of children in care

Development and validation of a questionnaire to assess the social image of youth in residential care

Speakers & Authors: Diniz Lopes, Joana Patrício, Maria Manuela Calheiros, Margarida Garrido

The literature indicates the existence of a negative social image of youth in residential care. However, there are no validated measures for evaluating the social image of these youth quantitatively. Therefore, we developed two studies: one to develop a questionnaire to measure the social images of youth in residential care and the other to examine the psychometric properties of this questionnaire. In the first study, a sample of 176 participants indicated 5 attributes of youth in residential care and in family context, and 68 attributes were selected to construct the questionnaire. In the second study, this questionnaire was administered to a sample of 269 participants. The results indicated that this questionnaire has good psychometric properties and is organized in three factors that discriminate the social image of the youth in residential care.

Key words: social image assessment, residential care, youth
Exploring the borders between residential care and mental health treatment

Speakers & Authors: Jorge F. Del Valle, Amaia Bravo, Eeva Timonen-Kallio

Due to the high prevalence of behavioral and emotional problems in children in residential care cooperation between mental health services and child care system is paramount. However, the lack of mutual knowledge, some attitudes and different perspectives between professionals from both parts can become notable obstacles for this cooperation. This paper will present an empirical study about mutual relationships between professionals of mental health and child care services.

Method consisted of 45 individual interviews and 3 focus groups carried out in Finland, Germany, Lithuania, Denmark, Scotland and Spain. Professionals interviewed in each counter were practitioners both form mental health and child care services. The content was mainly devoted to collet mutual attitudes and knowledge, limitations and roles, as well as best practices in cooperation.

Findings show very similar results despite the different type of countries involved in the sample. Mental health professionals felt that child care workers seemed to "ask for miracles", with important lack of knowledge about mental health issues, and that residential workers showed a notable lack of information about children background when coming to consultation. On the other hand, residential workers felt that they did not receive clear guidance from mental health professionals to face behavioral problems, that there is an excessive use of medical jargon and scarce feedback received about therapy progress.

Some good practices detected will be presented as well as a proposal to improve cooperation between both systems based in an international project RESME (Erasmus LLP-programme)
Residential care and treatment interventions fault

Therapeutic Residential Care in the U.S. Challenges and Opportunities in Building Evidence-Based Practices

Symposium Co-ordinator: James Whittaker

In their closing essay to a recent insightful and cogent volume on residential care in international perspective, three of the contributors - Mark Courtney (U.S.), Talal Dolev (Israel) and Robbie Gilligan (Ireland) remind us: that the dilemmas we confront and the solutions we imagine are shared across cultural and geographic boundaries, and across time. It highlights the importance of developing a body of evidence to support our care choices... (Courtney & Iwaniec, 2009 p.208). It is in that spirit of fostering critical cross-national exchange that we propose a symposium highlighting current research, policy trends and practice issues in U.S. based therapeutic residential care. We do so only in part to provide ‘answers’ to vexing questions, but largely to seek insight and new direction from our European colleagues throughout the week who will comprise the majority of the conference participants. The unifying theme of our several distinct presentations centers on the challenges and opportunities in incorporating evidence-based practices - both discrete interventions and efficacious ‘whole cloth models’- into contemporary U.S. therapeutic residential care.
Residential care and treatment interventions fault

Research Insights from the Family Home Program: An Adaptation of the Teaching Family Model at Boys Town

Speakers & Authors: Ronald Thompson, Daniel Daly

The goal of this presentation is to provide a summary of selected research findings related to a science-based residential care model that has been adapted and scaled up in multiple treatment, intervention, and prevention settings in the US. The Teaching Family Model is a behaviorally-based, family-style residential program and the result of fifty years of program development, innovation and research. Evidence-based and promising intervention and program implementation practices are a core part of the approach, and the entire model has been rated as having promising research evidence based on independent scientific reviews.

More than one hundred and twenty-five papers have been published about the development, implementation, and outcomes of the Boys Town adaptation of this model, first of all in residential care and treatment and later in foster care, in-home family services, and parent training. Findings and implications from this research will be summarized during the presentation. Examples include long-term follow-up youth outcomes related to permanence, safety, and well-being; moderators and mediators of positive outcomes; the effects of integrated aftercare on placement stability and risky behavior after discharge; and prevention of school dropout and out-of-home placement when the model is used community settings. Currently, over 30,000 youth are served annually in all these settings in the US.
Evidence-based Treatments in Therapeutic Residential Care

Speakers & Authors: Sigrid James

There is growing interest in the feasibility of implementing evidence-based treatments into residential care settings. The current presentation will address three questions: (1) What is known about the effectiveness and implementation of evidence-based client-specific models into residential care settings? (2) What is known about the evidence for milieu-wide treatments; and (3) what is known about sending youth to evidence-based treatments in the community? A systematic literature review yielded a very modest body of knowledge that indicates the existence of a few promising residential care treatment models (e.g., Teaching Family Model, Positive Peer Culture) and supports the feasibility of implementing and testing evidence-based treatments in residential care (e.g., Dialectical Behavior Therapy, Aggression Replacement Training). No systematic knowledge was discovered about the use of evidence-based treatments in the community by residential care youth. It is evident that the research lags far behind the needs of the residential care providers which indicate growing interest and beginning efforts in the implementation of evidence-based treatments. Questions about the process of identifying and implementing an evidence-based treatment and the lack of implementation models specific to residential care settings present a new and potentially fruitful area of inquiry and collaboration for residential care providers and researchers.
Creating and Maintaining Family Partnerships in Therapeutic Residential Care: The Critical Role of the 'Professional Parent Liaison'

*Speakers & Authors: Richard Small, Christopher Bellonci, Susan Ramsey*

There is an accumulation of evidence that family involvement and family-centered practice makes a difference in outcomes of therapeutic residential care. Whittaker (2012) reviews selective U.S. sources dating back to the 1960's, all supporting the critical role of family and community involvement in enhancing positive outcomes. Geurts et al (2012), with more emphasis on the European literature similarly identify a range of papers connecting family involvement to better outcomes. In the U.S., this emerging consensus in the literature is also supported by key values underlying current formulations such as ‘Systems of Care Principles’ (Stroul and Friedman 1986). In addition, the Building Bridges Initiative, a unique undertaking involving the federal Center for Mental Health Services and several voluntary associations, has set the stage for innovation by establishing clear benchmarks defining family-centered practice (www.buildingbridges4youth.org).

This presentation draws on our own collective clinical and administrative experience with therapeutic residential care including at The Walker School in Needham, Massachusetts. We will describe how the implementation of family partnerships requires change in structure and culture within the residential program from pre-admission to discharge planning and aftercare and highlight the critical role of the ‘Professional Parent Liaison’ in maintaining effective teamwork between staff and empowered family members.
Identifying Research Priorities for Therapeutic Residential Care

Speakers & Authors: James Whittaker

Therapeutic residential care in the U.S has suffered from a kind of benign neglect in model and theory development and testing, including demonstration research and development of protocols for practice and training. The resultant imprecision of the ‘therapeutic residential approach’ coupled with a reflexive aversion to anything perceived as ‘institutional’ and heightened by concerns about the potential for child maltreatment and possible iatrogenic effects in group settings along with cost disparities when compared with other forms of intervention have called into serious question the uses of therapeutic residential care as anything but a last resort alternative. This has been particularly the case in the U.S., but it is a theme that resonates in other developed countries with complex social service systems as well. As the critical mental health needs of children presenting for out-of-home care services are better understood, there is an increasing urgency to determine the full suite of intensive services available to meet their needs, including where appropriate, high-quality therapeutic residential care. This paper will explore some of the historical impediments to developing and implementing empirical research in therapeutic residential care, as well as identify some key questions for future research in selected areas and some potential strategies for moving them forward.
Interventioner/forebyggelse i hjemmet og nærmiljøet

Etniske minoritetsfamilier i barnevernet: diskurser, intervensjoner og god praksis

Symposium Co-ordinator: Ragnhild Bjørknes

Symposiet vil ha fokus på ny norsk forskning på etniske minoritetsfamilier i barnevernet. Forskning på dette feltet er komplekst, og det er i spenningsfeltet mellom forskning, god praksis og implikasjoner for videre satsning dette symposiet ønsker å skape diskusjon. Formålet er å øke bevisstheten omkring mangfoldet og kompleksiteten barnevernstjenesten står ovenfor i arbeid med denne gruppen familier. Symposiet vil omfatte både kvalitativ og kvantitativ forskning. Der dette inkluderer både et litteratursøk på forskning på feltet, en diskursanalyse av norske aviser artikler, en randomisert kontrollert studie og kvalitative intervju.
Interventioner/forebygelse i hjemmet og nærmiljøet

Etniske minoritetsfamilier i barnevernet - hva sier forskningen?

Speakers & Authors: Ragnhild Bjørknes, Marte Fylkesnes

Bakgrunn: Internasjonalt har forskningen de senere år vist en økning i antall etniske minoritetsfamilier som mottar tiltak fra barnevernet. Denne økningen er også merkelig for praktikere i den norske barnevernstjenesten. Men hvordan kan vi forstå og møte denne overrepresentasjonen av enkelte barnegrupper?

Metode: Denne presentasjonen bygger på et litteratursøk der internasjonal og norsk forskning er innhentet og vurdert. I tillegg til nasjonale rapporter er vitenskapelige databaser slik som Web of Science, NorArt, PsychINFO benyttet i litteratursøket. Søkestrategien innebar at vi utarbeidet flere søk med relevante søkeord i samråd med en bibliotekar. Litteratursøk er gjort i perioden mars til juni 2014.

Resultater og implikasjoner: Vi vil presentere og problematisere nasjonale rapporter som viser at etniske minoritetsfamilier er overrepresentert i barnevernet, samt forskning som undersøker de særskilte utfordringene barnevernet står ovenfor på det flerkulturelle barnevernsfeltet. Spørsmålene som stilles er:

1) i hvilken grad er etniske minoritetsbarn overrepresentert i barnevernet,
2) hvordan kan overrepresentasjonen forstås og
3) hvilke utfordringer kan identifiseres på barnevernsfeltet med hensyn til tjenestene som tilbys etniske minoritetsfamilier. Diskusjonen vil ramme inn de videre bidragene i symposiet, og trekke linjer til forhold som eksempelvis kulturforskjeller i syn på barns behov og velferdsstatens rolle, barrierer for godt samarbeid og iverksetting av effektive intervensjoner.
Diskurser om barn i norsk kontekst

Speakers & Authors: Ragnhild Hollekim, Norman Anderssen, Marguerite Daniel

Bakgrunn og målsetting.
I en globalisert verden er syn på barn og barns posisjon, som følge av for eksempel ulik politisk, økonomisk og demografisk utvikling, i stadig endring. Slike trender, eller dominerende forståelser av barn «reiser ikke på egen hånd». De forhandles om, bestemmes og forandres i ulike institusjonelle settinger og på ulike arenaer (Thelen & Haukanes, 2010). I dette prosjektet studerer vi diskurser om barn og barns posisjon i en norsk kontekst i lys av et case: barnevernets møte med etniske minoritetsforeldre. Dette møtet blir ofte fremstilt som konfliktfylt og har de siste årene vært høyt på medias dagsorden.

Metode.

Noen foreløpige funn.
I materialet har vi tentativt identifisert to overordnede, og samtidig nær forbundne diskurser om barn i Norge. 1) Barnet som selvstendig rettssubjekt og 2) Staten som garantist og ansvarlig for at barns rettigheter blir ivaretatt. Det fremkommer at barnets rett til å bli beskyttet fra foreldres bruk av vold og tvang har en særlig status, og at dette er en rett det tilsynelatende ikke kan forhandles om. Det er ellers åpenhet for å diskutere om barns rettigheter, i møtet mellom norsk barnevern og etniske minoritetsfamilier, respekteres på en måte som tar hensyn til hele barnets identitet. Studien vår viser pågående prosesser og bevegelser i samfunnet med hensyn til hvordan barn og barns posisjon kan forstås.
**Thursday, 4th September | Scandinavian track (Symposium) | 10.30**

**Interventioner/forebyggelse i hjemmet og nærmiljøet**

Foreldreveileddning med etniske minoritetsmødre - effekten av positivt samspill mellom mor og barn

**Speakers & Authors:** Ragnhild Bjørknes

**Bakgrunn og målsetting:** Parent Management Training—Oregon Model (PMTO) er et veldokumentert foreldreveileddningsprogram for å forebygge og hindre videre utvikling av atferdsvansker hos barn. PMTO er nasjonalt implementert i Norge, men svært få etniske minoritetsfamilier har fått intervensjonen. På bakgrunn av dette ble det i 2007 igangsatt en randomisert kontrollert studie for å undersøke brukervennlighet og effekten av PMTO med somaliske og pakistanske mødre. I dette symposiet vil vi rapportere forskningsresultatene både på mors foreldreferdigheter og mental helse, samt barnas atferdssproblem fra denne studien. Presentasjonen vil også omtale hvilke strukturelle og kulturelle tilpasninger som er gjort for å tilrettelegge for deltagelse både til studien og foreldreveileddningsprogrammet.

**Metode:** Dette er et randomisert kontrollert studie med 97 etniske minoritetsmødre og deres barn fra 3 til 9 år. Studien har innhentet data fra terapeuter, mødre og barnas skole/barnehagepersonale. Foreldreveileddningen ble gitt som et frivillig kurstilbud rettet mot mødre som har barn med atferdsvansker.

**Resultat og implikasjoner:** Mødrene hadde høy oppmøtefrekvens og var svært fornøyd med foreldreveileddningen. Funn på foreldreferdigheter viser en reduksjon av streng oppdragelse og økning i positive foreldreferdigheter sammenlignet med kontrollgruppen. Resultatene viser små til moderate effekter, sett i lys av at intervensjonen er av forebyggende karakter må disse tolkes som positive. PMTO hadde ingen effekt på mental helse, slik som depresjon og angst. Mødrene som fikk PMTO rapporterte om en markant bedring av barnas atferdsvansker sammenlignet med kontrollgruppen. Vi fant ikke støtte for at intervensjonen hadde positiv virkning på barnets atferdssvansker i barnehage og skole. Studien indikerer at det er mulig å forebygge atferdsvansker hos barn med somalisk og pakistansk bakgrunn i alderen 3 til 9 år ved bruk av PMTO. Tatt i betraktning at enkelte etniske minoritetsgrupper lever i sårbare situasjoner for utvikling av atferdsvansker, er studiens funn viktige for videre satsning på forebygging gjennom tidlig intervensjon.
Interventioner/forebyggelse i hjemmet og nærmiljøet

Om god praksis - fortellinger om godt samarbeid i det flerkulturelle barnevernet

Speakers & Authors:  Marte Fylkesnes


Metode: Seks foreldre og deres respektive saksbehandlere ble i en kvalitativ studie intervjuet om sine erfaringer. Samarbeidsrelasjonen ble beskrevet som gode av samtlig. Intervjumaterialet ble analysert tematisk, og sentrale tema knyttet til saksbehandlernes tilnærninger ble identifisert.

Thursday, 4th September | Social Work | 10.30

Social work and welfare policy

The Assessment Process in Norwegian Child Protection - When to intervene and how to choose the right intervention

Speakers & Authors: Jim Lurie, Torill Tjelflaat

This presentation aims to describe how child protection workers in Norway work with assessments of children reported to be at risk. Norwegian child protection cases generally start with a report of concern about a child. If it is decided to investigate, then workers have normally three months to conduct an investigation, and to decide if further action is needed. The case may either be dismissed, or an appropriate intervention must be chosen, such as home-based support, or placement in foster care or an institution.

We have carried out a qualitative study based on data collected through in-depth interviews with one or more social workers from 15 local child protection agencies in central Norway, and with supervisors/inspectors from 3 county-level child protection authorities. The views and experiences of these two types of child protection professionals are presented and compared.

The study focuses on various aspects of the investigative and decision-making process including an assessment plan, information collection from the family and from other public and private actors, involvement of child and parents in the investigation, use of professional experts, documentation of results and professional opinions, decision-making about if and how to intervene, and concluding information to the child, parents and other professionals.

Data analysis is not finished, but preliminary results suggest several important findings. Cooperation between social workers and parents is an important success factor in most investigations, especially when the assessment concludes with the need for home-based interventions. Investigations involving more serious allegations, such as suspicion of domestic violence or serious child abuse often follow a different approach, with early consideration of reporting to the police, and/or immediate removal of the child from the home on an emergency basis. Children are generally interviewed as part of the investigation, but are often not sufficiently involved in decisions about the outcome or properly informed. Written plans for the assessment and documentation of the results, particularly with regard to the rationale for professional decision-making and choice of intervention are often inadequate or lacking entirely.

Key words: social work assessments, decision-making, appropriate interventions
Looked-after children and youth justice: overcoming 'system abuses'

Speakers & Authors:  Julie Shaw

United Kingdom policy responses to the problem of 'looked-after' children in residential care being over-represented in the youth justice system have typically focused upon the culpability of individual children and practitioners. Nevertheless, 'system abuses', whereby deficits in the wider child care system prevent children from reaching their full potential, exacerbate existing problems or precipitate new ones, can be equally pertinent. This objective of this presentation is to explore the findings of research which aimed to illuminate factors at policy and practice levels that contribute to such children in England coming to the attention of the youth justice system and highlight positive ways forward. This qualitative research involved undertaking a case study which included a series of semi-structured interviews with a sample of young people who had offended whilst in residential care in a particular local authority area, as well as professionals from the care and youth justice systems and an analysis of relevant policy. Results revealed that 'system abuses' had the potential to directly influence contact with the youth justice system. These included multiple placement moves, which resulted in the exacerbation or precipitation of psychological and emotional difficulties and the homogeneity of provision, meaning that units at times struggled to cope with diverse needs. Similarly, the placement of individuals in isolated units at a distance from family and friends often resulted in challenging behaviour which led to police involvement. This is a state of affairs which runs counter to the spirit of both national and international legislation and edict, including the obligation placed upon UK local authorities to facilitate child-centred practice through the requirement to be good 'corporate parents' and various rights contained within the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). It will be concluded that in order to improve outcomes, it is necessary to employ a holistic approach which, while acknowledging individual culpability, both recognises and focuses on the contribution of overarching policy and practice and takes action to address identified systemic deficits.

Key words: residential care; youth justice; system abuse
Audit of residential child and youth care in Sweden

Speakers & Authors: David Pålsson

In Sweden, like in many other countries, state inspection represents the main monitoring system of residential child and youth care. This is in line with an international trend towards increased use of audits as means to maintain and raise quality in welfare services, captured in the term “audit society”. In this ongoing PhD project, organized as a compilation thesis, the inspection of residential care in Sweden is studied. The project has a multi method qualitative approach (interviews, observations, document studies) and the empirical object includes auditors (inspectors) as well as auditees (managers and staff, looked after children and trade associations/client organizations). The overall theoretical framework primarily consists of concepts derived from the thesis of the audit society, e.g. the constitutive nature of audit in that it shapes the social practices of the auditees.

So far, a study has been conducted regarding the role that interviews with children play in the inspection process. At a policy level, governments increasingly stress the importance of children’s rights and their ability to participate in decision-making in child welfare services. An example indicating that such rhetoric’s has taken a hold is that the Swedish Inspectorate is required to consult the children who wish to be interviewed and to take account of their opinions when making decisions. The aim of the study was to describe and analyze the influence the Inspectorate grants looked after children and particular attention was paid to how various kinds of remarks expressed by the children influence the inspection process. The study drew on interviews and observations of inspectors as well as an analysis of a representative sample (n= 147) of documentation from inspections performed during 2012.

The result indicate different inspectorial approaches, which in turn influence the importance children’s opinions are assigned in the inspection process. Moreover, the findings demonstrate difficulties for looked after children to exert influence on the inspection process. This is because most of the regulatory quality criteria used by the authority (e.g. staffing levels, facilities) diverge from the aspects of care that the children attach importance to (e.g. relationships with staff, resources).

keywords: Inspection, residential care, audit society, children´s voices
Social work and welfare policy

What motivates social workers to stay in municipal child welfare services?

Speakers & Authors: Anette Christine Iversen, Fungisai Gwanzura-Ottemöller

Working in municipal child welfare service is a challenging task and there are problems with high staff turnover in many countries. In an official report (NOU) by the Norwegian Ministry of children, equality and social inclusion it is argued that the complexity of child protective work calls for a more comprehensive base of knowledge and skills. Little is known about to what extent Norwegian social workers' intend to stay in their jobs and what factors may influence these intentions.

The purpose of this paper is to examine whether work experience, educational background and characteristics of the work can explain social workers' intentions to stay in their job.

Data was collected through an internet survey in 2011/2012. Out of a total of 636 case workers and leaders in municipal child welfare services in western Norway, who were invited to participate, 429 responded (response rate = 67.5 %). Of these 340 were professional social workers employed in permanent positions and they constitute the sample in this paper. Characteristics of the work were assessed by items from the QPS-Nordic scale and include social support, perceived competence, positive challenges and role conflict. Data will be analyzed in SPSS, descriptive statistics, bivariate and multivariate analysis will be presented.

Preliminary results show that ¾ of the child welfare workers intended to stay in their jobs the next two years and ¼ have considered quitting their job in the past few years.
Decision-making in child protection care orders: A cross-country analysis of practice

Speakers & Authors: Jill Berrick, Jonathan Dickens, Tarja Pösö, Marit Skivenes

Care orders within the child protection system are one of the most invasive interventions a State can make. We know that the discretionary space Governments set out for child protection workers when they prepare care orders differ. In this paper we analyze how child welfare workers make care order decisions in England, Finland, Norway and the USA (CA).

The data material is a survey with a sample of about 300 child welfare workers from each of the four countries, in which we use vignette methods to identify similarities and differences in practice between the child welfare systems. We will focus on how parents and children are involved in decision making as well as use of experts in the care order proceedings.
Transitions out of Care: Challenges and Opportunities

Experiences and Resilience Characteristics of Romanian Care Leavers: A Longitudinal Case Study Approach

Speakers & Authors: Gabriela Dima

This paper aims to bring an in-depth understanding on care leavers' experiences and resilience characteristics over a ten years period from leaving residential care in Romania. The largest part of literature and research on leaving care documents on the early stages of transition from care to independent living and adulthood and evidences generally poor outcomes and high risk of social exclusion.

This article draws on a previous mixed-methods research study (Dima, 2012) and data collected by use of semi-structured interviews from a sample of 34 young people who had left care during 2003-2004. Stein's resilience diamond (2005) was used to categorise care leavers at two to four years after discharge (first interview). One young person from each of the three groups - 'moving on', 'surviving', 'strugglers' - was followed-up in 2014 (second interview). The main method used for the qualitative analysis is the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, chosen for its potential to give voice to young people's lived experiences and bring an in-depth understanding and sense-making of independent living and adulthood. The moment of leaving care was a poor starting point for most young people, followed by an early transition period with highly changeable outcomes when few showed a clearer direction, either upwards, being successful, or downwards, being unsuccessful, while the large, middle group was often contradictory in that in one sphere they seemed to be 'moving on' whereas in other area, they weren't. The three case studies are discussed in terms of coping characteristics, social support, turning points and resilience factors. Findings show a tendency to keep on the initial path and remain within the early defined resilience group. These points to the importance of promoting resilience early and after-care support.

While categorisation approaches are considered helpful to provide a general assessment of care leavers' problems and needs to inform policy and management for an adequate planning of resources, it is less helpful at practice level, for individual interventions which require a more comprehensive understanding of individual experiences.
Transitions out of care: challenges and opportunities

Perceptions of Needs and Resources in the Transition to Adulthood for Youth in Care: Development of a Youth Peer Support Network

Speakers & Authors: Marie-Claude Richard, Vanessa Fournier, Nadeau France, Catherine Godin

Supporting the transition to adulthood in a vulnerability context is a concern reminding the action of both protection systems and community members. In the French-speaking province of Quebec (Canada) as elsewhere in the world, different measures exist to prepare youth to an autonomous life. Nevertheless, many of them found themselves impoverished and isolated when their time in care comes to an end. Faced with this situation, a supporting project has been initiated in 2010 by five youth centers of the province. In the region of Quebec City, the creation of a youth peer support network directed to youth in care or who have been in care began.

Inspired from a Canadian well-settled network, the Youth in Care, the process undertaken here is based on 3 principles: empowerment, peer-support and citizen participation. The youth peer support network aims at providing material, informational and emotional support to youth aging-out from care, building a network allowing peer-support, and promoting social participation. This network is actually in development and comes with an evaluation process. In this oral presentation, we will present data associated to a pilot project, which is a needs and resources analysis based on the perception of youths and their social workers.

Keywords
Transition, peer support, network
Transitions out of care: challenges and opportunities

Young people’s transitions from care to adulthood in European and post-communist Eastern European and Central Asian Societies

Speakers & Authors: Mike Stein

The aim of this paper is to explore comparative policy and practice issues arising from mapping information drawn from three samples: first a European sample which included data from 9 European countries representing Scandinavian, central European and southern European Western societies, and; second, two samples of 14 and 5 post-communist societies, respectively, based on data from Eastern and central Asian societies.

Collection of the mapping information for the three samples used a standardised framework and included data on: population; the types of placements of children living apart from their birth families; the age of leaving or ‘ageing out’ of care; the legal and policy context; preparation and after care support, official data and research, and law and policy.

In addressing the keynote theme, ‘From research to policy and practice’, and the topic Transitions out of care: challenges and opportunities, this paper will; first, present the main findings arising from the comparative mapping exercise; second, it will reflect upon the policy and practice implications arising from the comparative material, including: deinstitutionalisation and the quality of care; patterns of transitions from care to adulthood; services for preparation and support after care; the use of data and research, and; the different legal and policy contexts.

Finally, the paper will explore the implications of the comparative empirical material introduced for the way different welfare regimes have been conceptualized and modeled - using Esping-Andersen's welfare typology as a starting point. This will include a consideration of the limitations of 'Western models', given the evidence of diversity arising from the comparative material gathered from different and changing European and post-communist and central Asian societies.

Keywords: transitions; research; challenges
Care leavers' views on their entry to work: a multiple case study in Ireland and Catalonia

Speakers & Authors: Laura Arnau-Sabatés, Robbie Gilligan

Background: Work / employment is important for promoting social inclusion for care leavers as for other vulnerable populations. Nevertheless, there is little detailed evidence on how young care leavers access or remain in the world of work. This exploratory study seeks to generate some initial insights on this important topic.

Aims and objectives: Youth transitions to employment maybe particularly difficult and complex given what is broadly known about their educational and social histories and the general impact of austerity on youth employment opportunities. The aim of this cross national qualitative study (Ireland and Catalonia) is to explore the experiences of young adult care leavers who are currently in work (apparently successful cases). The focus is primarily on influences on their entry and progress into and within the world of work.

Methods and research design: A semi structured and open-ended interview was designed and validated. A maximum -variation sampling approach was used to select participants. A total of 21 care leavers, aged between 23 and 33 years old, were recruited on the basis of substantial employment experience since leaving care.

Key Findings: Preliminary analysis reveals two main pathways into the world of work for the young people in the study. Personal initiative, educational level, social connections (importance of relationships) and support from carers seem relevant to different degrees in each of the pathways. The implications of the findings for further research and for child welfare practice and policy and research will be explored.

Key words: care leavers, entry to work, progress within work, work trajectories
Transitions out of care: challenges and opportunities

Young people in care and care leavers: the influence of carers in their progression into and through the world of work

Speakers & Authors: Robbie Gilligan, Laura Arnau-Sabatés

Aims and objectives: The aim of this component of a preliminary cross national qualitative study (Ireland and Catalonia) of care leavers's experience in the world of work is to explore how carers may influence the entry of young people in care into the world of work, and how they may also influence the young people's progress in the world of work.

Methods and research design: A maximum -variation sampling approach was used to select participants. A total of 21 care leavers were recruited on the basis of substantial employment experience since leaving care. The young adults were interviewed about various aspects of their work / employment history and about factors that had helped their progress into and within the world of work.

Key Findings: In this paper, we present evidence from the data which illuminates the role of the carers in the work-related progression of the young care leavers, especially in relation to work experience while they were still in care. It emerges that carers were influential in promoting and sometimes hindering progress in work (and education). Carers were often reported to play an important part in opening up opportunities and in assisting with the logistics of travel etc. Carer expectations (high - and sometimes low) were also reported as having played a part in the unfolding work trajectories of the young people. An initial conceptualisation of carer roles in work support is proposed.

Key words: care leavers, work trajectories, role of carers.
Voices of children, youth and families

Listening voices from children, families and careers in the child protection system: initiatives across Europe to improve the practice

Symposium Co-ordinator: Nuria Fuentes-Peláez

Stakeholders are valued as an essential part of any effective social educative intervention in the partnership model. Making sense of their views and listening to them is an essential action to improve practice. Little is known about how they think about their experiences. To address this gap in knowledge, in this symposium we will aim to explore how children, biological families, foster families (parents and biological children) think about their situation through four different researches developed in different European Countries (Italy, Netherland, Portugal and Spain). The use of qualitative methods allows having a deeper meaning of the voices and understanding child protection system from another perspective. The results of the researches presented are related to various phases of the intervention: assessment, planning, measure communication, child placement, adjustment and follow up. Considering all their views can help practitioners to identify strengths and difficulties, and encourage them to use this knowledge to enable stakeholders to feel more valued and to empower them. Key words: stakeholders’ voices, child protection, foster care, practice.
Voices of children, youth and families

From voices to listen to actions to take: the "World of the child" as a tool to foster children and parents' participation

Speakers & Authors: Marco Ius, Serbati Sara, Ombretta Zanon, Diego Di Masi, Paola Milani

P.I.P.P.I. (Program of Intervention for Prevention of Institutionalization) is a research-training-intervention program developed as an intensive care program for vulnerable families funded by the Italian Ministry of Welfare. It aims at preventing child placement out-of-home and at responding to problems connected to poor-parenting and child neglect by balancing risk and protective factors, and focuses on supporting parenting through multi-professional and resilient based intervention. Particular focus is placed on tools supporting the intervention process within a participatory and transformative evaluation perspective where the link between assessment, planning, intervention and evaluation is key and where children and parents are fully protagonists of their care path.

The first implementation in 10 cities (2011-2012) involved 122 children 0-11 years old (89 families); the second one (2013-2014), currently in progress, involves 241 children (166 families). The third one (2014-2015) is the first national scaling up of the program and involves 500 families (51 cities).

The "World of the child" is the main tool used to support children and parents' participation. It is based on the Italian adaptation of the triangular models of the Assessment Framework developed in U.K., and it is available in different versions: paper with written and empty dimensions, and the novel tablet application "RPM-Android". They are developed within the Narrative Identity theory (Ricoeur, 1993) claiming through narration children and parents foster new identities and new meanings, connecting past, present and future of life.

Analyzing case-studies and showing video, textual and drawing material, the presentation will highlight and discuss how the "World of the child" empowers the process of children and parents participation.

The tool has helped in connecting what often, in the Italian context, is divided as:
- assessment and planning: turning the voice of the child (mostly 3-11 y.o.) and parent into a micro-plan, defining expected outcomes and actions to achieve them;
- the voices of children and parents: letting them to sing in unison and allowing them to confront themselves with others, with their views of reality and their different expertise, in order to meet together in a shared decision making.

Key words: tools, children-parents participation, children-parents's voices
Voices of children, youth and families

The experience of children and families when the child is placed out of home: improvements to the practice

Speakers & Authors: Nuria Fuentes-Peláez, Mªangels Balsells, Crescencia Pastor, Mªcruz Molina, Ainoa Mateos, Eduard Vaquero, Pere Amorós

When a child is being maltreated or abused or is at risk of being abused, he/she is in need of protection. If the child's safety cannot be guaranteed, and other options cannot be taken, the child protection system removes him/her from his family and takes him into care. How do families and children cope with this process? What are their needs? How can we make the protection system truly protect children and families? Research has been careless on these issues.

To understand the experiences and needs of children placed outside their family home and the needs of birth families with children in the child protection system during the initial phase of placement, 43 families and 30 children from 4 regions of Spain participated in a focus group or were interviewed. All these families, at the time of data collection, were in the process of being reunited or were already reunited. The data was analyzed with Atlas.ti.6.

The research concludes that children and birth families have specific needs when child protection services communicate the protective measure and the child is placed outside its home. The needs are focused into three broad categories: 1) information, 2) placement coping strategies and 3) social support.

The findings have clear practical implications, as they show that as a result of this process the children and families show needs that are not currently receiving attention. What these needs are and how to respond to these needs will be discussed in this paper.

Note: The data presented are part of a larger research project funded by the Ministry of Education of Spain, entitled “The biological family in the child protection system: educational processes” (EDU2011-30144-C02-01 2012 - 2014).

Key words: children and biological families' voices, needs, out of home placement
The voice of the foster carers’ biological child

Speakers & Authors: Kirti Zeijlmans, Elly Singer, Adimka Uzozie

Understanding the factors at play in the adjustment period of long-term foster care is key for foster care workers to guide the process. Little research has been done on the feelings and strategies of foster parents’ biological children in the adjustment period of a long-term placement. How do they cope with having a new foster brother or sister?

To understand the perception of the biological children, semi-structured interviews with 30 children older than seven years have been conducted in the Netherlands. At the time of the interview their parents were caring for a foster child that could possibly stay in the family until it was eighteen. The interviews were transcribed verbatim and analyzed using MaxQDA, a qualitative data analysis software.

Results show that the arrival of a new foster child impacts the biological child’s routines and behaviour. They feel the need to be nice and help the child in the beginning, although that’s not always easy. To cope with the emotional impact of the placement, the biological children use a wide range of strategies, for example talking with parents or rationalizing their difficult thoughts.

As biological children feel the need to be a role model and a positive example for the foster child, they frequently hide their negative feelings and irritations. Often, the foster parents are sensitive to the feelings of their biological children, but fosters care workers are not available to the biological child. In the work practice, more emphasis should be placed on the foster parents’ biological children. They play an important role in the family system and can make or break a placement.

Key words: biological children, child's voice in foster care, coping strategies
Family foster care in Southern European countries. A comparative research on foster carer perception of satisfaction in Portugal and Spain

Speakers & Authors: Paulo Delgado, Monica Lopez Lopez, João M. S. Carvalho, Jorge Fernandez Del Valle

Fostering processes that occur in each country depend on historical and cultural factors that give rise to large international differences. Despite the fact that international comparisons offer a way of exchanging experiences, allowing mutual learning and transfer of good practice, we often encounter major barriers for its completion due to limited access to data on child protection practice, among other factors. Given these limitations, this paper provides a comparative study on foster carers satisfaction conducted in Spain and Portugal, two countries where, despite some initiatives, research in the field of child protection has traditionally been neglected. These two countries may gain great benefits from measuring satisfaction of foster families, since this exercise helps to improve programs and to prevent discontinuation.

The sample of this study included 52 foster carers interviewed in Portugal and 46 in Spain. The interview was designed to assess their experiences with foster care services in several domains of satisfaction: a) satisfaction with the information received before placement (duties, rights, responsibilities, health history of the child, family history); b) satisfaction with the preparation of the foster child for the placement; c) satisfaction with the technical support (availability of social workers, speed of response, degree to which social workers take into account their opinions, frequency of contact, help or advice with child behaviour problems); d) satisfaction with economic support; e) satisfaction with the progress of foster care placement (among others, child's relationship with carers, consequences of family contact for child and carers, health of the child, psychological well-being of the child, motivation for the study and academic performance).

Portuguese and Spanish foster carers showed a high degree of satisfaction with the fostering services, although some areas appeared to be more problematic for Portuguese carers, such as the economic provision, the information provided by the service about the fostering process, or the preparation of the child to enter foster care. Service improvements that should be tackled in order to increase foster carers satisfaction will be discussed during the paper presentation.

Key words: Family Foster Care; Comparative Research; Foster Carer Satisfaction
Bridging the gap between research, policy and practice

Time use data: Policy and fiscal implications for child welfare services

Symposium Co-ordinator: Lisa Holmes

Measuring the way child welfare workers use their time is a complex task, yet it is fundamental to the assessment of costs of providing child welfare services. This symposium outlines research developed in England to assess the costs of providing child welfare services. With an emphasis on analysis of child welfare time use this symposium brings together international evidence of how the research developed in England has been extended and replicated in both Scotland and the US. Implications for national and international child welfare policy and fiscal decisions will also be discussed.
Costing child welfare services: An overview

Speakers & Authors: Lisa Holmes, Harriet Ward

Since 2000 the Centre for Child and Family Research, Loughborough University has undertaken a programme of research to explore the costs and outcomes of services to meet the needs of vulnerable children.

The programme of research utilises a 'bottom-up' approach to costing services. This 'bottom up' approach identifies the constituent parts that form the delivery of a service and assigns a value to each of these parts. The approach facilitates the development of a detailed and transparent picture of unit costs and is particularly well suited to child welfare services as it can accommodate variations in costs incurred by an extensive range of interventions, including the introduction of Evidence-Based Interventions (EBI) offered to children with very different levels of need.

A key output has been the development of the Cost Calculator for Children's Services (CCfCS). The CCfCS is a purpose designed software tool that estimates the costs of social care processes and placements for children in out of home care. The unit costs of the processes are brought together with data concerning placement fees and allowances, management and capital expenditure along with routinely collected data on children's needs, characteristics and placements to estimate the costs of placing children in out of home care for a given time period.

This overview presentation introduces the research background and outlines the different methods that have been used to collect time use data that are used for unit cost estimations. These methods include focus groups, verification questionnaires and web-based surveys and the completion of event records (diaries) by child welfare workers.

The presentation will also focus on how the methods and findings to date have been used to inform English child welfare policy and practice. These include: an exploration of the 'hidden costs' of service provision such as the different referral and assessment routes; the costs of the contracting and commissioning processes; the proportion of time child welfare workers spend on direct work with families compared to administrative activities and an analysis of the impact of changes in national policy on workloads for child welfare workers.
Mapping time use data across different child welfare systems: An example from Scotland

Speakers & Authors: Samantha McDermid, Lisa Holmes

This presentation will provide a worked example of how the time use approach can be adapted for other child welfare systems to facilitate a range of analyses.

The time use data collection and analysis method which is the focus of this symposium was originally developed to explore how social workers spend their time in the English child welfare system. In 2013 The Centre for Child and Family Research (CCFR) were commissioned by the Scottish Government to adapt the methods and the Cost Calculator tool for the Scottish child welfare system. The Cost Calculator is a software application which uses the time use methodology developed by CCFR to underpin the calculation of the costs of placing children in out of home care.

While there are some similarities with the English care system, the Scottish approach to placing and supporting children in out of home care differs in a number of key aspects. For instance, the types of placements used along with the legal structures and processes differ between the English and Scottish systems. As a result, the child welfare processes, originally developed for England, have been adapted to better reflect practice and policy in Scotland. Data on the time spent on case management activities associated with placing children in out of home care have been gathered through the use of focus groups with child welfare practitioners in two Scottish local authorities.

This presentation will explore how the time use approach was adapted for Scotland. An overview of the key similarities and differences between the English and Scottish child welfare systems and the resultant impact on time use will be presented, along with the emerging messages for policy and practice. Using the example of the work undertaken in Scotland, the presentation will demonstrate how time use data can be used to facilitate comparisons between different welfare systems to inform national policy and practice.

Speakers & Authors: John Landsverk, Jennifer Rolls-Reutz, Lisa Holmes, Harriet Ward

Unit costs are typically not available to examine the impact of innovative changes in child welfare services in the United States. This paper reports on research in four California counties to adapt the English Cost Calculator approach for estimating use of time and associated direct and administrative costs within a federal project to reduce use of long term foster care. The study estimated changes in time use and associated costs related to county-specific practice model modifications.

The pre-post research design has collected time use data and associated direct and administrative costs both prior to and after full implementation of changes in the practice model for each county over the five year project. Qualitative and quantitative (mixed-methods) data collection processes are modeled on the English Cost Calculator approach.

Prior to changes in the county-specific practice model, multiple focus groups have been conducted independently in each of the four counties to both determine adaptations needed for each of the eight standardized Cost Calculator processes and to provide preliminary estimates of caseworker time use. These focus group estimates provide the county-specific lower and upper bounds for a web-based survey of child welfare caseworkers in each county to generate more precise time use estimates within the eight practice model processes. These pre-post estimates are used to calculate quantitative and qualitative changes in use of case work time resulting from implementation of the new practice model. Baseline studies have been completed and follow-up studies are being completed in all four counties.

The English Cost Calculator eight processes provide an appropriate framework for the four counties, despite some variation in terminology between the English and U.S. contexts. Greater use of specialized case work staff and use of legal processes have been observed in the four counties as compared to England. Estimates of use of time and costs vary considerably between the four counties as has been observed in England. Changes in time use and costs related to practice model change will be reported in the presentation.
Time Use, Cost, and Child Welfare Innovation in the U.S.

Speakers & Authors: Fred Wulczyn

The aim of this paper is to describe how time use and cost analyses are used in the U.S. to understand program innovation and related implementation problems. Foster care in the U.S. is regulated at both the federal and state levels: the federal government sets out a basic framework; the states implement policies and practices within that framework. Within this bifurcated structure, the manner in which placement services are financed has implications for system structure.

In recent years, the policy/practice mindset has shifted from a service- to an outcome-centric perspective. As a consequence, funding mechanisms tied to the purchase of services are increasingly outdated. To adapt funding mechanisms, the federal government adopted what is known as the Title IV-E waiver program. The program gives states greater flexibility over the use funds, provided the states improve outcomes for children.

Within the waiver context, two issues stand out: time use and the cost of services. With regard to time use, when caseworkers implement Evidence-Based Interventions (EBIs) they have to change their time use. As for cost, the Waiver program is predicated on cost-neutrality: the new service regimen will cost no more in the aggregate than what the old regimen would have cost. Time use is the mechanism whereby caseworkers change client behavior and the cost of that time is how one calculates the cost-benefit relative to business as usual.

The authors will describe their approach to waiver evaluation. At the core of the design is the link between the process of care (referral, assessment, planning, etc.) and the time spent implementing these. The overall study design, which is guided by the elements of the English Cost Calculator, is pre/post-test to detect whether waiver-inspired EBIs actually produce behavioral changes. Special attention will be paid to how EBIs are used to conceptualize the process of care and time use.

Time use provides a useful heuristic for understanding a range of implementation issues including fidelity and dose/response problems that often plague evaluations that aim to understand whether what workers do actually changes.
Does allocation to a control condition in an RCT affect the routine care?

Speakers & Authors: Frank van Holen, Johan Vanderfaeillie, Skrallan de Maeyer, Marijke Robberechts, Tim Stroobants

Aims/objectives
Strengthen Foster parents in Parenting (SFP) is a Flemish support program for foster parents caring for foster children with severe externalizing problem behaviour. A RCT was conducted to examine its effectiveness. This research examined whether the support offered to foster parents assigned to a ‘care as usual’-control condition was representative for the care as usual offered to foster families caring for foster children with externalizing problem behaviour.

Methods and data
The support offered to 64 foster families in the SFP-control group was carefully registered during a period of 3.5 months and was compared with the routine care offered to a matched group of 64 foster parents who were not taking part in the RCT. Using Chi-square tests and t-tests the support offered by the foster care agency and external service use were compared between the two groups.

Key findings
Our results indicated that being part of a control group in a RCT had a clear impact on the care offered. More specifically it was positively associated with the counselling frequency, with help seeking behaviour and with service use: the families of the SFP-control group were visited more frequently by their social worker (t(125)=3.44, p=.001) and foster care workers consulted more external mental health services (t(79.11)=4.44, p<.001). Furthermore, the mental health service use was significantly higher in the SFP-control group (χ²(1, N=128)=4.17, p=.041): 32.8% of the families in the SFP-control group got additional help compared to 17.2% of the families who were not taking part of the RCT.

Conclusion, implications
The SFP-control group was no longer a care as usual condition, but rather an ‘enhanced care’ control condition which complicated the interpretation of the research results. It is advisable to carefully define routine care and to monitor expectations and help seeking behaviour in RCTs with a care-as-usual control condition since actions undertaken by foster care workers and foster parents are a potential threat to internal validity.
Making a difference with a new intervention in foster care of young (preschool aged) children: the FFI (Foster child-Foster carer Intervention)

Speakers & Authors:  Hans van Andel, Erik J. Knorth, Hans Grietens

Placement in foster care is a major event for young children. It often happens unexpected and without a proper preparation. The loss of a family is a traumatic experience (Bruskas, 2008). Also the children have to deal with conflicting emotions and loyalty issues to the biological parents (Leathers, 2004). Often a history of neglect is present, which influences the way a child meets its environment (Strijker & Knorth, 2005). Many of these children come from impoverished biological homes and a large majority of them have experienced trauma and/or toxic stress in the form of abuse and neglect (Fisher et al, 2006). This factors may influence the way the child reacts to its new environment. Young children tend to react with avoidant behaviour, which poses a risk, because foster parents may think the child adapts in a proper way. We developed an intervention (Van Andel et al, 2012) to help foster carers understand what is going on with their child and to help young children feel more secure in their new home and deal with their emotions. In the presentation we will explain the relevant working elements of the intervention. Furthermore, we want to present the evidence base of the intervention.

123 preschool aged children participated in a random controlled trial. Half of the children received the intervention, the other half received care as usual (regular foster care). Foster carers reflected on stress by answering a questionnaire, salivary cortisol (as a stress index in the child) was measured in the children and the relation between foster carer and foster child was evaluated with the Emotional Availability Scales (EAS) four weeks after placement. We collected data in both groups with a pre measurement and a post measurement half a year later.

We found a significantly positive effect of the intervention on foster carers’ perceived parenting stress. Furthermore we found a significantly positive effect on EAS Sensitivity, Structurering and Nonintrusiveness in foster parents as well as in EAS Responsivity in the child. We found no significant effect on salivary cortisol levels of foster children.
The effectiveness of the Stepping Stones Triple P parenting support among parents of children with borderline to mild intellectual disability and psychosocial problems: a randomized controlled trial

Speakers & Authors: Marijke Kleefman, Danielle E. M. C. Jansen, Sijmen A. Reijneveld

Aim and objectives: Children with borderline to mild intellectual disability (BMID) have been shown to be at increased risk for psychosocial problems. The presence of these psychosocial problems leads to parenting stress. Stepping Stones Triple P (SSTP) is a program to support parents with children with BMID and psychosocial problems. The aim of the presentation is to present the results of a study on the effectiveness of SSTP compared to Care as Usual (CAU) in reducing psychosocial problems in children with BMID.

Methods and design: The effects of SSTP were studied in a randomized controlled trial. Parents of children aged 5-12 years and IQ 50-85 were selected via schools for special education in the Northern part of the Netherlands. Measurements were assessed before the intervention (T0), immediately after the intervention (T1) and after a follow-up of six months (T2).

Data: Primary outcome were psychosocial problems of the child, measured with the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), parent and teacher version, and the Eyberg Child Behaviour Inventory (ECBI). Secondary outcomes included the Parenting Stress Index (PSI) and the Alabama Parenting Questionnaire (APQ). 209 parents with a child with clinical psychosocial problems (SDQ ≥14) were randomized (98 to CAU and 111 to SSTP).

Key findings: On the SDQ, parent and teacher version, and the APQ, no differences were found between SSTP and CAU on both post measurements. Regarding the ECBI, SSTP scored significantly lower on the ECBI than CAU at T1 (B=-5.84, 95% CI -11.08 to -0.60). Regarding the PSI, SSTP did also significantly lower than CAU at T1 (B=-7.43, 95% CI -12.58 to -2.29). On both the ECBI and PSI, no significant differences were found on T2. Concluding, this study found limited effects of SSTP compared to CAU on short term. On the long term, SSTP did not reduce psychosocial problems more compared to CAU. However, since psychosocial problems seem not to worsen after SSTP, its implementation may still be justified. Further research should focus on cost-effectiveness and a process-evaluation.

Key words: intellectual disability, special education, parenting support
Evidence-based practice and implementation

Back to the Future: relational social work in a multi-disciplinary team

Speakers & Authors: Andressa Gadda

This presentation will consider some of the emerging findings of an ongoing evaluation of the Scottish Borders Council’s Early Years Assessment Team (EYAT). The EYAT is a co-located team of family support workers, infant mental health workers, midwives and social workers established in its current format in 2010. Professionals from health and social care work closely together in order to secure early identification of those families who may need extra support during pregnancy and to develop a plan with families in order to provide personalised antenatal and postnatal care to them. This approach is founded on a set of evidence-based propositions about how prevention and early intervention in the early years can support a child’s healthy development (Ward & Brown 2013; Wave Trust with Department for Education 2013); as well as on a desire to change practice so that it is more responsive to families’ needs and less preoccupied with procedures, targets and the management of risks (Munro & Hubbard 2011).

The evaluation has two key aims: first, to explore the impact of the EYAT’s approach on children and their families and, second, to gain an understanding into how this approach interacts with, and impacts on, other parts of the complex system of child welfare policy and practice in the Scottish Borders. The evaluation is adopting a multi-method approach that includes observations, interviews with service users and providers and questionnaires with other service providers in the local authority. Emerging findings from interviews and observations indicate that the EYAT has, to an extent; been able to ‘reclaim social work’ (see Fergusson 2008) and adopt a social casework practice found on the building of ‘therapeutic relationships’ (Scottish Executive 2006) with individuals and families. As I shall be arguing, this is not an easily attainable position when operating within a largely managerial system (preoccupied with cost, efficiency, rationality and risk) thus putting into question the sustainability of the model, as well as its transferability into other contexts.

Key words: Evaluation, therapeutic relationships, early intervention.
Implementing the MTFC programme for adolescents in England: issues in programme transfer

*Speakers & Authors:* Nina Biehal, Jo Dixon

**AIMS**
- To present the findings of a national evaluation of the evidence-based programme Multi-dimensional Treatment Foster Care for Adolescents (MTFC-A)
- To discuss issues in programme transfer.

**DESIGN AND METHODS**

Sample: 219 young people with complex needs who were already in care and whose care placements were at risk of breakdown.

Design: a quasi-experimental case-control study with one-year follow-up. Outcomes for young people who entered MTFC-A foster placements were compared to those for a control group of similar young people who received 'usual care' in ordinary foster or residential placements.

Methods: quantitative and qualitative, including surveys, interviews and document analysis.

**Measures:** Primary outcome measure: Children's Global Assessment Scale (C-GAS). C-GAS scores were derived from 'blind' ratings of data from multiple sources on different domains of children's lives.

**DATA**

Quantitative and qualitative data from POSTAL questionnaires to social workers, MTFC teams and foster carers; interviews with young people; analysis of reports and records.

**KEY FINDINGS**

Young people who received MTFC-A did no better than the control group on our global measure of general social functioning (the C-GAS). However, those with high scores for disruptive/anti-social behaviour at baseline did better in MTFC-A than in usual care, while those who were not anti-social did better in usual care than in MTFC-A. No group differences were observed on our measures of secondary outcomes (placement stability, school engagement and offending). In depth-analysis of 20 case studies of young people placed in MTFC-A provided helpful insights into variations in engagement with the programme. The study raises a number of key issues in programme transfer, including targeting, treatment fidelity and the importance of context.

**Key words:**
MTFC; programme transfer
Implementing Intensive Family Case Management in Youth Care - Every Child Safe Forever

Symposium Co-ordinator: Marc Dinkgreve

Dutch Youth Care is complex; many organizations are involved and volatile because of significant political and public attention. Laws changed in 2005 and placed 15 Youth Care Agencies in the middle of the Youth Care system. Many forces and bureaucratic rules influence this field. Families get lost in an endless stream of bureaucracy, face multiple case workers and ineffective services.

Youth Care Agency Amsterdam (YCAA) combined what works and evidence based methods with a bottom up approach led by social workers, to create one universal case management method for multi problematic families called: Intensive Family Case Management. This involved a huge system change.

In this symposium we will present:
1. The development of intensive family case management - why (we really had to change);
2. The implementation of intensive family case management - what and how;
3. Present and ongoing research on - core elements, program fidelity & effects;
4. Comparative initiatives in Denmark and the Netherlands.
Evidence-based practice and implementation

The development of Intensive Family Case Management - why we really had to change

*Speakers & Authors: Sigrid van de Poel, Marc Dinkgreve*

In 2008 Youth Protection Amsterdam Area (YPAA) had a poor reputation and had been placed under extra surveillance by youth care inspection (ministry of security and justice). YPAA works with about 4200 families and 12,000 children annually, where there are issues of neglect, child abuse or juvenile delinquency. The 2005 Youth Law made the 15 regional Yout Care Agencies responsible for the safety of children in youth protection and parole services, as well as referrals to services in voluntary youth care. By law there are three kinds of case management: voluntary, youth protection (direct supervision and legal custody) and parole services for juvenile delinquents. Every Agency has three types of case workers, one for each framework. Staff are trained social workers, working in teams of 20-25 along with a psychologist and a team manager. The caseload varies with voluntary case workers having 40 cases, youth protection workers 15, and parole officers 22 cases. At that time cases were organized around a single child. Due to the system's fragmentation, most families with multiple problems end up with multiple case workers at the same time (or a series of case workers when they move from voluntary to protection). The case workers do not provide services; they refer to services and write reports to place youth into services and to inform the court and child protection counsel when necessary in order to get youth protection in place. As a result of this practice, 40% of children in voluntary care end up in child protection within two years. The voluntary worker usually does not make house visits but gives phone consultation or invites parents to their office. There are many no shows for appointments, which often drives the cases in to child protection. Between 2001 and 2012 the number of child protection cases doubled and legal custody increased by half.

In this presentation we explain how we transformed this complex ineffective situation into effective intensive family case management. Since 2012 we managed to reduce the number of child protection case by 40% and the number of forced out of home placements by 60%.
Evidence-based practice and implementation

The implementation of Intensive Family Case Management: what and how

Speakers & Authors: Marc Dinkgreve, Sigrid van de Poel

The new approach started with a broad discussion in and outside YCA Amsterdam about the purpose of our organization. This resulted in the goal: every child safe forever! Within a family focused method. Our approach was to have a single worker work with an entire family to create one omnibus plan: "One family, One plan, One worker". To create a truer focus on families we reorganized all of our processes with the Vanguard Method, based on Systems Thinking (Seddon, 2008). We started by selecting ten experienced case workers with backgrounds in voluntary, child protection and parole services; two team managers and two psychologists. This Vanguard team reviewed all of our processes to determine whether they would help "every child be safe forever".

They analyzed their work on a substantive and organizational manner following a Check-Plan-Do cycle, and continually reflected on why they thought and acted as they did (Argyris, 1991). The principle of value indicated that only activities of direct value for clients were included in the new approach. This principle was embraced on all levels in the organization.

If necessary, social workers, team managers, district managers, policy and support staff and board members redesigned their role and activities. As a result, many activities for professionals changed and several administrative tasks disappeared.

We determined the only way to achieve results would be to turn around the entire YCA Amsterdam. All former training programs were stopped. We made an agreement with the workers' union to change regular staff training, and started training all of our staff in FFP in cooperation with FFT-LLC Seattle. Staff were remixed - all types of case management experience was made available in every team. Teams were split into 4 cohorts and each cohort was enrolled into the new method within a time period of three months. After each cohort, we evaluated and adapted our implementation strategy. For example with the second cohort we pre-selected staff on the basis of previous competency evaluations (we started this practice in 2010). This resulted in reduction of staff drop-outs from the program.
Evidence-based practice and implementation

Present and ongoing research on implementation, program fidelity & effectiveness

Speakers & Authors: Inge Busschers, Marc Dinkgreve

Since Youth Protection Amsterdam Area (YPAA) started the implementation of Intensive Family Case Management (IFCM), research accompanies practice. In cooperation with the three universities in Amsterdam, YPAA set up an extensive research programme, that covers three main topics: the core elements; the description, operationalization and theoretical foundation program fidelity; reflective practice and continuous improvement effects of IFCM; results for children, their families, the professionals of YPAA and implications for the Dutch youth care system.

In this presentation we present the first results. Before starting research on implementation and effectiveness of a programme or method, it is necessary to describe and specify the core elements. This is needed to be able to find empirical evidence, as this enables us to study whether these elements are delivered in practice and whether or not the programme has been successfully implemented, effectively evaluated, improved over time, and subsequently scaled up if results are promising.

We will discuss the steps that are needed in order to clarify the core elements, discuss the actions undertaken to monitor and support programme fidelity and show the preliminary results.
Evidence-based practice and implementation

Intensive Family Case Management comparative initiatives in Denmark and the Netherlands

*Speakers & Authors: Helle Kreipke, Sanne Clemmensen, Lars Bo Kjaer, Marc Dinkgreve, Sigrid van de Poel, Inge Busschers*

During this symposium we also discuss two comparative initiatives. First, we compare a recent initiative in Odense, Denmark (population 200,000) to the Amsterdam experiences. In Odense, the municipality started intensive case management for the 100 most complex families and also fragile single person households. Many analogies exist with the approach in Amsterdam (population 800,000). Second, we discuss the experiences of one of the Youth Care Agencies in the south of the Netherlands, where the Amsterdam approach has been enrolled in the second half of 2013.

We present our experiences and discuss success factors and difficulties.

The audience is invited to participate by sharing their own ideas and experiences. This discussion will be moderated by two colleagues who work in Denmark and Norway as FFT trainer and therapist.
Factors of Efficacy in an Intervention for Adolescents with ADHD: Quantitative and Qualitative Results of a Content Analysis

Speakers & Authors: Timo Hennig, Stephanie Ahl

Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is very common in children and adolescents with prevalence rates between 5 and 6%. Longitudinal research indicates that problems related to the disorder persist into adulthood in most of the cases. Hence, there is an urgent need for concepts and interventions to help individuals with ADHD and their families. The development of interventions should be guided by process-outcome research that identifies active ingredients and factors of efficacy in a developmental sensitive setting.

To help youth with ADHD, the cognitive-behavioral treatment LeJA was developed containing both training of learning skills as school problems are very common and coaching to deal with individual problems (Linderkamp, Hennig, & Schramm, 2011). In addition to a randomized controlled trial evaluating the efficacy of the intervention, a content analysis of treatment protocols has been conducted in a sample of N = 55. Based upon the research on efficacy in psychotherapy, treatment protocols have systematically been analyzed. Qualitative in combination with quantitative results will be presented.

One major finding concerning extra-therapeutic factors was that positive social relations facilitated good treatment results. Interestingly, participants with strong benefit from the intervention had more problematic and stressful social relations compared to participants with poor results. But the successful participants also had more supportive relations which apparently had a buffering effect in line with longitudinal research on psychopathology. This finding shows that it is important and promising to offer and facilitate supportive relationships in adolescents at risk for maladaptation.

Key Words: ADHD, Adolescents, Outcome Research
Health and wellbeing of children in care

Mental health disorders of children in residential care: comparing cases referred to services and cases detected by screening tools

Speakers & Authors: Jorge Fernandez Del Valle, Amaia Bravo, Carla González, Iriana Santos, Susana Lázaro

There is international consensus about the high frequency in which children placed in residential care suffer from mental health problems due to their history of abuse and neglect, ranged between 40% and 80%. That means that the prevalence of mental health disorders is four times higher than in general population of the same age.

The aim of this presentation is to show prevalence data of this kind of disorders in a sample of 1226 children and adolescents aged 6 to 18 in residential care (excluding those who are in children's homes for case assessment). This sample constitutes almost the 10% of all children placed in residential homes in Spain.

Prevalence data has been obtained in terms of proportion of children attended in public or private therapeutic services (psychiatric, psychological or pharmacological therapy) and by means of applying a screening tool (CBCL, Child Behavioral Checklist, Achenbach, 1991). This screening test has been fulfilled by the key-social educator of every child of the sample.

Another aim is to analyse the relation between screening outcomes and therapeutic referrals, obtaining indicators of sensitivity, specificity, positive predictive value and negative predictive value of the screening test.

Preliminary results of this study show that the 51% (n=601) of the children and young people of the sample are being attended in therapeutic services, and the 61% (n=723) obtain a clinical result in the screening test (in the externalised and/or internalised broadband or the total scale).

There is a 24% (n=281) of the sample that are not attending any service even though the screening test detects a clinical problem. On the other hand, the 13% of the sample (n=159) are attending therapeutic services having negative results in screening (no clinical need detected).

These findings have important implications in this field of intervention. The high prevalence of clinical disorders has been confirmed, asserting the special vulnerability of this population. In this presentation we will analyse the validity of the screening tool and also the type of disorders detected and possible bias in the criteria used by practitioners for referrals.
Home-based and community-based interventions

The Effect of Medical Treatment of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) on Foster Care Caseloads: Evidence from Danish Registry Data

Speakers & Authors: Peter Fallesen, Christopher Wildeman

Since the early 2000s, foster care caseloads have decreased in many wealthy democracies, yet the causes of these declines remain, for the most part, a mystery. This paper uses administrative data from one country that experienced a sharp decline in foster care caseloads, Denmark, to show that increasing medical treatment of ADHD (primarily through the use of Ritalin) accounts for a substantial share of the decrease in foster care caseloads. According to our estimates, the decline in foster care caseloads over this period would have been 45% smaller absent increases in medical treatment of ADHD. These findings are provocative in light of recent research showing ambiguous effects of medical treatment of ADHD on children once the share of children treated exceeds a certain threshold. While a host of factors such as parental behaviors and characteristics, welfare generosity, and the female imprisonment rate all shape foster care caseloads, future research should be attentive to how medical treatment aimed at addressing children's acute behavioral problems could also have a powerful effect on foster care caseloads.
Education of children in care and schooling as a protective factor

Effects of Pharmacological Treatment on the Educational Achievement of Children Diagnosed with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

Speakers & Authors: Maria Keilow, Anders Holm

Scholastic impairment is a powerful predictor of adverse developmental trajectory. Studies show that an ADHD diagnosis is associated with lower academic achievement, yet few studies within the social sciences investigate the means, by which sustained negative trajectories associated with ADHD can be turned around. ADHD is the most common neurobehavioral disorder in children and adolescents and the disorder is associated with impairment in all aspects of a child’s life, with impairments often continuing into adulthood.

We use Danish register data to estimate the causal effect of medical treatment for children with ADHD. For a sample of children who commence medical treatment for ADHD, we exploit plausibly exogenous variation in medical non-response or adverse effects to estimate the effect of medical treatment. Data also allows for two supplementary identification strategies of causal effects: The first strategy uses across time variation in consumption patterns of ADHD medicine as an instrumental variable. The second strategy estimates placebo regressions for children who commence treatment after outcomes are measured.

We find significant effects of pharmacological treatment on ninth grade school-leaving GPA. Compared to consistent treatment, discontinuation has large significant negative effects on total teacher evaluation GPA and total exam GPA, reducing grades with 0.15 to 0.25 standard deviations. The IV strategies support these main findings but find larger effects. We also identify significant negative subject-specific effects for science, Danish language, and math exam grades.
Conceptualising respite care in child and family social work - a cross national exploration of partnership, service and respite

Speakers & Authors: Anu-Riina Svenlin

There is no universally accepted definition of respite care and there is confusion in the literature about the nature, scope and outcomes of different respite services. In child and family social work respite care can be provided as support to the biological parents, kinship carers or foster carers. The aim of this presentation is to develop, as a part of my PhD research, a common conceptualisation and language relating to family-based respite care schemes. It seems important to reach greater understanding about what is at the core of these kinds of interventions. Respite care schemes are considered here in two ways. Firstly a literature review enables a comparison of different family-based respite care schemes in Scandinavia, U.K and Australia. Secondly I apply a conceptual model of respite care for older people developed by Evans (2012) to child and family social work settings. The Finnish model of contact family as family-based scheme is used as an example to discuss the three attributes in Evans (2012) model: partnership, service and respite (outcomes of the respite). The three attributes are illustrated via a case study. The presentation offers insights in relation to how family-based respite care schemes can be further developed, evaluated and compared, especially on a cross national basis.
Long-term care for multi-problem families: Target group, care characteristics and outcomes of a family coaching program

Speakers & Authors: Tim Tausendfreund, Jana Knot-Dickscheit, Erik J. Knorth, Hans Grietens

Families who face a multitude of severe and persistent problems in a number of different areas of life are commonly referred to as multi-problem families in Dutch child welfare. Although evidence suggests that short-term crisis interventions can have positive effects on family functioning including and the prevention of out-of-home placements in these families, they have up to now not sufficiently succeeded in facilitating sustainable change. Interventions, which offer integrated care over longer periods of time, have been piloted in different European countries, but only few evaluation studies on outcomes of long-term care for the target group are available yet.

In our study we therefore explored a widely employed long-term family support program from the Netherlands, called 'Ten for the Future' [Tien voor Toekomst]. A longitudinal prospective research design was applied. The research included 122 families over a period of four years and seven months. Analysis on group level and individual case level were carried out to answer three main research questions concerning 1. characteristics of the target group, 2. variables associated with care duration, and 3. change in relevant outcome measures.

Our results suggest that the intervention is associated with a decrease in family stress, especially within the first year of the intervention. Furthermore, families with lower initial family stress levels were found to have a higher chance to end the program significantly earlier. Child problem behavior and family functioning, as perceived by care workers, show a lower magnitude and less coherent patterns of change. This might be explained by a main focus of care workers on the direct work with parents alone.

We conclude that the long-term care program has potential to decrease family stress and emphasize the importance of initial family stress measures in further exploring extended care involvement. Additionally we suggest to focus on the development of dual care worker approaches that target not only parents but also offer allocated care for children in multi-problem families at the same time. Finally we offer methodological suggestions to advance research on this type of intervention and target group.
Effectiveness of home-visiting special youth care services in Flanders

Speakers & Authors: Stroobants Tim, Johan Vanderfaeillie, Skrallan de Maeyer, Marijke Robberechts

The improvement and optimizing of the care offered to children and their families should be based on accurate knowledge on the processes and outcomes of the interventions used. In the present research the outcomes of the services offered by 21 Flemish home-visiting special youth care agencies is studied. All agencies provided short-term (maximum of 6 months) home-visiting services mainly based on an eclectic theoretical framework to children and their families referred because of psychosocial and parenting problems.

During six months all new clients were asked to participate into a practice-based research using a one group with pre- and posttest research design (N=233 children from 198 families). Parents, children and social workers were questioned with several questionnaires such as the CBCL, a parenting stress questionnaire etc. Results were analyzed using among others paired-samples t-tests.

According to the parents problem behavior of the children and parenting stress decreased significantly (respectively effect size d=0.38 and d=0.30). The use of positive parenting strategies by the parents also increased significantly (d=0.25). No significant or negligible effects were found on teaching children adequate rules (d=0.18), providing basic care to the family (d=0.07) and extending the social network of the family (d=0.10).

Although in most families progress was made regarding problem behavior of children, parenting stress and positive parenting, the effects of the intervention were rather small. Implications and recommendations for further research and the care offered will be discussed.

Key words: special youth care, care as usual and effectiveness.
Perspectives of professional youth workers on support needs of youngsters in vulnerable living conditions

*Speakers & Authors:* Jan Naert, Vanderplasschen Wouter

**Background:** Youth care is rediscovering community based work in the ecology of youngsters to implement preventive strategies (Van der Lans, 2008). This movement towards the community is 'used' to reach youngsters who may be at risk on different life domains (Cortis, 2012). There is however little knowledge on the support needs defined by the youngsters. Interventions in the ecology of youngsters can be questionable if they do not take into account the needs experienced by youngsters themselves. By getting the viewpoints of youth workers who work in the context of youngsters on a daily basis, a more clear view on their needs will be obtained. This will give insight in the complexity of needs in the life space of Youngsters.

**Objective:** getting a view on the needs of youngsters living in vulnerable situations in order to get a better match between needs and the presented solutions.

**Method:** By contacting the network on professional youth welfare work in Flanders, youth workers will be asked to participate in focus groups. The groups will be differentiated based on the targeted age groups. Youth welfare workers' \((n = 30)\) perspectives will be collected in focus groups \((n = 5)\). Two questions will be presented: which needs youth workers observe within the daily activities with youngsters in vulnerable situations and secondly, if they observe or know about support youngsters receive within their community environment.

A content analysis will be done on the focus group material using a grounded theory approach with sensitizing concepts (Bowen, 2006). Data will be managed and analyzed using NVIVO software for qualitative data analysis (Richards, 2002).

**Results:** We will get a diverse and broad view on different needs of youngsters defined by youth welfare workers. Data will be collected from April to June 2014, and preliminary results will be presented in detail during the presentation. This research is part of a broader research design where different viewpoints on continuity and coordination of care are collected and compared. In the presentation the material of the research will be linked to this broader research design.

**Key words:** community, ecology, youth care, vulnerable youth, support needs
Home-based and community-based interventions

Home-based interventions in Norwegian Child Welfare

Speakers & Authors: Øivin Christiansen

Over the past two decades, the number of children and adolescents receiving child welfare services in Norway has doubled. This significant growth raises questions as to whether today's child welfare services serve different population groups, whether the children and their families have different characteristics, whether the types of provided services have changed and whether these services are adapted to the children's needs and conditions.

Objectives: The presentation is based on an ongoing study investigating the most frequently adopted home-based services in Norway. The study aims at exploring the service recipients' characteristics, the services' aims, contents, and effects, as well as the relationship between the latter factors.

Research design: 1. Analyses based on national child welfare statistics; 2. Intensive examination of cases concerning 245 children receiving in-home services (aged 0-17, mean: 9,5) through both questionnaires (parents, children and social workers) and the analysis of selected documents.

Findings: National statistics indicate a considerable decrease in child welfare services due to abuse and neglect in 2009 (11%) compared to 1993 (24%). In addition, they illustrate a greater variation with regard to the recipient families' socio-economic conditions. They thus proof an increasingly complex target group for child welfare services.

This study shows that the 245 service-receiving children and their families face a wider spectrum of challenges. While a relatively small group is exposed to child abuse and neglect, most services have been provided in response to parents' mental health problems, disciplinary problems, parents' exhaustion, children's emotional problems and a lack of supporting networks. Despite of these diverse challenges, “advice and counselling for parents” is the most frequent service provided (66%). Today's expansive child welfare services seem to have entailed modifications as to who receives support and what they comprise. Still, it remains unclear whether the provided services adequately satisfy the children's needs for welfare support and developmental assistance.

Key words: home-based services, mixed methods
Attachment patterns of adolescents in residential care

Speakers & Authors: Xavier Oriol Granado, Gemma Filella Guiu, Josefina Sala Roca

The aim of this study was to analyse the attachment patterns of adolescents in residential care. A quantitative method was used. CaMir-R, an attachment representation test, was administered to 152 adolescents aged between 14 and 17 years (M = 15.73, SD = 1.13). The study had three groups, residential care group (30 adolescents in residential care), disadvantaged group (33 adolescents from family in social risk situation), and normative group (89 adolescents from secondary schools). Analysis shows differences in attachment dimensions. Adolescents in residential care are those who score lower on the security dimension and higher in childhood trauma in relation to the other two groups. The adolescents of residential care and adolescents in family risk situation also have lower differences in secure attachment style and the dimensions of insecure attachment style and family structure in comparison with normative population. So it is conclude that event some of the negative attachment patterns can be attribute to disadvantaged environments, the residential care environment seems to be the one to have the worst influence in attachment patterns. Nevertheless the study has some limitations and it is necessary to compare the attachment patterns of adolescents in residential care with patters of in adolescents in foster families.

Even adolescents in care have had insecure attachments with their bird families; adolescence is a period with high brain plasticity in with attachment styles can be reorganised. But this reorganisation depends on the secure relationships that the youngster have with significant persons in their environment. So the quality of the relationship between adolescents in care and their educators and the socio educative intervention in the relationship of the youngster with their family is crucial.

Keywords: attachment, residential care
Resilient processes from the perspective of adolescents in children’s homes in Croatia

*Speakers & Authors: Ivana Maurovic, Antonija Zizak, Ivana Jedud Boric*

Existing scientific knowledge on developmental outcomes of children and youth in children’s homes (in Croatia) is primarily quantitative in nature, focused on negative outcomes, and based on “adultocentric” values of good behavioural outcomes. According to these data, majority (75%) of children that are removed from their homes and placed in children’s homes have some kind of behavioral problems. It still not known how, why and under impact of which factors, some of them (at least one fourth of them) are functioning well concerning behavioral problems, and what is their perspective on criteria of good developmental outcome for children in children’s home.

The aim of this paper is to explain how adolescents from the children’s homes in Croatia navigated their way from risk to resilience. Resilience is defined as a process of effectively negotiating, adapting to, or managing significant sources of stress or trauma. Assets and resources within the individual, their life and environment (protective mechanisms) facilitate this capacity for adaptation and ‘bouncing back’ (good outcome) in the face of adversity (Wiendle, 2011).

Research questions are:

1. How do adolescents in children’s home define good developmental outcomes of adolescents (in children's homes)?

2. What were the key protective mechanisms and how did they contribute to good outcomes for these adolescents?

3. What were the processes that occurred from the initial risk to the achievement of good outcome? The process of data collecting has just finished. They were collected using in-depth interviews with a 24 participants (13 females, 11 males), age between 14 and 21, that were assessed by their caregivers as resilient. They are placed in 13 Children’s homes in Croatia. Data will be analysed based on social constructivist as a philosophical approach and using qualitative methodology.

**Key words:** resilient processes, adolescent perspective, children’s homes
Evidence-based Practices in Residentially-based Programs: Results from a U.S. Survey

Speakers & Authors: Sigrid James, Ronald Thompson, Neal Sternberg

Aims: Evidence-based practices (EBPs) are a topic of growing interest in the residential care community, yet very little is known empirically about the types of EBPs used by residentially-based programs (RBPs), the perceptions and attitudes of RBP providers toward EBPs and their experiences in implementing them. This presentation will discuss results of a survey, conducted in the US in early 2014 to address these questions. Methods: The web-survey was sent to 118 RBP administrators that were members of a national RBP association. The survey of mostly close-ended questions included the EBP Attitude Scale, a 15-item measure with established norms and psychometric properties that assesses provider attitudes toward EBPs. Other items asked about types of EBPs used, reasons for the adoption of each EBP, training, supervision and monitoring, modifications of EBPs, and perceived barriers and successes with the EBP. Key Findings: Preliminary key findings indicate that 89% find EBPs to be useful or very useful and that most are open to implementing EBPs. Respondents identified 51 different interventions of which half have promising to strong research support, as defined by two prominent clearinghouses. The four most utilized EBPs (40% of all interventions) included cognitive-behavioral approaches, such as Trauma-Focused CBT and Dialectical Behavior Therapy. Primary reasons for adoption of an EBP were its research base and a perception of effectiveness. Comparatively few respondents indicated being “mandated” to use an EBP. However, findings suggest that only few EBPs were implemented with fidelity. In the majority of cases, adaptations were made or the RBP used the general principles of an EBP. With regard to barriers to EBP implementation, the two primary reasons given were training and supervision of staff (51%) and staff turnover (35%). Implications: Findings support growing openness among RBP providers toward EBPs, and show that EBPs are indeed being implemented in RBPs, in particular behaviorally-based EBPs. However, questions remain about conceptual definitions about an EBP among different stakeholders (RBP staff, researchers) and the implications for an adherent implementation of an EBP. Continuous barriers to the implementation of EBP in RBPs will be discussed.
Handle with care: Group care workers can make the difference for children in residential treatment

Speakers & Authors: Inge L. W. Bastiaanssen

The largest part of residential youth care takes place within the daily living group environment which is shaped by group care workers. There is little knowledge about the content of the care they provide and how they contribute to positive outcomes for children. The current study focussed on pedagogical interventions of group care workers and associations with child behaviours. It was expected that group care workers would attune their pedagogical interventions (such as warmth, control) to specific problem behaviours of children with the intent of helping children improve these behaviours.

The study used two different methods. First, group care worker interventions and child behaviours were videotaped during structured observations. Participants included 95 children (64% boys, Mage = 9.19) and 53 group care workers. A coding system was developed to code group care worker interventions and child behaviours. Second, questionnaires were used to study bidirectional influences between group care worker interventions and child behaviours over time. Group care workers completed the Group care worker Intervention Checklist (GICL) and Child Behaviour Checklist (CBCL) for 128 children (66% boys, Mage = 8.63 years) at the beginning of the treatment and at two measurement intervals that followed (6 and 12 months, respectively).

Based on the observations, it showed that group care workers mainly used positive pedagogical interventions (warmth/support and positive control) and seldom used negative pedagogical interventions (permissiveness and negative control). Workers who used more warmth and support, tended to use less negative control and more positive control. Frustration and anger of children was associated with positive controlling interventions and permissiveness of group care workers. Questionnaires revealed bidirectional patterns between group care worker interventions and child behaviours. Higher levels of controlling interventions were related to an increase in externalizing problems of children. In the opposite direction, higher levels of externalizing behaviours were related to an increase in controlling interventions.

The current study outlined the importance of group care workers concerning the influence of their pedagogical interventions on child behaviours. Pedagogical interventions should be part of education, training, and supervision of group care workers.

Key words: residential treatment, group care workers, pedagogical interventions
Residential care and treatment interventions fault

Staff attitudes towards young people in looked after accommodation

Speakers & Authors: Jennifer Copley, Daniel Johnson, Stella Bain

Aims
To consider the power of psychological well-being, empathy and coping style in predicting staff attitudes towards young people in looked after accommodation, involved in or at risk of offending behaviour.

The involvement of young people in offending behaviour has generated substantial literature looking at the factors that increase risk, how to reduce the likelihood of offending and how to better support these often vulnerable young people. Studies have highlighted the importance of relationships between relevant staff members and clients, noting that attitudes of staff may affect their working practice and the support they offer young people.

Method and research design
Regression analysis was used to establish the independent contribution of psychological well-being, empathy and coping style on attitudes towards young people. The predictive power of each factor was considered using multiple regression analysis of participants' responses on an adapted version of the Attitudes to Prisoners scale (ATP), the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ), the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI) and the Coping Styles Questionnaire (CSQ).

Data sample
Data was gathered from care and education staff working at an education and care centre in the West of Scotland. The education and care centre offers residential, foster and secure accommodation to young people who have experienced a range of behaviour difficulties and adverse experiences.

Key Findings
Multiple regression analyses showed that empathic concern (affective empathy) was the only factor predictive of attitudes towards young people. The paper discusses the applied implications for employers, in order to improve services and the support offered to young people, specifically the possibility of empathy training for staff members.

The paper also highlighted the need for further consideration of the factors impacting on staff attitudes. The research findings question the robustness of the relationships between staff psychological well-being, empathy, coping styles and attitudes towards their client group. The outcome suggests that empathy may serve as a protective factor against the development of negative attitudes and the potential benefits of empathy training.

Key words: Offending behaviour, attitudes, empathy
Institutionsanbringelse og behandlingsinterventioner

Dokumentation af resultater af indsatser på sociale institutioner

Symposium Co-ordinator: Michael Christensen

Formålet med symposiet er at præsentere en række praksisnære bud på, hvorledes man kan dokumentere resultaterne af indsatser i socialt arbejde. Dokumentationen af resultater, og mere generelt dokumentationen af de indsatser som hver social institution gør som del af den daglige praksis efterspørges i stigende grad af forskellige aktører placeret på forskellige niveauer i det offentlige sociale system. I takt med at det til stadighed bliver mere præcist, hvad der skal dokumenteres - i en dansk kontekst kommer denne præcisering særligt til udtryk i det nye sociale tilsyn som trådte i kraft 1/1-2014. Imidlertid er spørgsmålet omkring i hvilken form og hvad der ligger til grund for den konkrete dokumentation stadig relativt ubørørt, hvilket efterlader rummet for dokumentationsstrategier relativt åbent. Det giver endvidere anledning til spørgsmål om, hvordan det er muligt at dokumentere sammenhænge mellem den enkelte organisations værdier, henover indsatser og metoder til konkrete resultater/forandringer for de borgere der bor på sociale institutioner? På baggrund af symposiets oplægsholderes praksisnære oplæg, adresseres denne udfordring og der gives konkrete bud på, hvorledes dokumentation kan gøres meningsfuld for både myndighedssiden og for de praktikere som udfører dokumentationen i en hektisk og mangfoldig hverdag. Kort sagt, hvordan kan dokumentation anvendes til at gøre det som de sociale tilbud gør godt endnu bedre?
Dokumentation modus 2 - på vej mod refleksiv systematisk dokumentationspraksis

Speakers & Authors: Michael Christensen, Martin Madsen

Med udgangspunkt i erfaringerne fra et praksisorienteret udviklingsprojekt omkring dokumentation af hvad der virker på sociale tilbud diskuterer paperet, hvorledes man kan udfolde en systematisk og refleksiv dokumentationspraksis når man på den ene side skal møde eksterne standardiserede dokumentationskrav og på den anden side skal dokumentere det, der er meningsgivende i den tilbudsspecifikke kontekst.


I oplægget berøres: 1) hvad det gør ved refleksiviteten, at man som tilbud pålægges en særlig dokumentationsrationalitet og samtidigt ansvaret for de gode resultater, 2) mulighederne for at tale om lokal evidens ved hjælp af at dokumentere, der det 'meningsgivende' for det enkelte tilbud i lyset af potentielt konfliktende/komplementerende eksternt definerede dokumentationsrationaler.


Nøgleord: dokumentationsrationaler, refleksion, resultater
Institutionsanbringelse og behandlingsinterventioner

**Fra viden til handling - vidensbaseret og reflekeret kvalitetsudvikling på den enkelte institution**

*Speakers & Authors: Jes Jessen, Lone Bang-Møller*

Sikring og udvikling af kvalitet i socialt arbejde er et felt i udvikling. Det skyldes blandt andet en stigende erkendelse af, at spørgsmålet om kvalitet i virkeligheden involverer mange dimensioner og dermed mange fagligheder. Kvalitet i socialt arbejde involverer faglighed vedrørende de sociale ydelser, ledelse og organiserings, kvalitative og kvantitative metoder, brugerinddragelse, refleksion, implementering med videre. Vi vil argumentere for, at mange forskellige dimensioner skal bringes i spil, hvis arbejdet med kvalitet skal give værdi.

Efterhånden diskuteres de færreste steder, hvorvidt vi i tilknytning til det daglige arbejde på sociale institutioner skal foretage forskellige registreringer af vores aktiviteter og af borgernes udvikling og udbytte af indsatzen. Vi er oven i købet ved at udvikle og implementere glimrende IT-understøttelse til dette arbejde. Men det er fortsat en udfordring at sikre, at dokumentation bliver brugt og omsat til læring og til faglig udvikling. Vi giver med udgangspunkt i praktiske eksempler og erfaringer (cases) fra 20 års konsulentarbejde på området bud på, hvordan man som leder og medarbejder udnytter anledninger til at omsætte dokumentation til læring og udvikling. Én af pointerne er, at det ikke er svaret på spørgsmålet "hvad virker?", der er interessant, men det er selve spørgsmålet, der er vigtigt. Derudover handler det om at etablere overblik over hvilket dokumentationsarbejde man allerede har og få det brugt. Det handler om at bruge brugersamtaler, handleplanmøder, personalemøder, bestyrelsesarrengementer og pårørendearrangementer til at sætte faglig udvikling på dagsordenen. Det handler om at etablere fælles sprog og møde samarbejdspartnere - herunder bestillere og tilsyn - i en kvalificeret drøftelse.

Formålet med præsentationen er at vise, hvordan man på institutionsniveau kan arbejde praktisk og nyttigt med dokumentation og evaluering.

Enkelt-institutioner kan typisk ikke leve op til at arbejde metodisk på de øverste trin af evidensstigen, men det er absolut muligt at kvalificere dokumentationsarbejdet, således at der foretages valide målinger af relevante forhold.
Kvalitetsmodel som ramme for meningsfuld dokumentation

Speakers & Authors: Mette Munch-Petersen

Der stilles stadig større krav til, at sociale tilbud dokumenterer indsatser og resultater, bl.a. fordi kommuner og 'samfundet' vil have en vis sikkerhed for, at anbringelser kan retfærdiggøres - menneskeligt og økonomisk. Det er i praksis en vanskelig opgave, fordi social- og specialpædagogisk arbejde er kendtegnet ved en høj grad af kompleksitet. Hvis et socialt tilbud vil arbejde målrettet med systematisk meningsfuld dokumentation er en kvalitetsmodel en mulighed. Akkreditering Danmarks Kvalitetsmodel henvender sig til sociale tilbud, der ønsker en reflekterende og resultatorienteret kultur såvel som at arbejde med dokumentation samt kvalificering og udvikling af egen praksis.

Oplægget drejer sig om, hvordan kvalitetsmodellen fungerer som værktøj og ramme for meningsfuld dokumentation i praksis, og hvilke muligheder og udfordringer det giver på de enkelte tilbud.

Modellen er udviklet udfra praktikeres viden og erfaringer om, hvad der karakteriserer godt socialt arbejde og meningsfuld dokumentation. Modellen udvikles og versioneres løbende, og dette gøres ligeledes ved at inddrage praktikere i de forskellige udviklingsfaser. Fokus på inddragelse af praktikerne muliggør, at modellen er stadig relevant for dem, der i hverdagen skal bruge den som værktøj.


De væsentligste resultater for arbejdet med modellen er, at tilbudet skaber en skriftlig ramme for arbejdet og en udviklet og reflekteret dokumentationspraksis, hvilket er til gavn for: den sociale indsat for den enkelte borger, medarbejdernes arbejdsvilkår, ledelsens styring med organisation og indsats, samt gennemsigtighed og åbenhed for bl.a. samarbejdspartnere (bl.a. kommuner).

Nøgleord: kvalitetsmodel, ramme for meningsfuld dokumentation, praksiserfaringer
Institutionsanbringelse og behandlingsinterventioner

Barrierer for faglig refleksion og dokumentation i tværfaglige sociale tilbud

Speakers & Authors: Martin Madsen


Sammenfattes disse to perspektiver problematiserer oplægget de troværdige faglige autoriteter i sociale tilbud med mange forskellige fagligheder, da der her skabes muligheder for organisationskulturer, hvor faglighed og holdninger kan være svære at skille ad. Ud fra praksis eksempler vil præsentationen illustrere, hvordan forskellige faglige videnområder transformeres til en fælles logik, eller forklaret med Levitt og March: en rutine, der går på tværs af faggrænserne, og kan udføres af alle i tilbuddene.

Formålet med oplægget er således at reflektere over faglighed i tværfaglige sociale tilbud. Ifølge Ejrnæs hænger holdning og faglig viden sammen for fagpersonen, men hvordan sikres en høj faglighed og fagligfunderede handlinger, hvis der i tværfaglige tilbud skabes muligheder for, at definere borgers handlingssporløb ud fra personlige præferencer uden fagligbaggrund?
Towards a comprehensive view of factors affecting decision making in child welfare

Symposium Co-ordinator: Mónica López López

Decision making is a key activity within the child welfare system and one of the most complex and challenging parts of it. Child welfare professionals are responsible for assessing the risk of harm and deciding on the most pertinent level of intervention, for instance whether or not to remove a child from home or to reunify the child with the family after a care episode. These crucial decisions are made under high levels of uncertainty due to insufficient or ambiguous information and time constraints. A current challenge facing child welfare is to improve decision making in order to prevent false positive and false negative errors and to enhance the optimal matching of needs and services for vulnerable children and their families.

The symposium will start with a theoretical approach to the study of decisions in child welfare presented by John Fluke. The author will give a short overview about the Decision Making Ecology Framework for organizing decision-making research in child welfare, including an example study regarding influences on placement decisions.

Two papers will offer different perspectives on an international vignette study of removal and reunification decisions in a case of suspected child abuse (Israel, the Netherlands, Northern Ireland, and Spain). Specifically, the first paper presentation by Rami Benbenishty will explore the impact of a case characteristic (whether mother objects to removal), and a decision maker characteristic (child welfare attitudes) on maltreatment substantiation, risk assessment, and recommended intervention. The second paper presentation by Mónica López will analyse the role of training and experience in decision making in cases of suspected child abuse. The study compares professionals with student trainees and between practitioners with different levels of education and experience.

Amélie Tourlais will contribute with a paper on the factors that impact the decision making process of mental health clinicians to contact child protection in the French context.

Paul Durning will be invited to moderate the symposium and comment on all the papers, with special attention to implications for future research, policy, and practice.

The symposium is carefully planned by Mónica López, John Fluke, Rami Benbenishty, and Erik Knorth.
Decision Making Ecology: A framework for organizing decision-making research in child welfare and an example of its application in the decision to place a child out of home

Speakers & Authors: John Fluke, Chris Graham, Donald Baumann, Alan Detlaff

The decision to remove children from their families is particularly complex given the lifelong impacts on children and families. Despite the complexity and consequences of this decision, surprisingly little is understood about this decision-making process. The aim of this presentation is to offer a description of the Decision Making Ecology (DME) as a framework for organizing research and informing child welfare policy and practice. An illustrative study is used to present findings regarding the factors contributing to the removal decision at the caseworker level.

Using the Decision-Making Ecology framework the removal study was designed to assess the influence of case, caseworker, and organizational factors on the removal decision-making process among child protection caseworkers. The instrument was administered to caseworkers in a US state. Data were matched to administrative records including worker demographics and combined with information from the administrative case records about each worker’s caseload. A structural equation model was fitted to the data to test paths between case, caseworker, and organizational variables in relation to children removed across cases informed by the DME framework.

Several factors were found to influence the removal decision. Case factors were of most importance: Caseworker factors were not found to directly influence the placement decision, including workers’ own race/ethnicity.

This presentation facilitates an increased understanding of decision-making using the (DME) framework and specifically the removal decision. These results can be used to inform future research efforts, as well as to further develop and refine policy, workforce development, and assessment of the decision-making process.
Social work and welfare policy

Decision making in cases of suspected child maltreatment: A comparative international study on child welfare attitudes, maltreatment substantiation, risk assessment, and intervention recommendations

Speakers & Authors: Rami Benbenishty, Bilha Davidson-Arad, Erik J. Knorth, Carien Koopmans, Mónica López López, Cilia Witteman, Jorge Fernandez Del Valle, John Devaney, David Hayes, Trevor Spratt

Background. The present study is based on the Judgment and Decision Processes in Context (JUDPIC) model, developed by Benbenishty and Arad-Davidson, describing decision making at the case level as embedded within nested contexts, such as the ecological context of the family, the agency, and wider contexts relating to the overall characteristics of the service system and multiple cultural contexts.

Aims. The study examines the impact of a case characteristic (whether mother objects to removal), and a decision maker characteristic (child welfare attitudes) on maltreatment substantiation, risk assessment, and recommended intervention. To study the unique impact of the country context we examine and compare child protective professionals in four countries: Israel, the Netherlands, Northern Ireland, and Spain.

Methods. We presented 828 professionals from four countries with a vignette of a suspected maltreatment case and asked to assess the case and recommend interventions. Participants were randomly assigned to a vignette in which the mother opposed placement or was willing to accept the professional's recommendation. Participants completed a structured questionnaire to report their substantiation judgments, risk assessments and recommended intervention, as well as the Child Welfare Attitude Questionnaire and background information.

Key findings. Mother's wishes had no impact on judgments and decisions. Child welfare attitudes were significantly different among professionals from the participating countries. Maltreatment substantiation and risk assessments were associated with child welfare attitudes, and they were different across countries. Similarly, intervention recommendations were different between countries and reflected the attitudes of professionals – pro removal attitudes were associated with increased tendency to recommend removal, with or without parental consent.

Conclusions. We conclude that the model received support. In addition to case details, child protection decisions are influenced by a range of personal and context variables, including major differences between countries with relatively similar welfare and child protection regimes.
Social work and welfare policy

The role of education, training and experience in decision making in cases of suspected child abuse

Speakers & Authors: Mónica López López, Bilha Davidson-Arad, Rami Benbenishty, Erik J. Knorth, Carien Koopmans, Cilia Witteman, Jorge Fernandez Del Valle, John Devaney, David Hayes, Trevor Spratt

Background and aim. This paper deals with the process of decision making whether or not to remove a child from home in a case of suspected child abuse. Traditionally research into social work decision making tended to consider decision makers as a compact group, neglecting the differences between levels of training or experience. In order to fill this gap, this study compared professionals with student trainees and between practitioners with different levels of education and experience.

Methods. A total of 1044 students and 828 professionals from four countries (Israel, the Netherlands, Northern Ireland, and Spain) took part in this study. All novices were students of bachelor and master degrees related to child care (mainly social work, psychology, pedagogy). The study utilized a vignette of a case of alleged child abuse or neglect based in real cases. Subjects were asked to make judgments and recommendations on the case.

Key findings and implications. This study has highlighted some important differences in the ways in which students and professionals make decisions in child protection. There were significant differences in their assessments of risk and recommendations for removal and reunification. Students tended to assess higher risk and recommend removal in more occasions.

In this paper presentation, attention will be paid to the effects of type of degree and training when making these decisions. The implications of these findings will be discussed in relation to education of future professionals of the child protections system.
Why clinicians decide to contact child protection services?

Speakers & Authors: Amélie Turlais

The French Child Protection System is organised around social workers who are sometimes clinicians. However the majority of them work in mental health care and maintain professional relationships with child protection. Professional in the child protection system (social workers, judges), highlight the importance of these clinicians’ actions and opinions, but little research has focused on the relationship between mental health care clinicians and child protection services’ professionals.

While conducting research in the field of family education, we studied a mental health care intervention designed for children aged between 3 and 16 years old, with behavioural disorders. They are at the intervention site once school is finished from 4.30pm to 6.30 pm. If the intervention team offers care services, in some situations the question of a possible intervention of child protection services may emerge. The aim of the research in this presentation was to study which factors impact the decision making process of this team of mental health clinicians to contact child protection. Through the analysis of 165 situations, we will demonstrate how families and children's circumstances taken separately do not impact the decision making process and combined present mixed results. We will conclude by providing evidence for the concept that more than maltreatment and/or neglect, the factor which impacts the most clinicians' decision making process is the assessment of the fundamental nature of the relation between the parent and the child related to both attachment and perhaps specifically in the French context, psychoanalysis theories.
Thursday, 4th September | Transition out of Care (Symp) | 15.00

Transitions out of care: challenges and opportunities

Doing research with care leavers: methodological and ethical challenges and opportunities

Symposium Co-ordinator: Anne-Kirstine Mølholt

As far as quality of care and well-being of young people in care is concerned, transitions to adulthood after care are increasingly in focus of research. Nevertheless the discussion can be defined as heterogenic. This Symposium is based on an international PhD network focusing on care leavers and will discuss methodological challenges and opportunities concerning this specific research field as well as similar ones.

Invited papers will present and bring up for discussions:

- Relevant methodological dimensions: “Dimensions of leaving-care research and its consequences for common comprehension”
- Ethical questions: “Research with youth in or after care - managing multiple alliances”
- Concepts of emancipation: “Disadvantaged by circumstance: how young adults manage after-care emancipation”
- Insights in developments, changes and continuity: “Perspectives on Everyday Life among Care Leavers”
Transitions out of care: challenges and opportunities

Dimensions of leaving-care research and its consequences for common comprehension

Speakers & Authors:  Samuel Keller, Eran Melkman

Care leavers' research is a growing field in social work research, one that redefines awareness of youth in care, of goals and effects of care as well as of processual dimensions before, in and after care. At the same time it's increasingly hard to have a common comprehension when using terms (or 'semi-terms') as for example "transition to adulthood", "care leaver" or "independency".

That's why in an international network of young researchers the idea arose to collect and structure important methodological dimensions to facilitate operationalisation of the leaving-care research field. Thus, it should be easier to have an orientation when beginning, communicating, defining, comparing and implementing research and research results. Moreover a common comprehension of relevant dimensions simplifies methodological discussions about challenges and ways to deal with them and at the same time facilitates international exchanges in a specific research field.

To start this symposium an uncompleted matrix of dimensions (work in progress) will be presented. The goal is to discuss, reorganise and complement it and to focus specific issues, their challenges and consequences by introducing examples from theoretical discourse and field experiences.

At the moment this matrix is segmented in three columns ("main dimensions of research", "challenges", "consequences for definition of care, transition and adulthood") and in eight lines ("care settings, specific settings & stage in care-career", "sample(s) and perspectives", "methods and instruments", "research period, moment(s) of elicitation/data collection", "dimensions and indicators of adulthood", "character of issues and indicators", "compared norms and population", "possible impacts of research").

Beside differentiating the presented matrix, first ideas of possible useful forms and products for researchers in this and similar fields could be collected such as prototypes of designs and concepts of leaving-care or decision-trees to design a research project.
Transitions out of care: challenges and opportunities

Research with youth in or after care (youth transition from out of home care) - managing multiple alliances

Speakers & Authors: Åsa Söderqvist, Claire Ting Zhao

As researchers in the social work field, we have a strong commitment to improve the quality of life, which related to the subjects of our inquiry, in this case- youth in or after care (who are facing or have been through the transition from out of home care). The researcher, who conduct thus studies, has been found being located in a complex social network, which consists of the gatekeepers, the funding bodies and the vulnerable youths. Though often overlooked, the central aspect of a research project is to effectively manage liaisons with all these stakeholders who at times are driven by contradicting motivations.

The aim in this study is thus to emphasize how the researchers build up relationships to conduct field work while try to find a balance among gatekeepers (i.e. residential care manager, parents, peers), young people (i.e. with minority background) and funding bodies (i.e. universities). Based on empirical data from two different qualitative research projects, in China and Sweden, it is possible to distinguish several aspects giving an insight to these challenges. Through participatory observations and interviews (in-depth interview and focus-group interview), which has been conducted in two residential care units from the Chinese and Swedish context, it became clear that such challenges were related to the gatekeeper’s willingness and attitude, also the past experiences of research and researchers. Aspects having a great impact on not only getting access to the field, but also to what kind of data that was made visible for the researchers. Besides, the findings implicates further that getting the possibility to create a decent alliance with involved parts and find the balance require a developed understanding of how to navigate between different interests. A navigation that became extremely important in terms of getting valuable knowledge about the young people’s experiences and avoiding violating the trust or occurring additional harm towards a group which already has been defined as vulnerable.
Transitions out of care: challenges and opportunities

Disadvantaged by circumstance: how young adults manage after-care emancipation

Speakers & Authors: Georgiana Tri

Knowing that help is there when needed, having a place to come back to, being afforded to make mistakes, support being given in the transition to and during adulthood are not benefits experienced by all young populations. Once youth age out of orphanages, foster cares or other alternative state care systems, ready or not, provision of services are stopped. The objective of this study is to conceptualize the meaning and process of after-care transformations by exploring how and where Romanian and English young people after public care ("care leavers") find support/help to meet the demands of adulthood responsibilities. It will look specifically how social networks/social capital interplay with the youth's agency to shape and to adapt to the new status, and their ability to deal with this path to independent living. Social networks here are viewed as buffers against stresses, mechanisms to positive adaptation and coping in times of major life changes. A total of 60 participants will be involved in the research project: 30 from Romania and 30 from England. This comparative element included in this research project will bring out similarities and differences in how the young adults from Romania and England manage after-care emancipation, further delivering a sound understanding to the concept of transition to adulthood and the role, the impact of social networks in this life phase. The study will investigate the experiences from an individualized approach, thus will depict experiences through care leavers' eyes to provide in-depth understanding of the group's reality to independent living from the moment they left care.
Perspectives on Everyday Life among Care Leavers

Speakers & Authors: Anne-Kirstine Mølholt

This abstract is concerned with young people leaving out-of-home care and their perspectives on everyday life. In Denmark when young people leave care the main concepts highlighted in social policy are ‘independent living’, ‘development’ and ‘adulthood’. Knowledge on the subject is derived from outcomes in quantitative studies, which points to challenges experienced by care leavers such as lower degrees of education, higher levels of unemployment, homelessness and convictions compared to their peers. This has lead to an increasing focus on social work with care leavers and a securing of their transitions into adulthood. Often social policy, social work practice and research on the field points to challenges characterizing care leavers. The approach is based on ‘transitions’ instead of ‘every day life’. In other words on the extraordinary instead of the ordinary. Part of this is probably due to a limited amount of research involving the perspectives of care leavers: We know what they are not but have limited knowledge about what they are and what characterizes their lives defined on their own terms.

The aim of my PhD-study is to gather knowledge about care leavers and their everyday life from their own perspectives. The study is constructed as a qualitative longitudinal study using different kinds of narrative methods. During a period of two years I follow eight care leavers age 21 to 33 to get an insight in the perspectives on their everyday life and experiences. This insight in developments, changes and continuity is important to ensure transitions that are not experienced as chaotic and filled with insecurities but are viewed as a wholeness of circumstances where care leavers have the possibilities of constructing meanings. The preliminary findings highlights the need to understand the perspectives of care leavers and their construction of everyday life to understand the challenges they experience leaving care and in their life afterwards.
How to gain insight into the everyday lives of young people in care in England and France?

*Speakers & Authors: Hélène Join-Lambert, Janet Boddy*

What do we know about the everyday lives over time of young people who live in care settings? What do they think about their day-to-day experiences and how do those experiences relate to plans they make for the future? We will present methodological considerations explored in a pilot study, financed in the EU Marie Skłodowska Curie IEF Programme, designed to study everyday lives in time for young people living in care in France and England.

The methodological approach for the study was based on an international review which was unusual in two key respects. First, it brought together research on transitions to adulthood, in the general population and for care leavers, with studies on everyday lives of young people in care. Second, it was focussed on developing cross-national methodology. Overall, the research aims to establish a qualitative longitudinal research methodology to gain an in-depth understanding of young people's experiences and views of their everyday lives over time. It follows a multi-method approach, including social mapping, guided walks, photography and texting.

The research includes case studies of eight young people in France and eight in England, boys and girls aged 14 to 16, living in foster and residential care. Data collection takes place at three time points in the project - with one to two weeks between meetings 1 and 2, and another two to three months between meetings 2 and 3. Consent is sought for further future follow up (with the understanding that this will depend on additional funding).

In this paper, we discuss the process of methodological development, identifying key methodological, and ethical, considerations in qualitative longitudinal research with children and young people in care, and across countries, taking account of the cultural, legal and institutional contexts in France and England.

**Key words:** Everyday life of young people in care, France - England, methodology
Voices of children, youth and families

The impact of client-professional communication on adolescents' participation and learning processes in psychosocial care

Speakers & Authors: Margot Jager, Sijmen A. Reijneveld, Janneke Metselaar, Erik J. Knorth, Andrea de Winter

Aims: Adolescents with emotional and behavioural problems often have poor treatment adherence, or drop out from treatment, undermining its effectiveness. Client-centred communication, in which professionals adapt their communication style to the preferences of the client, may positively influence outcomes of care. The aim of this study was to examine adolescents' preferred and experienced communication, and whether discrepancies in these are associated with clients' participation and learning processes.

Design, methods and data: Adolescents receiving psychosocial care (n = 211) reported regarding affective communication, information provision, and shared decision making. Communication preferences were measured before treatment started, and experiences three months later, using an adapted version of the Consumer Quality Index. Participation involved clients' attendance and adherence (professional-reported). Learning processes involved clients' improvement in understanding and confidence (client- and professional-reported). Logistic regression analysis was used to examine associations between communication and outcomes.

Key findings: Discrepancies between adolescents' preferences and experiences were found for all three communication domains. Frequencies were rather similar for communication that was preferred but less often experienced, and for communication that was less preferred but experienced. Preferred but less experienced affective communication was associated with low adherence (odds ratio: 95% confidence interval: 2.7: 1.1-6.6), less improvement in understanding (3.5: 1.4-8.5), and less improvement in confidence (4.1: 1.6-10.5). If information provision was preferred but less often experienced, adolescents were more likely to demonstrate less improvement in understanding (2.7: 1.0-7.4). Preferred but less often experienced shared decision making was also associated with less improvement in understanding (3.7: 1.5-9.3). The combination "less preferred but experienced" only had an effect regarding affective communication; these adolescents were more likely to demonstrate less improvement in confidence (6.2: 2.4-15.9).

Implications: Discrepancies between the communication that adolescents prefer and what they experience negatively affect adolescents' participation and learning processes, although the pattern differs across communication domains. These insights may stimulate care professionals to pay considerable attention to their clients' communication preferences.

Key words: client-professional communication, participation, adolescent psychosocial care
"THEN THEY TALK AND TRY TO CALM YOU DOWN" A methodological exercise in studying physical restraint in residential care

Speakers & Authors: Susanna Hoikkala, Tarja Pösö

Physical restraint in residential care is an ethically complex and contradictory topic for child welfare practice and research. This paper presents one exercise carried out in four children’s homes in Finland to learn about the children’s point of view on the use of physical restraint, and analyses the strengths and weaknesses of the method employed in the study.

The method is based on the group interviews of children, aged 8-17 in which children were encouraged to imagine certain moments in which physical restraint was used by the staff in a children’s home. A set of escalating descriptions was constructed on the basis of the analysis of the formal decisions of the use of physical restraint (N = 260) in those four institutions within the time period of 18 months. These descriptions were presented to four self-composed groups of children (2-5 children in the groups). In addition to the children’s agreement to participate, the relevant research permits were required from the parents and the social welfare agencies.

Similar to the existing studies using vignettes, this study demonstrates that a method based on ‘imagination’ is a useful and ethically sound means to study such a sensitive issue. The method encourages children to speak about their shared experiences and allows children to express their views of correct and incorrect use of restraint. It also highlights some common elements of restraint. In this study, every group started discussing the use of restraint by saying that the staff always ‘talks to the child and tries to calm the child’. We take it as an important message that staff talk was described in more detail than the staff’s use of physical power.
Adoption and permanency planning

Making plans and decisions for children in care: professionals, parents and young people

Speakers & Authors: Jonathan Dickens, Gillian Schofield, Chris Beckett

In England, local authorities are the statutory bodies that are responsible for children in care, and are regarded as 'corporate parents' for them. They must have a care plan for each child, which has to address the seven dimensions of the 'looked after children' (LAC) planning framework. These include a plan for the child's permanent placement, their education, health care, social and behavioural development, and contact with parents, siblings and others. The plan has to be reviewed regularly by an 'independent reviewing officer' (IRO). This person is an employee of the local authority, but independent of the line management of the case.

This paper presents findings from a study of care planning and the role of the IRO, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, undertaken in 2012-14. It was a mixed methods study, with data on 120 cases across four local authorities, plus interviews with social workers, IROs, parents and young people, and a national questionnaire.

The presentation examines how different people interact in making plans and decisions for and with the child. It highlights the overlaps, ambiguities and tensions between them. The social worker, in consultation with his/her team manager, is responsible for the plan on behalf of the local authority, but some aspects may require higher authorisation, or inter-agency agreement. The IRO reviews the plan and may make recommendations to change it. If the case is going through care proceedings, another professional is involved, the 'children's guardian', and the court is the decision-maker. There are also the parents. If the child is on a care order, the local authority should still try to work with them, but has the power to overrule their wishes in the child's best interests. In other cases, if the child is 'accommodated' (voluntary care), all has to be done by agreement. Responsibility for decisions about day-to-day care is usually delegated to the foster carers or residential workers. And then, of course, there is the child, with their own wishes and feelings. Who decides what, when and how?

Keywords: decision-making; planning; reviewing
Adoption and permanency planning

Paths to permanence in England and Norway: evolving policy and the welfare state foundation

Speakers & Authors: June Thoburn, Marit Skivenes

Aim and objectives
Child welfare policy in England and (more recently) in Norway, has emphasised the central importance of achieving stability and a sense of permanence for children who enter out-of-home care. However, there are important policy, legislative and practice differences in the ways in which they seek to achieve this aim. The paper explores these differences and discuss the possible impact of welfare state models in the two countries for the different permanence options.

Methods
The presenters review the child welfare contexts, welfare state models, policy documents, research and legislation in England and Norway. They conduct document analysis and review of research findings on placement practice and outcomes and discuss the implications for policy and legislative change and practice in Norway and England as well as in similar jurisdictions.

Key findings
Both countries consider that the first permanence options are return to birth parents or relatives, and both use long term foster care (with relatives or ‘strangers’), adoption and forms of group care as permanence options for children with different characteristics. However, there are significant differences in the extent to which adoption, and group care are used as long term/permanence options in the two countries. Different proportions entering care in the different age groups in England and Norway are explored as a partial explanation for these findings, as is the differential emphasis placed on continuing family links. The authors review the research on permanency and discusses the impact of welfare state services and universal services for families and children on this policy area. They make suggestions about how ‘achieving permanence’ might best be understood and evaluated.

Key words: Rates in care; child welfare policy; placement comparisons
Adoption and permanency planning

'...because you need to hear that somebody's having a bad time like you are...'  
The importance of peer support in post-adoption support

Speakers & Authors:  Andressa Gadda

Since early 2013 a Voluntary Adoption Agency (VAA) in Scotland has been offering a post-adoption support program to its clients that aims to support the development of secure attachments between adoptive children and parents through play. This therapeutic approach is founded on a set of evidence-based propositions about the importance of secure attachment in promoting children's healthy development and ensuring placement stability. The program consists of six sessions - two home visits to the family and four group sessions - delivered over a six month period by specially trained Senior Practitioners. The program thus requires a considerable amount of resources, both in terms of set up costs and time commitment.

The VAA running the program asked the Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland (CELCIS) to carry out an evaluation of the program to inform ongoing development and improvement. The evaluation followed a realist approach which seeks to identify 'what works, for whom and in what circumstances' (1). It adopted a multi-method approach including observations, questionnaires, diaries and interviews with parents and Senior Practitioners in order to explore whether the program had, in any way, supported adoptive parents and their children. This paper will consider some of the key findings of this evaluation, paying particular attention to the importance of peer support in 'normalising' experiences which might otherwise seem 'problematic'. It will argue that the reassurance provided by this process of 'normalisation' has a noticeable impact on parents' understandings about their experiences of adoption and their children which may, in turn, support the building of attachment between parents and their adopted children. The presentation will also raise a number of questions about how adoptive parents are supported before, during and after the adoption process, and whether further consideration should be given to the role of attachment theory in this process.

Key words: post-adoption support, attachment, peer support

Adoption and permanency planning

The path of children placed in foster-to-adopt families: how did they get there?

Speakers & Authors: Page Geneviève, Sonia Hélie

The Youth Protection Act in Quebec, Canada states that every decision made under this Act must aim at keeping the child in its family environment. However, if, in the interest of the child, returning to its family environment is impossible, the decision must aim at ensuring continuity of care, stable relationships and stable living conditions corresponding to the child’s needs and age on a permanent basis (YPA, section 4). In some cases, these children are placed in a “mixed-bank” family, i.e. a family that agrees to 1) foster a child who is highly unlikely to return home and 2) adopt this child if he or she is freed for adoption. While this practice is seen as allowing earlier permanence and greater stability for these children (Association des Centres jeunesse du Québec, 2009), little is known about the path they follow down the road of child protective services. The current quantitative study aims at describing this path for over 300 children who were placed in a mixed-bank family between 2003 and 2013. Administrative, judicial and clinical data were analyzed. Results concerning the child’s family of origin, his or her history of placement as well as the intensity of service provision all provide indications that can help better understand the length of time before a child is placed in a mixed-bank family as well as the length of time before adoption is finalized. Ultimately, this will allow a better understanding of decision-making as well as clinical practice with these children and their families.
Adoption reform in England: Messages from local authorities on changes in processes and timescales

Speakers & Authors: Katie Hollingworth, Emily Munro

The paper presents the findings from a study commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE) to explore adoption managers’ and frontline social workers’ perspectives on the strengths and limitations of adoption reforms announced by the Coalition Government in 2012. The reforms are designed to accelerate the adoption process so that more children benefit from adoption and more rapidly. The research formed part of an overall exercise examining the on-going impact of the developing adoption reform programme on the: numbers of adoptions taking place; speed of progression through the system for children being adopted and prospective adopters; and causes of delay and how best to overcome them.

The research involved three waves of qualitative data collection, at six monthly intervals, to examine factors affecting adoption timescales and causes of delay and to explore how local authorities were responding to the adoption reform agenda. Telephone interviews were undertaken with adoption managers from 15 local authorities at each wave and complemented with focus groups with four adoption teams in waves one and three.

Findings from the first wave of data collection revealed a wide range of factors contributing to delay in the adoption process. Managers expressed their commitment to ensuring the timely completion of adoption processes but highlighted that ‘faster is not always better’ and raised concerns that tight timescales for the completion of the adopters’ approval process may be at the expense of quality. Questions were also raised about whether changes would impact upon social workers’ ability to build rapport and develop relationships with potential adopters and whether adopters would have sufficient time and space to make life changing decisions. They also highlighted the ongoing challenges of finding sufficient families with the skills and attributes to parent older children and those with disabilities and complex needs. The paper will examine these issues and present examples of best practice, developed by local authorities, to support the effective delivery of adoption services.
Adoption and permanency planning

What difference has PaCT made to permanence in Scotland? And how do we find out?

 Speakers & Authors: Rachel Harris, Andressa Gadda

The CELCIS Permanence and Care Team (PaCT) was established in Autumn 2012, partially as a result of Henderson et al's (2011) review of care and permanence planning in Scotland. One of PaCT's aims has been to promote a common understanding of permanence and permanence planning across Scotland. PaCT has also sought to share evidence and good practice, support the development of concurrency models in Scotland, and influence the quality and consistency of care planning, while improving permanence systems. Yet this was challenging, as there is a lack of an agreed definition and understanding of how and when to proceed with permanence planning. Indeed the "meanings of permanence in terms of stability, emotional security and family membership into adulthood are complex and the placements and legal status thought best able to achieve permanence are contested" (Schofield et al, 2012).

For the purposes of evaluating PaCT's interventions, we started by scoping intended outcomes to inform activity and the choice of baseline and outcome data. The team identified potential outcomes using a 'History of the Future' exercise (Markland et al, 2007). This was developed into a fuller logic model, with short to long-term outcomes, and possible indicators of impact of the program.

This paper will provide a brief overview of the key findings of the Phase 1 evaluation of PaCT, highlighting the challenges in designing and undertaking an evaluation in a complex and sensitive area and considering ways in which this may be addressed in future. The Phase 1 evaluation sought to answer the following:

* What value is there in having a shared vision for permanency?
* To what extent has practice shared by PaCT been taken up and embedded?
* Have practitioners made increased use of evidence in their practice?
* What influence have PaCT had on developing concurrency models that work in Scotland?
* How have PaCT influenced the quality of assessment/care planning?
* How have permanence systems changed? And what impact has this had on quality and consistency?

Data sources included questionnaires addressing understanding of permanence, training event evaluations to interviews with various stakeholders from statutory and non statutory agencies.
**Engaging foster carers in research teams: Recruiting and supporting foster carers**

*Symposium Co-ordinator: Judy Sebba*

**Aims:**
There is evidence to suggest that user engagement in research increases authenticity, strengthens validity and maximises impact on policy and practice (e.g. Barnes and Taylor, 2007; Rickinson, Sebba and Edwards, 2011). The Rees Centre for Research in Fostering and Education was set up from the outset with ‘user engagement’ as one of its key principles. The three papers and respondent in this symposium around the theme of recruitment and support for foster carers, illustrate the possible ways in which this might be approached.

**Methods, design, data, findings:**
The Rees Centre trained 22 foster carers in research interviewing and have engaged them in three studies thus far. Judy Sebba will describe a study of why people become foster carers in which 14 foster carers were involved in interviewing 110 people who inquired about fostering. Nikki Luke will present a study in which three fostering providers have designed interventions on foster carer peer support drawing on the findings of a Rees Centre research review on this topic. The study is evaluating these interventions using pre- and post intervention measures and seven foster carers are undertaking the interviews of the carers in the study. In the third paper Colin Chatten, Foster Carer, Treasurer of the International Foster Care Organisation (IFCO) and national carer representative for an independent international foster care provider, will give his perspective on being a foster carer interviewer in these studies. Lessons learned about how to engage users, the benefits and challenges will be discussed. Finally Ian Sinclair will respond to the papers.

**Keywords:** user engagement, foster carer support, carer recruitment


Bridging the gap between research, policy and practice

Why people become foster carers

Speakers & Authors: Judy Sebba

Aims and Objectives:
Drawing on a review of the research on why people become foster carers (Sebba, 2012) the Rees Centre undertook a prospective study with 10 fostering providers to identify the initial motivations that attract people to fostering. This study is an important source of evidence for the many fostering providers trying to improve their recruitment and retention of foster carers.

Methods, Design and Data:
The study is a survey involving interviews with 110 people who approached one of the ten participating fostering providers to inquire about fostering during a 9-week period in May-July 2013. Interviews were repeated after 6 months to see how they had progressed in the application process and whether their motivations to foster had changed as they learned more about fostering. Applicants who decided to withdraw from the process were also interviewed about their reasons for doing so. The interviews were undertaken by 14 experienced foster carers who were trained by the Rees Centre in research interviewing.

Key findings:
The findings will be fully analysed by July 2014. They will provide the first prospective study in the UK and will assist service providers to identify ways of attracting more, and in particular more suitable, foster carers. They will also provide some insights into the role established carers can play in recruiting new carers.


Keywords: foster carer recruitment, user engagement, carers as researchers
Informing and evaluating foster carer peer support groups

Speakers & Authors: Nikki Luke

Aim
This presentation describes the involvement of peer researchers in our work examining the potential benefits of foster carer support groups. We will present preliminary results from our evaluation and discuss the translation of evidence-based recommendations into practice.

Methods, research design and data
This mixed-methods study drew on a review of the international research on peer contact between foster carers (Luke & Sebba, 2013), which identified the ways in which foster carers come together, the forms of support and learning that this provides and the subsequent impact on outcomes for carers, children and placements. Foster carers’ feedback on the draft review was incorporated into the published version. Three fostering service providers in England considered our evidence-based recommendations for improving foster carer support groups. The support groups implemented by providers were then evaluated using a pre- and post-test design. Measures included semi-structured interviews conducted by peer researchers to capture carers’ perceptions of peer support and any perceived impact of the group on relationships with others, attitudes to fostering and intention to continue in the role. Survey measures of carers’ stress levels and parenting attitudes were also gathered. All measures were administered at the first group meeting and again after six months.

Results and outcomes
Preliminary findings from our evaluation suggest that peer contact between foster carers fulfills a number of important support needs: the need for emotional (the provision of caring and empathy), instrumental (concrete assistance), informational (assisting with problem-solving) and appraisal (positive feedback) support (Hinson Langford, et al., 1997). In addition, support groups can serve to counter the sense of isolation that is sometimes experienced by foster carers. Recommendations for evidence-informed practice will be discussed, along with the potential benefits of working with peer researchers.

Key words
Peer support; intervention; peer researchers.

Participating in research as an interviewer - a foster carer’s perspective

Speakers & Authors: Colin Chatten, Nikki Luke

Aim
A key focus of work conducted at the Rees Centre for Research in Fostering and Education is the involvement of the main user groups in the design, implementation and analysis of research projects. In this presentation we give an overview of the involvement of foster carers in our work to date, illustrated with the personal experiences of one carer-researcher.

Methods, research design and data
A case study of our research centre’s approach to user engagement will be presented. The Rees Centre works with 22 foster carer-researchers recruited from local authority and independent fostering service providers. The Centre has trained the carers in research interviewing and has involved them in three projects to date. Qualitative feedback has been sought from the carer-researcher team on their experiences of working on these projects. An overview of the feedback will provide an introduction to an in-depth exploration of one foster carer’s experiences.

Results and outcomes
The overview of the feedback from the carer-researcher team will focus on the following questions:
• What has your experience been like working as an interviewer on the Rees Centre studies?
• What have you learned in the process?
• Has anything surprised you?
• How do you strike the right balance with your interviewees between being a fellow foster carer and a researcher?

Colin Chatten a carer-researcher, will speak about the dynamics of the particular peer support group that he helped to interview; their eagerness to welcome carer-researchers as interviewers. He will also discuss his frustrations at having been unable to complete some interviews, including anxiety in the motivation to foster study about possibly putting people off continuing with their application to foster.

The perspectives of the carer-research team will be used to inform a set of recommendations for research teams seeking to engage service users as co-researchers.

Key words
Peer researchers, user engagement, research design.
Friday, 5th September | Bridging the Gap (Symposium) | 10.30

Bridging the gap between research, policy and practice

Professor Ian Sinclair to respond to the three papers

Speakers & Authors: Ian Sinclair

Professor Ian Sinclair will respond to the three papers in this symposium.
Evidence-based practice and implementation

Training issues and challenge for professionals regarding the British framework for assessing the developmental needs of vulnerable children in four western countries

Symposium Co-ordinator: Claire Chamberland

The Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (FACNF) was developed in 1999 to systematically determine the needs of maltreated or at-risk children and to offer them the best solutions possible with the ultimate goal of ensuring their well-being and optimal development trajectories. The framework also gave rise to tools for exploring the various dimensions of the framework conceived as a triangle (left side: needs; right side: parental responses; base: family and environmental factors). These tools of increasing complexity depending on the level of child’s needs, allow exploring the needs of children and promoting dialogue and participation with parents and youth. They also support the clinical judgment of practitioners from various sectors (health and social services, schools, daycares, public security, etc.) in planning the most relevant interventions and individualised services possible. In 2004, the assessment framework became the practice model for all children receiving services in England. A meta-analysis conducted in 2010 highlighted the international dissemination of the framework and its promising nature (Léveillé & Chamberland, 2010). The purpose of this symposium is to present the adaptation of the framework and tools and to describe the training experiences of professionals in four countries/jurisdictions: England, France, Italy, and Quebec. Training content and strategies will be presented as well as the issues and challenges associated with their implementation in various social political contexts and service organisations. Similarities and differences will also be discussed.
Evidence-based practice and implementation

Adaptation of the British framework and tools for assessing the needs of children in Quebec

Speakers & Authors: Chamberland Claire, Lessard Danielle, Lacharité Carl, Fafard Guylaine

Since 2003, a group of researchers has set out to implement, adapt, and evaluate the model developed in Britain for assessing the needs of children. Four stages have marked this experience: testing of the framework and Core Assessment (2003-2008); a preliminary evaluative study in four urban, semi-urban, and rural areas (2008-2011); a systematic review of the tools for assessing the needs of children, and development and testing of a structured training programme (2011-2012); a second evaluative study in six new territories, and implementation of the training programme in several regions of Quebec (2012-2016). The training programme and adaptation of the approach and tools currently underway have been enhanced over the years by continuous interactions with the activities and results of research conducted for more than a decade. Presently, nearly 100 professionals, from several intervention areas and working with children and their families from various milieus, have been trained. These include social workers (in prevention and protection), health workers, teaching professionals, daycare workers, community workers (family centres, youth centres, etc.), and public safety professionals. Individuals who have received training, in turn, provide training to others in their own regions and milieus; we called them "multiplicateurs". Currently more than 500 hundred partners have been already exposed to the framework and tools. Many more workers will be trained in the next few months. This paper will present a description of the content covered, including the assessment framework, the participatory approach with children and parents, inter-professional and inter-organisational collaboration, and the use of three assessment tools (the adaptation of Common Assessment Framework, Initial Assessment and Core Assessment) based on the level of needs of children. We will also discuss the activities and pedagogical content of the training programme, the dynamics and realities of the various milieus in which we tested it, and the challenges faced by the trainers, managers, and professionals involved. Finally, we will present results on the evaluation of the training.
Evidence-based practice and implementation

Implementation of the British Assessment Framework in organisation in Haute-Savoie

Speakers & Authors: Lhoussni Mohamed, Helen Jones

France reformed its child protection system in 2007 with a law which required an assessment of the circumstances of children and families, emphasising the support for parents and the need to look at the resources available within the wider environment of the family before any intervention is provided. The British Assessment Framework is well suited to this new paradigm of help for children and support for families within an ecological, multi-systemic approach. The new child welfare agency Retis, set up in 2007, chose to implement the Assessment Framework across its services in Haute Savoie for 180 children supported in their families. It represented a change of professional culture away from a sole focus on protection towards a concept of the optimal development of the child which addresses the child’s wider developmental needs. Implementation has supported a change in practice to partnership working with parents which takes account of the perspectives of children as agents in their own protection. To achieve this, a five year programme of training has been put in place:

- core training for all professionals to raise awareness about approach, principles and methods for a new way of working with families
- monthly dedicated time for practice reflection and case analysis
- training for team leaders as key to driving practice improvement

The founder of Retis, Mohamed L’Houssni and Helen Jones who has supported the implementation and training from the beginning will present the work. The strengths of the model will be set out (shared language and concepts, improved information gathering, tools to support planning, interventions and review) and the difficulties (tendency to stay with the familiar, difficulties in triaging relevant information to generate an analysis and in using different perspectives to develop hypotheses etc) as well as the adaptations to a French context. An established collaboration with researchers in Quebec has resulted in them providing workshops for Retis staff about using the framework which recognised the same challenges for professionals across frontiers. The common prize is to better support the reflective capacity of the professionals to improve the help for children and families.
Evidence-based practice and implementation

Assessment Framework Implementation in England

Speakers & Authors: Helen Jones, Harriet Ward, Jenny Gray

The development of the Assessment Framework in England took place in the context of a wider journey taken by child welfare policy and children's services over the last two decades. The new framework offered a consistent approach to identifying children's needs in the context of parental capacity and resources available in the family's wider environment. It provided a practice model for implementing the Children Act 1989, with its focus on the health and development of children.

Work began in 1997 following a number of social services inspection reports highlighting the lack of a coherent assessment model, analysis or professional judgements underpinning decisions. Children and families were more likely to receive a service if there were substantiated child protection concerns, even where other significant needs were identified. The framework has a strength-based ecological approach which uses theories of child development, attachment and resilience to guide practice. It supports multi-disciplinary working and provides a common language to describe children's and families' needs. It supports the analysis of risk and protective factors, strengths and difficulties and includes a number of practice tools to support its use.

Implementation presented a number of challenges related to the requirement for practitioners to follow a clear logic model of collecting information about families, undertaking an analysis, developing an action plan, providing services and undertaking a review of whether children's outcomes were improving as a result of the interventions. Implementation showed that a whole system approach was necessary. This required senior management commitment, training for practitioners and managers, quality IT systems for the collection of case based data and sound skills in analysis and direct work with children and their families.

The framework has provided a vehicle for significant international collaboration and provided important lessons on implementation. While the guidance is no longer compulsory for use in children's services in England, assessments are still required on the child's developmental needs and parental capacity to meet these within the family and environmental context. There are more recent signs of a resurgence of interest and use.

This presentation also sets the scene for exploring the implementation and impact of the Assessment Framework in Canada, Italy and France.
Evidence-based practice and implementation

The implementation of Assessment framework (FACNF) in Italy: the experience of P.I.P.P.I. (Program of Intervention for Prevention of Institutionalization)

Speakers & Authors: Paola Milani, Serbati Sara, Marco Ius, Diego Di Masi, Ombretta Zanon

From 2011, the Italian adaptation of the Framework for the Assessment of Children in need and their Families (FACNF) named RPMonline (that stands for assessment, planning, monitoring) has been implemented in a program (the P.I.P.P.I. Program of Intervention for Prevention of Institutionalization) run by the Italian Ministry of Welfare and the University of Padua (Italy). P.I.P.P.I. has involved 10 cities in a research training intervention program that aims at preventing child-placement, and responding to problems connected to poor-parenting and child-neglect. Practitioners, parents, teachers and other actors co-work along a participative and transformative evaluation-path to foster children's development using RPMonline: each step of the care process becomes a learning opportunity for practitioners, and also for families. In the first study (2011-2012), a pretest postest quasi experimental design was used to compare families and children involved in P.I.P.P.I. to those receiving a service from mainstream social workers. Data were collected on a sample of 169 children (130 families) aged 0-14 years of whom 122 (89 families) were referred to the P.I.P.P.I. Quantitative and qualitative methods were used. Results from questionnaires and care plans are encouraging in changes in the children's developmental needs, in the parenting experiences and also in the environmental conditions, even if the need of more work to strengthen the support system available in the social network of the family is highlighted. Care-plans and focus groups reports also practitioners' good experience in family participation. For the years 2012-2013, 9 out of 10 cities have applied for an expansion of the program to new families (n=242). Moreover, for the years 2014-2015 the Italian Ministry of Welfare wishes to institute the first step of scaling-up of the program by initiating the third-implementation, which will involve 50 cities and around 500 children. Simultaneously with this widespread (that seems an indicator of success, as well as an unexpected outcome), we are working to the experimentation of new app RPM-Android created in collaboration with the Department of Engineering of Padua University, in order to facilitate the use of RPMonline by families and practitioners.
Foster care: different paths and their implications

Fostering unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people

Speakers & Authors: Jim Wade

The paper reports findings from a mixed methods study that explored the fostering experiences of unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people (UASYP) in England. The study was based in four English local authorities and incorporated:

- Administrative data on all 2,113 UASYP supported in these local authorities on a given date
- A postal survey of 133 foster carers caring for a UASYP
- Interviews with 23 foster carers and 21 UASYP in their care
- Focus group discussions with UASYP, social workers and other stakeholders

Key findings
Fostering UASYP is made more complex by the intersection of immigration and child welfare policies, lack of prior information about young people's lives and uncertainties that derive from cultural and language divides. Despite these challenges, most UASYP, once settled in foster placements, were reported by foster carers to be doing very well. This paper focuses on some key aspects of the fostering experience:

- Changes have been made to the care pathways of UASYP in recent years, yet only UASYP aged 15 or under tend to access foster care. The majority of UASYP therefore take a different and less supported pathway.
- Most UASYP initially had no idea what foster care was, the majority could not speak English well and foster carers focused on providing an initial safe refuge.
- From uncertain beginnings, most (77%) went on to do very well and most were reported to be well integrated into the fabric of family life.
- Three relationship models were identified that captured proximity and distance in family relationships: 'family-like' relationships (the majority); 'temporary home bases' and 'lodgings'. Family-like relationships developed over time through gradual bonding, mutual trust, active listening, advocating, being flexible, developing strategies to promote family inclusion and by managing tensions and differences with sensitivity. 'Lodgers' tended to be isolated and excluded from family practices.
- Planning for adult life, a key fostering task, was made complex by uncertainties created by asylum decision making and UASYP's uncertainties about the future.
Pregnant young women in foster care

Speakers & Authors: Frank Ainsworth, Patricia Hansen

The focus of this presentation is on young women under the age of 18 years who become pregnant and give birth while in foster care. This is an important issue. The presentation draws on limited qualitative data from New South Wales (Australia) that highlights the paucity of information held by child protection authorities about this issue. This is both in New South Wales and across Australia, and we suspect elsewhere.

The presentation notes how some, but not all, of these young women lose their child to state care immediately following birth. There is a need for special services for these young women who exit foster care with responsibility for the care of a child. This makes them the most vulnerable of all care leavers. Ideas for services for these young women and their child are offered and sought.
Foster care: different paths and their implications

Contact in Foster Care in Porto: a study about patterns and outcomes

Speakers & Authors: Vânia S. Pinto, Paulo Delgado, João M. S. Carvalho

When a child is placed in foster care the contact between the foster child and her biological family has consequences on her development, the carers accompaniment, the cessation and rupture of the placement and on the family reunification. The difficulties associated with the management of contact are due mainly to its nature, since those relationships involve different actors. The consequences they produce depend on a vast and complex set of interrelated factors, such as time spent in care, the pathway in protection system, and the carers posture.

This study, conducted by INED, the School of Education of the Polytechnic Institute of Porto, aims to analyze the results of the contact between the child or young person in foster care and their family of origin. It also looks at causes of the absence or termination. In addition it aims to identify changes to be implemented in the contacts' structure and arrangement, in order to improve the management and monitoring of placements.

The survey was conducted using a large convenience sample of 141 foster families who are caring for 217 children and young people.

The results show that 59.9% of these children and young people have contact with their birth families and are, on average, the youngest and those who have spent less time in foster care.

The carers perceive the biological parents as being partly cooperative, citing the biological family interest as central in the contact maintenance. Regarding the existence of contact, 67.5% of children and young people manifest happiness, well-being or tranquility, 22.2% demonstrate indifference, apathy or disinterest, 10.3% feel sadness or distress and 6.8% experience revolt or fear.

It should be highlighted however, that despite the large majority of these placements in foster families being classified as successful, there is no evidence that contact with the biological family is a key factor in this success, furthering the consideration that other factors may be decisive.

Key words: Foster Care, Children and Young People, Contact
Foster care: different paths and their implications

Disinterest of child protection for kinship care in France

Speakers & Authors: Bernadette Tillard

In 2007, June Thoburn’s cross-national comparison of the main trends in child protection noted that in France there are less children who are fostered by family or friends than in most other countries. only 7% of children in care are in kinship care (Thoburn J., 2007, p. 30). In France, they are mostly living in their extended family. Sometimes the relatives close to the biological parents, are designated by the judge as “tiers digne de confiance” (reliable family).

The last counting available at the end of 2011 confirms this number: 7% of the children in out-of-home care are in kinship care in France (Seriestat 176, tab8.ase). In the two départements of our area Nord – Pas-de-Calais: among the 17,390 children in out-of-home care, 1116 children are in kinship care (6%) 818 in Nord and 298 in Pas-de-Calais.

This preliminary study tried to highlight different hypotheses to understand this difference between France and other countries, taking into account the features of French child protection policy.

Key words: family foster care, child protection
Health and wellbeing of children in care

Caring for who? The impact of burnout and stress among practitioners and vulnerable young people in Ireland

Speakers & Authors: Lavinia McLean, Emmett Tuite

The significance of stress and burnout as an issue in the caring professions is clearly established in relation to professionals (Dyer & Quine, 1998; Gray-Stanley, 2009). Although stress initially impacts directly on staff, there are significant ancillary impacts on service users, family members, other staff and management. It is imperative therefore that any moderating or contributing factors to stress are understood, with a view to identifying critical factors which may contribute to, or reduce the likelihood of stress impacting in the social care context. The present research is building on relevant research conducted across the caring professions. This two part study is designed to explore the possible relationship that exists between reported stress levels in staff, and in addition, explores the role and impact of stress and role of emotional literacy in the lives of young people in mainstream residential and high support services in Ireland.

The research is being conducted at present using a mixed methods approach, exploring stress and burnout in a sample of workers and stress and emotional literacy in young people in children's residential services in Ireland. This research is focused on profiling stress levels and understanding of stress across the two groups of participants and further exploration will highlight the contributing and moderating factors related to this. Direct reference will be made to the relevance of these findings in relation to potential impact for young people and for staff in the evolving social care environment. Conventional systems to support staff in addressing stress and burn-out are quite clearly established in relation to supervision, team-building and reflective practice. The research explores a possible gap in services that may be required to support the services users in their experience of stress and burn out which may occur as a direct result of extended experiences in social care settings. The current study may allow the development of a more tailored response to the needs of both service users and professionals as we identify key issues in relation to key factors with regard to stress. Identification of these key issues fundamentally allows us to improve practice and the quality of life of service users.
Child Welfare Services when clients do not speak the National Language: Voices from the Frontlines

Speakers & Authors: Sarah Maiter, Ramona Alaggia, Adrienne Chan

Aim and objectives:
This presentation reports on the study and findings from a Social Sciences and Humanities funded project in Canada that explored child protection services for families from diverse backgrounds where language was a barrier to communication with the families. The focus was primarily with parents and families for whom English and French were a barrier. The overall question for the study was: How can we improve upon child protection approaches to better meet the needs of linguistically diverse families?

Methods:
A mixed method exploratory approach utilizing qualitative (focus groups and interviews with child protection workers) and quantitative (file review of child protection agency files) measures was employed. Child protection workers at two relatively large immigrant receiving cities were asked to reflect on policy, practices, and issues regarding services for families.

Findings and Recommendations:
Workers identified that they provided services to clients from a large number of language groups. Even though French is a national language of Canada, workers speaking French were not always available. Language interpretation is frequently required for parents, rather than the children in the family. Children, extended family members, and neighbours were sometimes used as informal interpreters, while workers who spoke the language of the client were often called on ad-hoc for interpretation and translation, placing considerable burdens on them.

Workers also identified a number of challenges including: the lack of resources and supports for workers, assigning clients to workers who use the same language as the client, and lack of support services to refer linguistically diverse clients to. Furthermore, workers identified challenges in using formal interpreters including issues of access, cost, quality of interpretation, confusion regarding the role of the interpreter, boundary issues, confidentiality, greater time investment, and heavier work burden. Interpreters were considered beneficial in clarifying communication and culture and providing assistance with assessment and plans for care. In many cases, the quality standard of interpretation was quite variable.

Workers recommended that interpreters have some basic training and knowledge in child welfare matters and procedures. Workers also discussed the need for cultural training, and information on how to work with interpreters.
Evidence-based practice and implementation

Vicarious trauma for staff: Treatment for second order effects that improve outcomes for children and young people in care

Speakers & Authors: Romaine Moss, Michael Cashin, Stephen Mondy, Vanessa Smith

Vicarious trauma refers to the detrimental effects suffered by people who are exposed to traumatic information. Research suggests that it is often suffered by workers in helping professions where workers are required to take part in empathic interaction with trauma survivors (Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995). We report empirical evidence of a program directed at residential care staff in therapeutic residential care settings providing care for children and young people with high and complex needs and significant behavioural issues to reduce the effects of vicarious trauma sequelae in staff. 70 residential care workers were provided with the resources to access individualised “self-care” packages which included activities to increase physical activity (e.g., gym membership), reduce stress (e.g., yoga, mindfulness), creative activities, training in cognitive behavioural techniques to reduce cognitive distortions, and training in work/life balance techniques. Two validated psychological instruments, the Compassion Fatigue Self Test for Practitioners (Figley, 1995) and the Trauma and Belief Scale (Pearlman, 2003) were used to assess levels of vicarious trauma pre- and post-test. Results indicate positive outcomes for staff and commensurate outcomes for the agency in terms of staff retention, reduction in sick and stress leave, reduction in worker’s compensation claims and positive second order outcomes for children and young people in residential care placements. The issues associated with program introduction and staff acceptance and participation are discussed.

Keywords: vicarious trauma, staff trauma, outcomes for children
A new approach to postgraduate education in Australia: Improving skills, knowledge and role satisfaction in child and family welfare

Speakers & Authors: Patricia McNamara, Margarita Frederico, Maureen Long, Lynne McPherson, Nadine Cameron

Two innovative postgraduate educational courses in the child and family sector are now being delivered in Victoria, Australia. A Graduate Certificate in Child and Family Practice and Graduate Diploma in Child and Family Practice Leadership have been operational since 2009. The program is government funded and has been created and delivered by a consortium of child and family welfare and mental health organisations led by La Trobe University in Melbourne. It was envisaged that improving the skill and knowledge base of the sector would impact positively on recruitment and retention of staff, resulting in better outcomes for children and young people experiencing trauma and abuse. A creative approach to curriculum development and teaching aims to enhance students’ integration of theory and practice. The multi-faceted program design includes assessments targeting specific competencies which can potentially generalise to the workplace.

These postgraduate courses are currently in their sixth year of delivery. This presentation reports on selected findings from a major evaluation of the postgraduate program as delivered from 2009 till 2013. The evaluation had three aims. The first was to investigate the impact of course completion on practice, management and leadership; the second was to identify the impact of the courses on staff retention and document distinctive features of this academic-industry partnership; finally, the evaluation aimed to explore potential to further develop this model for improved graduate education. A process and impact evaluation using mixed methods has been conducted. Graduates completed a survey designed to elicit their estimations of the value of the course. Quantitative findings were analysed using SPSS21.0 and compared with qualitative data. Data from focus group and individual interviews with graduates, their managers and senior child and family service managers was thematically analysed using NVivo10.

The overall findings of this evaluation in terms of graduate competence and confidence, along with staff retention, are extremely positive; these have been reported elsewhere. This presentation will focus specifically on participant response to the style of pedagogy and the curriculum. Participant appraisal of course content, delivery approaches and assessment procedures is presented, including the response to Enquiry Based Learning (EBL).
Residential care and treatment interventions fault

Working with Young People in Secure Accommodation - From Chaos to Culture

Speakers & Authors: Jim Rose

Aims and hypothesis:
• In all types of residential care for young people, including secure accommodation, the social and emotional environment of the living units provides a crucial context for young people's well-being and for the delivery of successful treatment outcomes. This environment, although predicated on good quality residential accommodation and the availability of sufficient resources for programme delivery, requires the commitment of a well-trained staff team with an understanding of the importance of attachment and nurture who able to attend to the needs of the adolescent group within the framework of a structured and consistent daily routine.
• It is these daily routines, made up of the ordinary experiences of residential life, i.e. getting up in the morning, meal times, education and leisure activities, and bed-times that provide the context in which the adult staff team are able to establish relationships with the young people in the units. These relationships are the most powerful therapeutic tool available to the staff teams and are the basis upon which other, more structured, programme interventions achieve any success.

Methods:
• Analysis of all relevant reports and surveys (2000 – 2013) regarding youth justice services and secure accommodation
• Literature Review of residential work with delinquent and traumatised young people in custodial or other types of secure accommodation
• Interviews with: Prison Service Inspectors; Prison Governors; Managers of local authority secure children's homes; Directors of Secure Training Centres; Residential staff in all types of secure accommodation for young people

Key Findings:
• The absence of a coherent theoretical model for understanding the developmental needs of young people prevents staff from effectively engaging with the delinquent and traumatised population in secure accommodation
• The lack of formal training for residential staff across all types of secure accommodation for young people directly impacts on the effectiveness of treatment and educational programmes for young people
• The deficiencies identified previously seriously inhibit the development of regimes that satisfactorily promote the well-being, education and mental health of young people in secure accommodation.

Key Words: secure accommodation; attachment; relationships
Residential care and treatment interventions fault

Readiness for independent living among youth on the verge of leaving juvenile correctional facilities

Speakers & Authors: Eran Melkman, Tehila Refaeli, Rami Benbenishty

Juvenile correctional facilities (JCFs), a form of mandatory substitute care, cater for youth who alongside their criminal activity are often characterized by suicidal attempts, substance abuse, and a personal history of physical and sexual abuse, placing them at the far end of the care continuum. In the last decade, a growing body of literature has documented the dismal outcomes of these youth in education, employment and recidivism upon returning to the community. While leading to much empirical evaluation research on reentry programs following exit from care, very little is known as to how well equipped are the youth with the necessary skills for reintegration on the verge of leaving the facilities.

The purpose of this exploratory study is thus twofold. First, we examine self-reports of readiness for independent living among adolescents in correctional settings on the verge of leaving care. Second, we investigate the associations between readiness and individual, placement, and support characteristics.

The entire cohorts of Israeli adolescents, aged 16-18, placed in JCFs, 200 in total, were approached, of which, 116 were reached and participated in the study. The youth responded to self-report questionnaires administered at the settings by research staff. The instruments tapped youth's background characteristics, personal attributes (self-esteem and optimism), social support (family, peers, and staff), and readiness for independent living.

Most adolescents perceived their readiness to leave care as high in all domains assessed, with girls showing significantly lower levels of readiness compared to boys. Higher levels of self-esteem and optimism as well as support from peers and staff were related to better readiness. The findings suggest that girls constitute a vulnerable sub-group within the predominantly male juvenile justice system population prone to poor transition outcomes. In addition, the findings highlight the often overlooked importance of supportive relationships with peers and staff in juvenile correctional settings. Gender specific interventions addressing the unique needs of female offenders, careful planning and implementation of group interventions making proper use of pro-social peer effects within the institutions, and additional staff training and ongoing supervision are recommended.
Voices of children, youth and families

Stories of girls in secure unit care

Speakers & Authors: Maria Andersson Vogel

In Swedish youth care, secure units are the most intervening form of placement, primarily intended for severely antisocial and criminal youth. Since criminality is more common among boys than girls, the secure unit has a long history of above all controlling and handling boys and the institutions is edified by a masculine grammar. Nevertheless, approximately a third of the young people in secure unit care are girls. Their depiction of problems more often regards psychological and emotional issues and it may be questioned why some of them are placed in secure unit care and whether the institutions have means to help them. Studies show that secure unit staff considers the girls to be more difficult than the boys and at follow-up their psychological problems remains to a high extent. However, few studies have focused on the girls themselves. The aim of this presentation is to call attention to the girls' own stories. I have carried out qualitative interviews with ten girls placed in secure unit care. These interviews have been inspired by life stories-method and the girls have been called upon to tell their version of their story from the first contact with social services up to the present placement. Preliminary results show that the girls often seem to feel let down by society, especially the social services. Some of them have trouble understanding why they ended up in secure unit care while others have a more coherent understanding of their life story.

Keywords: life stories, secure unit care, girls
Pilot study: Evaluation of the Teaching Recovery Techniques Programme in Rossie Young People's Trust (Secure Care)

Speakers & Authors: Ian Barron, David Mitchell, William Yule

The current study brought a trauma-informed lens to secure care in Scotland by assessing the nature and extent of adolescent traumatization and through evaluating a trauma-specific intervention. Teaching Recovery Techniques (TRT), developed by the Children and War Foundation, teaches adolescents coping skills for symptoms of post-traumatic stress (PTSD). The study applied a developmental trauma framework to case file analysis. A structured trauma history interview assessed traumatic events and current levels of disturbance. A randomized control trial involved seventeen adolescents randomly allocated to intervention (n=10) and wait-list (n=7) conditions. TRT was delivered over three phases with groups of four, four and two with equivalent numbers in the wait-list. Pre and post-test subjective units of disturbance (SUDs) scores and a battery of standardized measures was used: Children's Revised Impact of Events Scale for PTSD; the Traumatic Grief Inventory for Children; the Moods and Feelings Questionnaire for depression; the Adolescent Dissociative Experiences Scale; and the Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire. Analysis involved MANOVA for between and within group differences. Behavioral tracking of daily observation sheets assessed changes in behavior before and after TRT. Interviews with adolescents (n=10) and a focus group with presenters (n=4) provided an assessment of subjective experience of program delivery. Program fidelity was assessed though video analysis of sessions and a cost-benefit analysis was conducted.

File analysis indicated an over-focus on behavioral difficulties with a lack of recognition of mental health needs. In contrast, adolescents reported experiencing a wide range of 'types' of traumatic events. SUDs scores and standardized measures indicated clinical levels of PTSD, traumatic grief, and depression. TRT achieved a large effect size for reducing internal disturbance and a small effect size for behavioral change. Program fidelity was high and financial post-placement gains were achieved. In conclusion, trauma symptoms are severe and pervasive in the secure care population. There is a need to address underlying trauma as part of reducing behavioral difficulties. Recommendations are provided for TRT delivery across the secure care and the utilization of robust trauma-specific measures to assess outcomes.
Anbragte børns skolegang og skolen som beskyttelsesfaktor

Lær for Livet - et landsdækkende lærringsprogram for anbragte børn

Speakers & Authors: Ila Westrup Stephensen

Lær for Livet er et innovativt og ambitiøst initiativ fra Egmont Fonden, som fra 2013 til 2019 gennem en helhedsorienteret indsats sammen med danske kommuner skal sikre omsorgsfuld læring til anbragte børn.

Temaet på EUSARF 2014-konferencen gør det oplagt at fortælle om programmet, den viden programmet hviler på samt ikke mindst de første resultater.

Lær for Livet er desuden et praktisk eksempel på en succesfuld velfærdsalliance i praksis, der hviler på et sikkert videngrundlag, hvor nye aktører samarbejder om væsentlige problemer.

Tilknyttede eksperter til Lær for Livet er bl.a. professor Bo Vinnerlung (Stockholm) og professor Inge Bryderup (Ålborg).

Lær for Livet bygger på tre indsatser:
2) Lær for Livet Mentor. Barnet tilknyttes en voksen med en videregående uddannelse, som skal hjælpe med lektier og andre skolerelaterede udfordringer. Barnet støttes af mentor gennem hele det seksårige forløb i Lær for Livet.
3) Lær for Livet Viden. Viden om anbragte børns læring og inklusion skal gøres tilgængelig for de mennesker, der arbejder med anbragte børn.


Campen er fulgt op af et årelangt sejt træk via Lær for Livets mentorordning. Hvert barn har en frivillig mentor, som et par timer om ugen hjælper og støtter barnet fagligt med lektier og andre faglige udfordringer.

Lær for Livet følger børnenes faglige udvikling i 6 år og har tilknyttet DPU som kvalitative følgeforskere.
Børns, unges og familiers stemmer

Barn og unges deltakelse i vanskelige beslutningssituasjoner

Speakers & Authors: Anne-Kari Johnsen, Astrid Strandbu

Familieråd er en beslutningsmodell som blir brukt av barnevernet i flere land. I Norge er familierådsmodellen et politisk satsingsområde. Ved bruk av familieråd blir ressurser i familiens eget nettverk mobilisert for å finne løsninger på ulike problemer eller utfordringer. Det er barnets situasjon som skal være i fokus.

Gjennom endringer i synet på barn, og barns lovfestede rettigheter, kommer det til uttrykk at barn skal gis anledning til å uttale seg og delta i beslutninger som omhandler dem. Det varierer imidlertid i hvilken grad barn gis anledning til å delta og på hvilke arenaer. Tradisjonelt har barn vært svært lite involvert når det tas beslutninger om hvor barnet skal bo i barnevernssaker. I mitt ph.d. prosjekt intervjuer jeg barn og unge som har vært med på familieråd i denne kategorien barnevernssaker.

For å kunne forbedre og legge til rette for deltakelse på måter som samtidig ivaretar barns behov og rett til beskyttelse, er det nødvendig med kunnskap om hvordan barn opplever og erfarer deltakelse.

Barn er viktige bidragsytere i forskning som omhandler deres liv og deres livsbetingelser. I dette paperet presenteres forskning om barn og unges erfaringer av å delta i vanskelige beslutningsprosesser. Kunnskapssoversikten vil være basert på systematiske søk i internasjonale databaser etter peer reviewed artikler/rapporter.

Under presentasjon vil følgende bli belyst:
Hva sier forskning om:
- Barns opplevelse ved deltakelse
- Barns grad av innflytelse
- Tilrettelegging for barns deltakelse
Socialt arbejde og velfærdspolitikker

Familieråd i et kulturelt perspektiv

Speakers & Authors: Reidunn Håøy Nygård, Merete Saus


I denne presentasjonen vil vi presentere funn fra en systematisk gjennomgang av forskningsartikler gjort på familieråd, og eventuelt andre nettverksbaserte metoder, i et kulturelt perspektiv. Vi stiller følgende spørsmål:

1. Hvilken kunnskap har vi om familieråd i en urfolkskontekst?
2. Hvilken kunnskap har vi om familieråd brukt i møte med minoriteter?
3. Hvilken konstruksjon av familieråd, sett i forhold til beslutningstaking, konfliktteori, lokalbaserte tiltak og andre nettverksbaserte modeller, blir presentert i forskingslitteraturen?
4. Fra hvilket perspektiv blir kunnskap om familieråd i en kulturell kontekst produsert?

Denne gjennomgangen er en del av et ph. d. prosjekt der målet er å se familieråd i en videre kontekst for å se hvilke ideer og erfaringer som ligger til grunn for implementering av familieråd i barne- og familievern. Oversiktsbildet over kunnskap på feltet vil være et forarbeid til videre studier av familieråd og andre nettverksbaserte metoder brukt i urfolkssamfunn i Norge og USA. Ved sammenlikning av beslutningstaking og konflikthåndtering, innenfor rammen av familienettverk og barnevern i ulike urfolkssamfunn, er målet å bringe frem kunnskap for videreutvikling av kulturelt egnet og etisk forsvarlige tjenester innenfor velferdsstaten. Vi vil i presentasjonen si noe om hvor dette prosjektet står i forhold til kunnskapsfronten slik den kommer til uttrykk i litteraturgjennomgangen.
Functional Family Therapy (FFT) & Scandinavia - a Match? / The State of implementation of FFT in Sweden, Norway & Denmark

Speakers & Authors: Dagfinn Mørkrid Thøgersen, Bianca Albers, Gunilla Anderson

Presentation:
Functional Family Therapy (FFT) is an evidence-based treatment model targeting families with youth aged 11-17 with behavioral problems. FFT is a short-term intervention lasting between 3 and 6 months and is provided to families in both clinic and home settings. As a strength-based model, FFT targets those risk and protective factors that impact the adolescent and his or her environment, with specific attention paid to both intra- and extra-familial factors. FFT also works intensely with establishing family motivation and matching interventions to family dynamics.

FFT was developed in the US, where it is widely used in several states. In Europe FFT is implemented in Belgium, the Netherlands, UK and the three Scandinavian countries Sweden, Norway and Denmark. With regard to FFT, Sweden is the most experienced country with implementation going back to 1992. Norway began its implementation in 2007, and Denmark followed in 2013. The countries thus are at different stages of their implementation process, and their experiences vary along with different policy contexts, aspects of welfare state systems and implementation traditions.

Each of the three panellists will present specific aspects of their implementation experience with FFT and - to the degree this is possible for each country - present data that reflect the implementability and effectiveness of FFT within a Scandinavian context.

Aim and objectives of the presentation are:
To highlight the impact of implementation on the quality and sustainability of evidence-based service delivery for end-users of services.

To thematically address the challenges and barriers to implementation when transporting and translating a US-based intervention to a Scandinavian setting.

To present different states of the Scandinavian FFT implementation and discuss ‘implementation’ as a general issue to take into accordance if programs are to contribute to a positive difference for vulnerable children and youth in need of support.

Presentation form:
The presentation will have the form of a panel with each presenter presenting on his / her country specific experience with implementing FFT and from there move forward to a discussion with the audience about questions that fall within the above mentioned aims and objectives.
Transitions out of care: challenges and opportunities

Higher education among care leavers

*Symposium Co-ordinator: Rami Benbenishty*

In recent years awareness has grown of the many challenges facing young people who are leaving care facilities. One of their most pressing disadvantages is their low educational attainments, which limit their ability to obtain higher education, an important asset in today's society. Policy makers, social agencies and scholars are increasingly aware of this problem and are developing ways of understanding the situation and changing policies and practices to address care leavers' educational gaps. The aim of this symposium is to present studies that examine education among care leavers from different countries using multiple perspectives and methodologies. Our aim is to bring together these perspectives so that the discussion can benefit from insights and ideas from many contexts.
Transitions out of care: challenges and opportunities

A peer research on leaving care: education and economical insertion

Speakers & Authors: Robin Pierrine

This communication is based on a qualitative peer research on leaving care. Since 2012 we worked in a team with four researchers and ten care leavers from 18 until 30 years old. With qualitative interviews of care leavers from 16 until 28 years old, we try to explore the pathway to adulthood. Our research point out that if school is seen by care leavers as a only space where they can explore a liberty of choice during the minority, most of them have to choose in the pathway to adulthood short studies to be quickly independent. In our communication we will try to explore how care leavers deal with this injunction of autonomy and professional insertion.

Key words: Education, Leaving care, Peer research

References:
Transitions out of care: challenges and opportunities

Alumni of educational residential setting: Factors related to their integration in higher education

Speakers & Authors: Yifat Mor-Salwo, Anat Zeira

Care leavers are one of the most vulnerable populations in society. Their participation rates in higher education are significantly lower than their peers in the general population. Despite the growing interest in their educational status, few studies have examined young people who successfully integrated in higher education. The aim of this study is to explore factors that promote and hinder such integration among alumni of educational residential settings in Israel.

The study utilizes a qualitative approach. Semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with 45 alumni of educational residential settings in Israel that successfully integrated in higher education institutions. The young people come from three different groups of cultural origin: Israel, former Soviet Union and Ethiopia to allow cross-cultural comparisons.

Initial findings suggest that most young people who integrate in higher education had two kinds of assets that contributed to their resilience: their identity capital and their social capital. The combination of their personal assets (e.g., assertiveness, persistence) and their environmental resources (e.g., support from a significant adult, contact with figures that had a positive attitude about education, and financial support) seems to be the key to successful integration.

The study uses a broad conceptual framework, which includes the resilience approach, the identity capital model and the social capital model to shed light on the phenomenon and to address the paucity of theory in this field. In addition, the findings may be an important step for policy makers and professionals in the field in their efforts to improve programs and services that are aimed at enabling care leavers to successfully improve their status in the civil society.

Keywords: care leavers, transition to higher education, Israel
Transitions out of care: challenges and opportunities

Longitudinal study among care leavers: predictors of self-efficacy regarding post-secondary education

Speakers & Authors: Tehila Refaeli, Rami Benbenishty, Anat Zeira

At the age of 18 in Israel, the country ceases its responsibility towards children who grew up in care facilities. From that stage on they are responsible for themselves in all life domains, e.g.: accommodation, work, etc. Therefore, acquiring higher or vocational education is seen as a difficult and sometimes impossible task for this population. Many studies focus on a better understanding of the resources that help care leavers acquire postsecondary education. The suggested presentation focuses on the predictors of self-efficacy among care leavers regarding integration in postsecondary education and regarding dealing with tasks related to integration in education.

The current research is part of a quantitative longitudinal research. In the first stage, 287 young people in their 12th school year, who live in care facilities, answered a questionnaire. In the second stage, 231 out of the participants were interviewed by phone a year after leaving the care facilities. In the third stage, 4 years after leaving care, 220 of the first cohort answered a questionnaire by phone. In the current presentation, we used a sample of 191 of participants who reported that they intend to continue their studies.

Main findings suggest that different layers in the life of care leavers predict their self-efficacy regarding education. Support from parents did not correlate with self-efficacy in all 3 stages. Support from peers had weak but significant correlation with self-efficacy in the 3 stages. The regression equation reveals that personal resources and current functioning are the main predictors of self-efficacy. Within personal resources, the appreciation of readiness to leave care reported in the first stage had the greatest contribution in predicting self-efficacy. Of the variables reflecting current functioning, economic difficulties mainly predict the low self-efficacy regarding education. The implication for practice suggest the importance of programs preparing youth for leaving care, in order to enhance their sense of readiness when the time arrives. Moreover, after leaving care economic support is necessary to help the youth consider other options beyond basic daily survival, such as acquiring education.

Key words: Care leavers, self-efficacy, postsecondary education
How well can we predict young people's educational success during transition from their earlier in-care risk and protective factors?

*Speakers & Authors: Nicholas Tessier, Robert Flynn*

In recent cross-sectional and longitudinal studies, we demonstrated that a small number of risk and protective factors can predict educational and employment outcomes of youths who are in supported transitional living. Expanding upon these results, a longitudinal sample of 512 young people (54% female, 46% male) was selected from the Ontario Looking After Children (OnLAC) project. Selected risk and protective factors from the period when these youth were in out-of-home care (aged 15-17; time 1) were used to predict the youths' educational attainment, educational aspirations, and NEET Status (NEET = Not in education, employment, or training) after they had made the transition out-of-care and into supported transitional living (aged 18-21+; time 2). The predictive factors included gender, age, self-care skills, developmental assets, behavioural difficulties, cognitive difficulties, and soft-drug use.

This presentation will discuss the predictive power of these risk and protective factors when separated from outcomes by larger or smaller gaps in time (years) between the in-care (aged 15-17; time 1) and in-transition (aged 18-21+; time 2) assessments. In one analysis, the length of time between assessments (the "gap length") was maximized (median gap length = 2.06 years; range = 0.62-5.09 years), whereas the gap length was minimized in the second analysis (median gap length = 1.09 years; range = 0.28-3.81 years).

In addition, data on changes in hard drug use, overall mental health, and suicidality (suicidal ideation, self-harm behaviour, and suicide attempts) will be presented. Lastly, the measurement and programmatic implications of the findings for predicting and improving young people's preparedness for transition from care will be discussed. This longitudinal study will be one of three from Nicholas Tessier's doctoral thesis, carried out under the supervision of Professor Robert Flynn. The paper will build on the authors' prior research in the same domain.

**Key words:** supported transitional living, protective and risk factors, longitudinal analysis
Voices of children, youth and families

Project Iris - Caring for a sexually abused foster child

*Speakers & Authors: Dorijn Wubs, Hans Grietens, Laura Batstra*

The traumatizing effects of child sexual abuse are generally acknowledged. Successfully fostering a child with a history of sexual abuse requires specific skills and knowledge. What expertise do foster families caring for these vulnerable children have? What do they need to succeed? What do foster children themselves have to say concerning their upbringing? In project Iris we try to answer these questions. Project Iris is a qualitative study in which stories are collected on the expertise, needs and experiences of family members in foster families concerning the care for a child with a history of sexual abuse previous to placement in the foster family. This study includes the voices of foster parents, biological children of foster parents (9 to 17 years old and 18 to 25 years old) and foster children (9 to 17 years old). The aim of the presentation is to present a case study and reflect on the process of conducting research on this sensitive topic. Preliminary results from the analysis of narrative interviews will be presented. These interviews followed an episodic structure and took place during a six month time span. During this time span several methodological and ethical dilemmas were faced. From the personal stories of the respondents important themes emerged such as bonding with a foster child, family coping strategies and "seeing" more than a traumatized child. The key findings of project Iris will contribute to the development of an e-toolkit for foster families and their network.
Positive development after a rough start

Speakers & Authors: Daniela Reimer

The aim of the presentation is to consider the phenomenon of a positive development after a rough start with qualitative research methods. Resilience research regarding foster children usually works quantitatively. This leads to a systematic neglect of the subjective interpretations and the agency of the affected actors. The studies to which the presentation refers aim to close that gap.

The presentation refers to two studies based on qualitative research, precisely biographical interviews (first study) and narrative follow up interviews (second study). For both studies 100 biographical interviews surveyed in previous studies were available. Out of this sample those which feature a positive development after a rough start have been chosen according to the theoretical sample and analyzed. A rough start means that there has been domestic violence, neglect, abuse, massive discontinuity during the first three years of life. The positive development includes that there is a high level of objective measurable social integration at the point of time the interview took place and at the same time a high level of personal satisfaction in life. In 18 of these cases four to eight years after the initial biographical interview a follow up has been done (second study). In narrative interviews the young adults have told the researcher what has happened since the last interview.

Key findings touch:
- the meaning of continuity for foster children and the importance of helpful adult – child relationships, even beyond the official end of foster care
- Gender specific issues: young males give a much higher importance to a successful job integration including a good enough salary and base their satisfaction in adult life on this criteria whereas the female interviewees are more open to alternative lifestyles
- Developing a realistic picture of the foster family, allowing ambivalences
- Reconciliation and acceptance of the own biography
- Importance to deal with the birth family, developing a realistic picture of the family and finding ways for a mature relationship, balancing proximity and distance

The results give hints for professionals. At the same time they raise further research questions, especially the need of a qualitative resilience research.

Keywords: Foster care, biographies, resilience
Voices of children, youth and families

„In and out of foster care“- Perspective of children placed in children’s home following inadequate foster care

Speakers & Authors: Ivana Jedud Boric, Antonija Zizak, Ivana Maurovic

Majority of data concerning foster care system in Croatia is generated by the professionals and adults. There is lack of information on how children feel about foster care and other forms of public child care, as well as how they experience foster care and what they take away from it. Respecting the fact that children’s perspective is imperative in all matters concerning the child, research study was developed in order to enable “voices of children” in foster care to be heard. The purpose of this research is directly related to developing new knowledge needed to improve the quality of foster care.

General research objective was to examine and understand foster care from the perspective of foster children and biological children of foster parents, as well as adults with experience of living in foster care as children, i.e. exploring and understanding the user perspective.

The research was based on direct data collection from research participant through semi-structure interviews. Interview transcripts, read and approved by research participants, represent data processed according to thematic analysis method.

This paper will focus specifically on the perspective of children who experienced inadequate or unsuccessful foster care placement. This subsample consists of 10 children, seven males and three females, who have been placed in children’s home following inadequate foster care. Their age ranges from 10 to 17 years.

The main finding is that this group of children has few uniform perspectives on the foster care system. Results implicate that biological and foster families share some negative characteristics (bad relationships, violence, abuse), but also that the foster family has a significant positive meaning for some of the children. The experiences of children with multiple removals and transfers from a familiar environment confirmed that every removal of the child from the familiar environment is difficult to accept and/or traumatic for the child. The only exception to this rule in the children’s experiences is removal from the foster family for the reason of meeting new needs and achieving a new quality of life.

Key words: children’s perspective, foster care, inadequate placement
Voices of children, youth and families

Growing up in foster care: the point of view of children

Speakers & Authors: Anne-Marie Doucet Dahlgren, Chiara Sità, Sellenet Catherine

The paper focuses on a part of the data collected within a research involving teams in France (Nantes, Paris Ouest Nanterre La Défense), Italy (Verona) and Romania (Iasi). The research aims to explore the representation of family and family ties in children living in foster care. The presentation takes into account the French and Italian samples. Growing up in foster care is a dual situation. Children maintain relationships with their own parents while living in a family that is not theirs. Children navigate from one sphere to another, which involves questioning the representations they have of both family configurations and their own positioning within their networks.

The research employs a qualitative approach, with the exploratory aim to collect the children's voices about living in multiple family bonds. We collected data through semi-structured interview, referring to a methodology adapted to children (Christensen & James, 2000). The texts were analysed through an open coding and a progressive conceptualization of the core themes qualifying the children's experience.

We interviewed 53 children in foster care, aged from 6 to 18 years, in Italy (in family foster care) and France (in Children Villages). All the children have experienced this kind of care for more than three years.

The analysis of interviews conducted in France and Italy specifies how a sense of belonging to a family is built and defined by children themselves (Höjer, 2007). It seems that the family image they forge fluctuates according to several variables (age at arrival and duration of placement, quality links between host family and natural family, between siblings, relationships with peers and welcoming children). The data also show how the children are engaged in a process where they try to define new family boundaries and to find their own place within them through everyday strategies, such as naming the new family ties, building multiple forms of affiliation, reconstructing their physical space within the house, finding the ways to tell about their situation to peers, teachers, professionals.

The research shows how the point of view of the child is crucial for building adequate forms of support.
Voices of children, youth and families

The voices of children in residential care in Portugal: Preliminary results from a comprehensive quality assessment of the Portuguese residential care system

Speakers & Authors: Rodrigues Sónia, Jorge F. Del Valle, Barbosa-Ducharne Maria Adelina

Approximately 8000 Portuguese children are currently in residential care (RC), representing more than 90% of all the children in care.

RC for children and young people in Portugal developed and has changed, until now, without a service quality evaluation.

The ARQUA-P comprehensive evaluation system for residential care is an ecological model based on an adaptation of Del Valle Arqua System. Using mixed methods and multiple sources of information, it aims to assess the needs and psychological adjustment of institutionalized children, the services’ quality provided by institutions and understand the relation of these variables.

A team of at least 4 researchers visited the institutions and interviewed children and young people, caregivers, directors, teachers and liaison technicians within the entity that coordinates and oversees this institutions (welfare services). To assess psychological adjustment and the needs of children and young people in RC we used the Portuguese versions of ASEBA: Achenbach's System of Empirically Based Assessment; RSES: Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale; SWLS: The Satisfaction with Life Scale; PWB: Personal Wellbeing Index; SDQ: Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire and SHS: Subjective Happiness Scale.

In the pilot study we visited 6 institutions. The total number of children/young people living there was 114, aged between 2 months and 20 years old.

In spite all data collected from multiple sources, this research aims to give active voice to the children an young people in care and compare there point of view with the perspectives of other agents in context.

We will present a descriptive analysis of the Portuguese RC system according to factors and standards internationally referenced to have influence in the quality of RC, the results of the pilot study with special regards in those that translate the opinions of children and young people in care and we´ll compare the data with universal criteria.

We hope that by hearing the words, screams and laughs of children we can understand their needs and give voice to quality of RC in Portugal.

Keywords: Voices of children in RC, Residential care of children, institutional care, residential care system in Portugal
Decision-making regarding refugee and migrant children: is the best interest of the child taken into account?

Symposium Co-ordinator: Daan Beltman

Key words:
Decision-making, Best-interest-of-the-child, Asylum and immigration, Participation, Monitoring

Aim and objectives:
Children are a vulnerable group of people but children in migration are even more vulnerable. When they enter a host country with their parents, with one of the parents, with a guardian or by themselves (as an unaccompanied minor) in search of protection and foremost a better life, they may have suffered persecution, starvation, (sexual) violence, war etc. in their country of origin, in the country they came from and/or on their flight to Europe. Many of the them cope with post traumatic stress, anxiety, fear and/or depressions (Henley & Robinson 2011; Montgomery 2011; Heptinstall & Sethna 2004). The rights of these children are protected by the United Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), in particular by the right to non-discrimination (Article 2 UNCRC), the right to participation (Article 12 UNCRC), the right to development (Article 6 UNCRC) and the right that their interests are taken into account in any measure/decision that regards them (Article 3 UNCRC). These provisions are the core principles of the UNCRC which should be guaranteed by any member state that ratified the UNCRC, which are all countries in the world except for Somalia, South-Sudan and the United States of America. In our past research (Zijlstra 2012; Kalverboer et al. 2011; Kalverboer, Zijlstra & Knorth 2009) we showed that in the Netherlands these rights are not well incorporated in administrative practice regarding asylum and immigration affairs.

Methods and research design:
Since 2006, the Study Centre for Children, Migration and Law of the University of Groningen (Study Centre) carries out pedagogic diagnostic assessments on the best interest of the child in individual asylum or immigration cases which are registered at the Study Centre by lawyer representatives. On the basis of our developed Best Interest of the Child (BIC)-model (the resulting BIC-method) (Zijlstra 2012; Kalverboer, Zijlstra & Knorth 2009) and in accordance with the in 2013 published General Comment no. 14 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on Article 3 UNCRC, a pedagogic pro justitia research report is drawn which is submitted in the asylum or immigration procedures or judicial proceedings by the concerned lawyer representative. By these means, the best interest of the child, is entered into evidence. However, it is still the question, whether the best interest of the child is meticulously weighed by the administrative authorities that are responsible for taking decisions which involve vulnerable asylum and migrant children.

The Study Centre collects data by way of the Best Interest of the Child Questionnaire (BIC-Q) and the Best Interest of the Child Self-Report (BIC-S) on the child-rearing environment and other questionnaires on the social emotional development of the child (BIC-method). On the basis of the data collection the Study Centre publishes qualitative as well as quantitative studies on the best interest of asylum and migrant children.

In the proposed symposium for the EUSARF conference, we discuss four themes in which we lead you by the hand through the field of work of our multidisciplinary Study Centre. The next themes pass in review:
1. The vulnerability of refugee and migrant children in relation to the child’s best interests (Article 3 UNCRC), his right on life and development (Article 6 UNCRC) and the quality of child rearing, including our developed BIC-model. Decision-making in conformity with the UNCRC: General Comment No. 14 is unfolded and the way Article 3 UNCRC has to be implemented in administrative practice from a multidisciplinary perspective.

2. Participation of children in decision-making procedures, the importance to hear the voice of children in any procedure that involves them in line with Article 12 UNCRC and the way it should be done.

3. The BIC-method as a monitoring tool on the best interest of the child regarding unaccompanied asylum seeking minors living in the host country.

4. The BIC-method as a monitoring tool on the best interest of the child regarding children that had to return to their country of origin, in this respect Kosovo.

Bibliography:


Decision-making concerning asylum and migrant children from a multidisciplinary perspective

Speakers & Authors: Daan Beltman, Elianne Zijlstra, Margrite Kalverboer, Mijntje Ten Brummelaar, Danielle Zevulun, Carla van Os

Key words: Decision-making, Asylum and immigration, Multidisciplinary approach

Aim and objectives:
Children in migration are an extreme vulnerable group of people. These children end up in mainly legally imbued procedures and judicial proceedings after a request for protection at the host country's authorities. In these procedures there is not much attention for the child's best interests (Zijlstra 2012; Kalverboer et al. 2011; Kalverboer, Zijlstra & Knorth 2009). The rights of these children are however protected by the United Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), in particular by Article 2, 3, 6 and 12 UNCRC. Moreover the Committee on the Rights of the Child drew up several General Comments of which no. 14, regarding Article 3 UNCRC, is the most principal, in which is explained how member states should assess and apply the best-interest-of-the-child (BIC) concept. According to this General Comment, this assessment does not merely apply to lawyers but should be rather implemented by a multidisciplinary team. The BIC is a multidisciplinary concept which should be accordingly applied in administrative practice among others by taking into account the current and future child-rearing environment and the social emotional development of the child. The BIC-model, which has been developed by Kalverboer and Zijlstra in 2006 (2012), may be used as a tool to identify the best interests in an individual case. In this presentation also the results of a study on the impact of submitting BIC-reports in judicial proceedings is dealt with.

Methods, research design and data:
Mixed methods:
- Ocular scanning and (legal and social behavioural) text/literature analysis;
- Qualitative and quantitative research regarding 50 court cases (judgments and grounds of appeal).

Key findings:
- A multidisciplinary approach of a procedural as well as a substantive assessment of the BIC is needed in order to fully comply with the UNCRC requirements.
- Submitting BIC-reports in judicial proceedings lead to a better imbedding of the BIC and the rights of the child in asylum and immigration procedures.

Bibliography:
See symposium abstract
(Non-)Participation of asylum seeking children in decision-making procedures

Speakers & Authors: Mijntje Ten Brummelaar, Carla van Os, Elianne Zijlstra, Margrite Kalverboer, Danielle Zevulun, Daan Beltman

Key words: - Participation - Asylum seeking children - Decision-making

Aim and objectives:
Article 12 UNCRC stipulates that every child has the right to be heard. This right to be heard concerns both legal and administrative procedures. General Comment no. 14 (see symposium abstract) further elaborating on Article 3 UNCRC, pays special attention to the 'inextricable link' between the best interest of the child and the right to be heard (p. 11). The concept of participation is often related to article 12 UNCRC, although the term participation itself is not mentioned in this provision. The right to be heard is applicable to every child staying in a country that ratified the UNCRC, therefore it also applies to children from families who seek asylum in one of these countries. The Study Centre for Children, Migration and Law (Study Centre) is working through its research to actively incorporate the best interest of the child principle into the Dutch asylum and immigration procedures, including the right to participation.

Methods, research design and data:
The Study Centre generates behavioral scientific reports and does (evaluation) research using mixed methods. Since 2004, over 200 families and their children from different countries have participated. Children's voices are heard for our assessment purposes by making use of the BiC-self report and the Youth Self-Report.

Key findings:
There are several limiting factors that stand in the way of children's participation. These limitations are that children in asylum seeking procedures do not apply for asylum themselves, but their parents do. This complicates the child's right to be heard in procedures. Besides, asylum procedures primarily focus on objective truth finding, which may distract from hearing the child's subjective wishes and feelings. Furthermore, there are different interests that come to play in asylum seeking procedures, e.g. interest of parents, that might be different from the child interests, or conflict with the interests of the State.

When children are heard in asylum procedures it is important to take factors into account such as traumatization and children's ability to express themselves.
Transitions out of care: challenges and opportunities

Home sweet Home? - Professional’s understanding of ‘home’ within residential care for unaccompanied youths in Sweden

Speakers & Authors: Åsa Söderqvist

The number of unaccompanied minors arriving to Sweden continues to rise remarkably, almost 80% remains to stay in the country. The majority of the children are placed in residential care, and only some in foster care. Unaccompanied minors are defined as a vulnerable group (UNCHR). One of the greatest challenges for the professionals at the residential care in Sweden is to find suitable ways of meeting the needs for this relatively new group within the system of out-of-home care. Basically meaning to strive for promoting positive outcomes making it possible for this children to get a smoother transition into adulthood. This a qualitative study aiming to deepen the understanding given by the professionals to the concept of home within the frames of residential care for unaccompanied children. Data is based on participatory observations at two residential care units followed up by individual-, and focus-groups interviews with staff. What is being defined as important while the children are placed in care is closely linked to how the professionals picture a successful transition out of care; making sense of the concept of home was one such thing. A concept which however was used as both self-explaining and therefore many times taken for granted, but research have shown that there are a much more complex meaning related to the issue of home. The findings in our study confirms the ambiguity of the concept, involving both hands-on factors such as a physical building, but also other components rather being related to a state of mind. Earlier research have further shown that it’s not possible to go beyond secondary care within this type of settings as such relations never can be exclusive. Also in our study it seems difficult to attain the close parenting-like relations with the children as the respondents claimed to have. Thus; the staff member’s attention to offer an ‘ordinary home’ fails also because of the executing of surveillance, the staffs apparent upper-hand, but not least due to the legal restrictions guiding a practices which not initially was meant for this specific group.
Monitoring the living situation and well-being of the child after return to the country of origin through the BIC-Method

Speakers & Authors: Danielle Zevulun, Margrite Kalverboer, Elianne Zijlstra, Mijntje Ten Brummelaar, Daan Beltman, Carla van Os

Key words: unaccompanied asylum seeking children, best interest of the child, participation, return migration

Aim and objectives:
In this presentation a study is presented in which the Best Interest of the Child (BIC)-Method is used as a monitoring tool to study the living situation and well-being of children after return to the country of origin, in this respect Kosovo. Return of migrants has become a more important issue within migration policies. In which situation asylum seeking children end up after return to their (parents’) country of origin and how they are doing after a stay in high-income host countries, is a question yet unexplored. The outcomes of studies conducted up to now show that many children cope with emotional distress after return (Kraus, 2012; Gladwell & Elwyn, 2012).

Methodology, research design and data:
Mixed methods research, 120 returned children and parents in Kosovo and 30 returned children and parents in Albania have been interviewed. For every child a BIC-Questionnaire, BIC-Selfreport and SDQ was completed. Through analyzing this data, we wish to determine which child-specific and socio-cultural factors contribute to a healthy development of the child after return.

Key findings:
A monitor on the situation and well-being of returned children provides knowledge on the specific factors that may contribute to healthy development of the child after return to the country of origin. Furthermore, it gives us insight in the best interest of the child determination in return decisions of EU host countries and which aspects should gain more importance.
Monitoring the living situation and well-being of the unaccompanied asylum seeking child in the host country through the use of the BIC-Method

Speakers & Authors: Margrite Kalverboer, Elianne Zijlstra, Mijntje Ten Brummelaar, Danielle Zevulun, Daan Beltman, Carla van Os

Key words: unaccompanied asylum seeking children, best interest of the child, participation, return migration

Aim and objectives:
In this presentation a study is presented in which the Best Interest of the Child (BIC)-Method is used as a monitoring tool to study the living situation and well-being of (unaccompanied) asylum seeking children, during their stay in the host country. After arriving in the Netherlands, unaccompanied asylum seeking young people are housed in different types of accommodation. The aim of this study was to gain insight in the development of separated asylum seeking youngsters in the Netherlands and their views about the quality of their lives in relation to the accommodation they are housed. According to article 12 CRC, children have the right to be heard about decisions concerning their interests.

Methodology, research design and data:
In-depth child friendly interviews were held with 70 unaccompanied asylum seeking youngsters living in foster care, children's home groups, small living units and asylum seeking centers. For every youngster the Best Interest of the Child-Questionnaire (BIC-Q) and YSR was completed.

Key findings:
Youngsters living in foster care or Small Living Units are the most satisfied about their lives. Youngsters living in asylum seeking centers turn out to be the least satisfied. Only 33 of the 70 youngsters completed the YSR. Analyses indicate that the youngsters living in asylum seeking centers report more problems in the clinical ranges than children growing up in other types of accommodation.

Bibliography:
See symposium abstract
Evidence-based practice and implementation

Effective bonding? The ‘Stronger Together’ research program on working alliances and youth care outcome

Symposium Co-ordinator: Hubert M Pijnenburg

Inspired by the Key Factors in Youth Care model (Pijnenburg, 2010) featured at EUSARF 2012, six Dutch youth care organisations and researchers from three universities have joined forces in a long term research and exchange program. Deviating from common practice, the program’s theme and objectives were developed in close collaboration between professionals/care provision organisations, policy makers and researchers, resulting in an active community of learning. In the resulting ‘Stronger Together’ program a key factor from the KFYC model takes centre stage: working alliance (e.g. Duncan, Miller, Wampold & Hubble, 2010). This concept is operationalised in three ways: in the ‘classical’ terms of the working relationship between professionals and clients (type 1); in terms of professional-client alliance with respect to social network approach (type 2), and in terms of professional-manager alliance (type 3). Six inter-agency projects are now in their concluding stages. They aim to assess and foster one of the aforementioned forms of alliance, and their impact on care outcome. The symposium highlights findings from four ongoing projects, preceded by a brief introductory overview of the program and the threefold notion of alliance underlying it. Three papers feature findings on alliance type 1, 1 and 3 respectively. The concluding paper presents preliminary findings on the interrelations between said three forms of alliance, and their impact on care outcome. In the concluding discussion the implications of these findings are discussed, as well as ways to foster alliance, and the challenges this presents to professionals and care provision centres alike. Key words: Working alliance, care outcome, professionalisation.
Evidence-based practice and implementation

Children in residential care: how to improve working alliances?

Speakers & Authors: Eefje Strijbosch, Mariette van Brandenburg, Linda Heutink, Peer van Der Helm, Marieke de Greef, Hubert M Pijnenburg, Inge Wissink

This paper - the first of four in this symposium - is based on one of the studies comprising the Stronger Together program, whose central theme is alliance and outcome in youth care.

Recent research has shown that treatment outcomes in residential youth care not only depend on the effects of evidence based interventions, but also on common (i.e. intervention non-specific) factors such as group atmosphere, support and growth, as experienced through daily interactions with group workers (e.g. Schubert et al., 2012; Van der Helm et al., 2012). Also, in several related care sectors, such as psychiatric care, there is evidence that a positive working alliance is an important factor influencing treatment outcomes. In this project - focusing on residential care for children and youth aged 4 to 14 - we hypothesize that an open living group climate and a positive working alliance between children and their group workers are necessary ingredients for positive outcomes of the offered care. Furthermore, we hypothesize that group climate is a mediating factor between working alliance and treatment outcomes. The past two and a half years, fifteen teams of two Dutch youth care organisations (Juzt and Stichting Maashorst) systematically worked on improving working alliances between children and group workers through intervening in the living group climate. Every six months, children filled in questionnaires (268 cases thus far). Preliminary findings of this longitudinal study suggest that alliance scores can be improved, and correlate with living group climate. In this presentation, we will first introduce the study design and team interventions, followed by the latest findings from this project. In conclusion, we offer and discuss recommendations for professionals, organisations, researchers, educators and policy makers in the field of youth care, on how to improve working alliances in residential child care.

Key words:
Working alliance, group climate, residential care
Feedback on parent-worker alliance: an effective tool for optimizing care efficacy and professionalization?

Speakers & Authors: Linda Heutink, Dagmar Kallen, Mariette van Brandenburg, Marieke de Greef, Marion van Hattum

This paper - the second of four in this symposium - is based on one of the studies comprising the Stronger Together program.

Studies in related care sectors such as adult mental health, have shown that feedback is an important tool in optimizing the quality of working alliances and care outcome. However, it is not self-evident that feedback regarding alliance and parent functioning is part of the collaboration between clients and professionals. This is why two Dutch youth care organisations (Stichting Maashorst, Juzt) set out to test the hypothesis that - also in youth care - feedback is a key factor in establishing positive working alliances and outcomes. To this end, the two centres started a collaborative research project (2012-2014). In this study, at the start and conclusion of individual care trajectories, parents and workers fill in questionnaires focusing on working alliance and parental well-being. Furthermore, workers continuously ask parents for information about their own and their children's functioning, and the parent-worker alliance. When soliciting feedback, workers use brief questionnaires, based on Duncan and Miller's Outcome and Session Rating Scales. Apart from providing data, workers also participate in 'communities of learning', in order to exchange experiences in working with feedback and their efforts to establish and maintain positive working alliances with clients.

Preliminary findings suggest that feedback proves indeed useful in realizing positive working relationships and achieving favourable care outcomes. Furthermore, youth care workers appear to differ in their ability to form working alliances, and workers and parents differ in their alliance assessments. In this presentation, we will first present the study design, followed by an overview of the latest results from this project. In addition, we will share our experiences in employing feedback questionnaires as a tool for monitoring the suitability of the parent-worker match. Finally, we will discuss recommendations for youth care professionals and organisations on how to foster alliance in home-based care, and what can be the role of feedback in the search for professional excellence.

Key words:
Working alliance, home-based care, feedback.
Evidence-based practice and implementation

Alliance between youth care professionals and their managers: associations with manager competencies and youth care worker functioning

Speakers & Authors: Judith van Vugt, Marieke de Greef, Thomas Ruitenbeek, Marion van Hattum

This paper - the third of four in this symposium - is based on one of the studies comprising the Stronger Together program.

Although most youth care professionals work together with managers, there is limited attention - both in research and practice - for their type of working alliance. Hypothesizing that a positive alliance between youth care workers and managers contributes (in)directly to successful youth care outcome, our research project and presentation aim to shed light on the link between this type of alliance and youth care workers' functioning/performance. Furthermore, we explore manager competencies that contribute to a positive alliance with workers.

In order to answer these questions, three Dutch youth care organisations (Combinatie Jeugdzorg, BJ Brabant, Stichting Maashorst) collaborate in a research project (2012-2014) that focuses on these topics. Within this study, both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to collect and analyse data: systematic literature review, interviews and focus groups with youth care workers and managers, and questionnaires filled in by youth care workers (n=118) and their managers (n=27).

Findings from this study suggest that alliance is positively related to youth care workers' functioning, indicating that better alliances were related to higher levels of worker motivation and satisfaction. Furthermore, manager competencies were positively associated with the quality of the alliance between workers and managers.

Given the importance of positive alliances between youth care workers and their managers, we developed tools for managers intended to optimize alliance with professionals they collaborate with.

In this presentation, we will present the study design and the results. Furthermore, we will introduce the alliance optimization tools for managers and discuss managers' experiences in using these tools. Finally, we will discuss recommendations for youth care professionals, managers and youth care organisations on how to foster professional-manager alliance.

Key words:
Working alliance, care management, (professional) performance.
Three forms of alliance in youth care: interdependence and association with care outcome

*Speakers & Authors: Marieke de Greef, Ellen Marres, Marion van Hattum, Hubert M Pijnenburg*

This paper - the last of four in this symposium - is based on one of the studies comprising the Stronger Together program. In this paper, we focus on three types of alliance that may play a key role in the field of youth care, and on their interdependence: the working relationship between 1) care workers and their clients, 2) care workers and clients with respect to the involvement of clients' social network, and 3) workers and their managers. The six Dutch youth care organisations participating in this study (BJ Brabant, Combinatie Jeugdzorg, Juzt, Kompaan en De Bocht, Stichting Maashorst, Stichting Oosterpoort) hypothesize that these three types of alliance are interrelated and associated with the outcome of care provided to families. To the best of our knowledge, to date no empirical underpinning of either hypothesis has been published (see also Barnhoorn et al., 2013).

In order to assess the validity of our assumptions, we are currently (2013-2014) carrying out a research project monitoring these three abovementioned types of alliance and youth care outcome. A specific focus is on home-based care, offered to families by specialized professionals. At the start and conclusion of individual care trajectories, we collect questionnaire data (on some 100 cases by September 2014) from multiple informants: youth/parents, youth care workers and their managers. Preliminary findings are promising, suggesting that the three types of alliance are indeed interdependent, and that better alliance between clients and professionals is indeed a key prerequisite for achieving favourable care outcome.

In this presentation, we will first introduce the study design, followed by an exploration of the cumulative results from this project. In conclusion, we invite symposium participants to reflect on recommendations for professionals, organisations, researchers, educators and policy makers in the field of youth care, with regards to strategies and tools for fostering working alliances and care efficacy in youth care.

**Key words:**
Working alliance, home-based care, outcome.
Students with in-care experiences: identity issues and support

Speakers & Authors: Branka Sladovic Franz, Vanja Branica, Kristina Urbanc

Students with care-experiences have overcome the risks and used their strengths to get to higher education. They have the greatest possibility to avoid social exclusion. Although they receive some practical support if they study regularly, most of them are facing many financial and accommodation difficulties; additional jobs, often studying harder to overcome previous educational shortcomings and have common adult life-starting challenges. Previous Croatian research (Sladovic Franz & Branica, 2013.) showed that some of those students found to be quite lonely, many hide their in-care experiences, their social support is significantly lowering as getting older and that they are relying basically on themselves. All can diminish their chances to complete degree and receive help and support when needed. Therefore qualitative explanatory research have been undertaken aimed to find out students understanding of relations between a) their care and student identity and b) need for prolonged help and support respecting their strong sense of self-esteem and independence. Five focus discussion groups took place with 23 students with different family and care-experiences, age, studying programs and current life circumstances around four thematic issues: everyday life, identity, social network and help and support services. Framework analyses have been used for data analyses. Results are showing that: a) student self-reliance and faith in their own strengths is their main force and/or obstacle in asking for help b) studying is the way to enhance future possibilities and mean to prove their worth to themselves as well as to others - parents, caretakers or those who have stigmatized them previously; c) sense of difference from peers and stigmatization issues are still strong, d) ending “care-career” for some is not possible but for others will come with time or with some life changes. The results will be discussed with regard to resilience and self-determination theory in order to explore the relevance of transition out of in-care identity and possible specific support models.

kw: student in-care identity, support
The education of children in residential, kinship and family foster care

Speakers & Authors: Carme Montserrat, Ferran Casas

Our aim is to present the educational situation of 11 to 16 year-old adolescents in different types of care in Catalonia (Spain): residential, kinship and family foster care.

The research design consists of a population study and the administering of a structured data collection protocol to all schoolteachers with students in care over five consecutive school years, maintaining the same cohorts. In the first two years, data were collected for students who turned 16 that school year, and for the last three years collection was extended to those aged between 11 and 16 in order to establish a baseline that reflects trends in the studied variables with regard to their schooling. We explored three variables: class attendance, behaviour and academic performance.

The protocol included closed questions and one open question. Quantitative data were analysed using the SPSS and qualitative data were encoded and categorized, with a content analysis.

Data collection took place annually from 2008 to 2013. The samples from the first two years (only 16 year-olds) were N=118 and N=305, and the other three (11 to 16 year-olds) N= 1664, N=2140, and N= 1993, respectively. Schools’ questionnaire return rate fluctuated between 60% and 70% over the 5 years.

The results highlight the difficulties faced by students in care with regard to attendance, but especially with regard to behaviour and academic results, with only around 30% of students in care found to be in the year that corresponds to their age at 16, a figure that varies greatly from that of the general population (70%). Moreover, differences between types of care are found to be very significant, with those in residential care showing the worst academic results.

These findings have many implications from which we can derive recommendations for inclusion on the political agenda, such as the need for greater interdepartmental cooperation, the need to collect more data and systematically, proposals for practitioners to prioritize further schooling and develop specific support programmes for these students, and the need for more in-depth research, including the analysis of the views of children in care themselves.
Access to tertiary education from out of home care in Australia: The case for a national framework

Speakers & Authors: Andrew Harvey, Patricia McNamara

Around 40,000 Australian children are estimated to require out-of-home care in Australia and this number has risen every year over the past decade (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2013). Many of these children are from multiple equity groups. In Western Australia, for example, an estimated 45 per cent of children in foster care are Aboriginal (www.dcp.wa.gov.au). Despite the magnitude of this cohort there is little analysis of the progression of people from care into higher education, and of potential policies that might increase aspirations, access and success.

This paper will present early findings from research mapping the Australian out-of-home care cohort in higher education. The project draws closely on work undertaken in the UK through the Buttle Foundation that resulted in the seminal report, By Degrees: Going from Care to University (Jackson, Ajayi & Quigley 2005), and subsequent European research in the YiPPEE project (Young People from a public care background Pathways to Education in Europe). The authors argue that while research in the UK and Europe is now well-developed, there remains a paucity of literature around education of people in out-of-home care in Australia, partly because of a federal legislative context and a greater conceptual and policy focus on care rather than education. Ten years ago, an Australian audit of research into out-of-home care found that ‘There are no national research or evaluation projects and only one multi-site cross-state project’ and that there is little research on ‘the educational needs and outcomes of children and young people in care’ (Cashmore & Ainsworth 2004, p.10).

The authors examine Australian parliamentary commissions and government reports over the past decade and provide a summary of initiatives proposed. They highlight a paucity of initiatives at tertiary level, and argue that establishment of a national framework is important to improving higher education outcomes, along with addressing the potential ‘soft bigotry of low expectations’. Actual approaches adopted by Australian agencies/stakeholders towards education along with challenges encountered are briefly presented.
Bridging the gap between research, policy and practice

From Risks to Resilience - Transitions out of care: challenges and opportunities

**Speakers & Authors:** Tarja Heino

The presentation aims at wrapping-around the four years of multilevel academic research (2010 - 2013) on following up children taken in care in Finland. The research consists of several sub-studies, various perspectives, methods and data. It is financed by the SKIDI-Kids research program launched by the Finnish Academy. The program aims at bridging research, policy and practice discussions.

The presentation includes reporting
1) results from a register based cohort study (all children born 1987 in Finland), followed up from birth to 21 years of age: risks for being taken in care wellbeing in early adulthood, intergenerational continuity.
2) Results from a local five-year follow up of those children taken in care 2006 are also reported. The study sheds light on the children's various institutional paths.
3) Findings generated by art-based methods with young persons placed in institutions. The study describes the significance of control-free spaces and metaphoric shelters for enabling children to act in situations characterized by interaction ambivalence.
4) In addition to the individual level we have also collected findings of systemic risks inflicted by the very institution and organization upon the lives of children and families connected to child protection services.
5) Finally, some considerations based on a literature review on resilience are presented. The literature consists of longitudinal research on children taken in care. The focus is on protective factors for surviving in adulthood.

Research findings are reflected upon policy and practice.

**Key words:**
Risks, resilience, follow up, child protection services
Foster care: different paths and their implications

Professionalisation of Foster Care: Perspectives in 4 Countries

Symposium Co-ordinator: Marie-Andree Poirier

In the last decade, many countries have conducted discussions and initiated changes in their family policy, child protection with regard to societal changes. A lot of these changes had an important impact on the family foster care context. It is found in several countries a deterioration of personal and family situation of children placed in foster families as well as several difficulties in recruitment and retention of foster parents. A plurality of practices and legislation is observable according to particular socio-cultural history of the country, but a trend seems to be emerging around the professionalization of substitute care. This trend raises many questions from political, professionals and researchers point of view. What do we know from the countries that already have a professional foster care network? What are the main findings and challenges identified in these countries? How to support countries began developing their network of foster care? These questions will be developed among others in this symposium around the experiences of four countries: Canada, France, Chile and Denmark.
Foster care: different paths and their implications

The introduction of a Social Pedagogy for UK foster care: emerging findings from a UK study

Speakers & Authors: Samantha McDermid, Lisa Holmes, Helen Trivedi, Clare Lushey

While social pedagogy is common across continental Europe, social care in the UK is relatively unfamiliar with the approach. Interest in social pedagogy has, however, increased in recent years, with more organisations, including fostering services, exploring the potential for the approach to make a difference to fostered children, their carers and those supporting them. Given that social pedagogy is constructed through the contexts within which it is used, a social pedagogy for UK foster care must emerge.

The Fostering Network has embarked on a major, four year programme of work to introduce social pedagogy into foster care across the UK and to explore the difference social pedagogy makes to children living in foster care. “Head, Heart, Hands” is being independently evaluated by a team led by the Centre for Child and Family Research at Loughborough University. The evaluation is examining the impact that social pedagogy has on children and young people in foster care, foster carers and the personnel and systems that seek to support them. The evaluation will also identify examples of effective social pedagogic practice, differences in the way that social pedagogy is adopted across the six participating demonstration sites and make recommendations to inform the systemic development of social pedagogy across UK foster care.

This presentation will explore the emerging findings from the first year of the Head Heart Hands programme. It will draw on data gathered from surveys, interviews, focus groups and in-depth case studies to examine the initial thoughts and responses of foster carers, the children and young people placed with them, and those who support them, on social pedagogy and its potential impact on UK foster care. The presentation will examine cultural similarities and differences between the current UK foster care system and social pedagogic approaches, and will explore the emerging challenges of adopting social pedagogy in the present context. Implications for the programme, policy and practice will also be explored.
Foster care: different paths and their implications

Results of a Quebec study on the factors of satisfaction in the role of foster parent. Potential positive and negative impacts of greater professionalization of foster parents.

Speakers & Authors: Marie-Pierre Joly, Poirier Marie-Andree

In Quebec, about 6041 children live in foster care, which represents 68% of children who are removed from their family. In this sense, the network of foster families is an important part of the youth protection system. The Quebec government struggling to maintain a pool of foster families able to meet the demand, as is the case in several countries (Triseliotis, Borland & Hill, 2000; Turcotte et al., 2008). The pressure is on both side of the recruitment and retention of foster families. A better understanding of the satisfactory and unsatisfactory aspects of their experience might improve recruitment and retention, and ultimately, better response to the needs of children.

The aim of this communication is to present the results of a study on the factors associated with the satisfaction of foster parents in their role. Semi-structured in-person interviews were conducted with thirteen foster parents, addressing the following topics: assessment of their satisfaction, motivation to become a foster parent, the challenges faced and vision of what should be improved in the context of foster families. According to these foster parents satisfaction in their role is associated with various forms of success, recognition and support in the professional and personal parental sphere.

These results will be discussed in the light of issues related to the professionalization of foster parents since, in Quebec, the network of foster families is changing towards greater professionalization. Thus, foster families are in transition to a status akin to self-employed status. Their rights are marked by a collective agreement, which greatly alters the organization of work and the relationship between the Child protection professionals and the foster families.

Key words: foster care, satisfaction, retention, and professionalization
Foster care: different paths and their implications

Foster care’s professionalization: multiple stakes in daily life, in relations and in institutions of child protection in France

Speakers & Authors: Euillet Séverine

For the past fifteen years, the context of the foster care in child welfare evolved towards a professionalization of the foster careers, in France. Since 2005, they are considered as professional by following a compulsory training of 240 hours that can end in a diploma and are integrated into a multi-professional team. This evolution questions the emotional dimension between the foster career and the child, the place of the child parents and the impact on the child development.

The results of a recent longitudinal research led with 22 children of 10 years of age in foster care for more than 6 years, 18 foster careers and 8 parents will be presented here. Results are obtain by means of questionnaires on the parental implication (three versions completed by the parents, the foster careers and the referent social worker, Euillet, 2007), by interview with the foster careers about their parenthood and their job, and by questionnaires completed by the children about the attachment (IAPA, Inventaire d’Attachement Parent-Adolescent, Larose & Boivin, 1991 ; QANRA, Questionnaire d’Attachement Non-Résolu de l’Adolescent, Thibaudeau, 2006) and about the depressive symptoms (MDI-C, Echelle composite de dépression pour enfants, Berndt & Kaiser, 1999) and an other one completed by the foster careers on the child general development (CBCL, Child Behavior Cheklist, Achenbach, 1991).

It was demonstrated that the foster career professional status, when it is accompanied by social worker and institution organization, allows him to develop a secure attachment relation with the child, a reflexive parenthood around the practice to the everyday life and a specific perception of the parents of the child.

The professionalization of the foster careers, considered here as a long-term process for them, as well within the institutions which employ them, affect all the actors of the foster care. This movement contributes to modify the conception of the foster care and to redistribute the roles and the places they occupy. In the great majority of departments, real debates are still in progress and answers are being sought to improve our understanding of the professionalization of foster care.
Foster care: different paths and their implications

Synthesis and links with the Danish context

Speakers & Authors: Inge Danielsen

To enhance our international perspective, we asked a researcher from Denmark to synthesize our seminar. The aim of this communication is to synthesize elements addressed in each of the three papers from Canada, France and Chile, identify key messages, raise key questions and ultimately, make the connections with the Danish context. This synthesis will surely promote communication links with seminar participants and to raise questions and comments.
Health and wellbeing of children in care

Mental health needs of children in care: research contributions and new approaches

Symposium Co-ordinator: Jorge F. Del Valle

Literature review on children in care, particularly in residential and foster care, conclude that the probability for those children to suffer from some emotional or behavioral problems is really high. To address those needs some new approaches have been developed, including specific treatment programs for children in care, early detection systems, new therapies such as virtual therapy, or therapeutic residential care. This symposium consists of a group of presentations about this kind of new approaches and programs to address the specificity of this group of children and young people. In the introduction of this symposium some aspects of the cooperation and limits between Mental Health and Child Care services will be presented based on an Erasmus Lifelong Learning Program project (RESME).
Health and wellbeing of children in care

A mental health service model for children and young people in care: Evidence and practice

Speakers & Authors: Panos Vostanis

Aims
A mental health service model for children in care will be described, with findings from recent evaluation studies and their implications.

Methods
The service: Regular links, consultation and training are provided to children's homes and foster carers. Psychological interventions are psychodynamic/trauma-focused, cognitive-behavioural, resilience enhancing, and crisis response.

Evaluation studies
A number of quantitative and qualitative studies have been conducted since the development of the service in response to emergent needs, and these have in turn influenced and informed service changes. Key findings of recent research will be presented in the context of the presentation.

Key findings and implications
1) The National Survey on Children in Care identified high rates of mental health problems; strong association with a range of risk factors; high level of unmet service needs; fragmented and uncoordinated agency involvement. The implication was to establish joint care pathways with social care systems and to successfully apply for joint commissioning of mental health posts.
2) The analysis of a service sample highlighted the strong association between mental and attachment problems, but also the variable and inconsistent use and connotation of attachment problems/disorders among referrers. These findings resulted in the clarification of the operational/referral criteria to the team, as well as the development of different levels of interventions and training for universal or targeted purposes.
3) The evaluation of the attachment-focused therapeutic group for foster carers found a decrease of carers' stress and improvement in children's mental health and attachment problems; better understanding and additional strategies than only adopting a social learning/behavioural approach. These findings indicate the importance of integrating attachment-focused training and interventions at different levels from carers.

Key words: Child mental health, Attachment, Services, Psychological interventions, Inter-agency, Training
Health and wellbeing of children in care

Treating trauma in children and adolescents in care: Advantages of the implementation of new technology

**Speakers & Authors:** Concepción López-Soler

Based on results from prior studies (e.g., Berliner, 2005; Cohen and Mannarino, 2008; Kowalik, Weller, Venter and Drachmand, 2011), many researchers agree that trauma-based treatments focused on cognitive-behavioral methods are most effective when working with children exposed to trauma related to intrafamilial child maltreatment. However, the applied method of facing an individual’s trauma history through exposure techniques has been seen as a great challenge for children and adolescents.

Due to this limitation, virtual reality (VR) can serve as a useful treatment method to help create realistic scenarios which simulate traumatic events patients experienced, while working in a controlled environment. Furthermore, VR can help patients who have imaginative difficulties and may function as a source of motivation during treatment as patients may feel interested in or entertained by VR technology.

The current presentation introduces the cognitive-behavioral-emotional treatment protocol (López-Soler et al., 2007), which was developed at the University of Murcia in Spain by the Grupo Universitario de Investigación en Infancia y Adolescencia - Psicología Clínica (University Research Group on Children and Adolescents - Psychology Clinic) (GUIIA-PC) for the Project of Evaluation, Diagnosis, and Psychological Intervention in Protected Minors. The proposed protocol is based on the work of experts in the field (Herman, 1992; Cohen, Mannarino and Deblinger, 2006; Mannarino, Cohen and Steer, 2002, 2006; Terr, 2003), and aims to treat posttraumatic reactions in maltreated children and adolescents. The protocol consists of six main components: 1) legitimization of suffering and relaxation techniques; 2) recognition and expression of emotions; 3) cognitive restructuring; 4) personal growth; 5) reconstruction of personal identity; 6) processing the traumatic events experienced.

Additionally, this treatment method uses the VR system of Engaging Media for Mental Health Applications (EMMA), which was adapted for GUIIA-PC to apply to children and adolescents. This presentation aims to demonstrate the advantages of new technology used as a therapeutic tool which overcome limitations of traditional treatment methods of trauma-based exposure therapy and to present preliminary data on the efficacy of the proposed protocol.
Health and wellbeing of children in care

**Trauma symptoms and impact of traumatic life events in foster children aged 6-12**

*Speakers & Authors: Hans Grietens*

In the literature, it is reported that a large number of children living in foster families have been exposed to multiple traumatic life events previous to placement and suffer from traumatic stress. Little is known about this issue in the Netherlands. We conducted a study in a convenience sample of 98 foster children aged 6-12 on traumatic life events, trauma symptoms and behavioural/emotional problems. All children were placed in short-term foster care (placement duration: less than one year). Foster mothers were asked to fill out the Parents Report of Traumatic Impact, the Trauma Symptom Checklist for Young Children and the Child Behavior Checklist. On average, children had experienced eight traumatic events (loss, interpersonal violence, separation) previous to placement. About three out of ten children showed clinically significant trauma symptoms. Thirty-three children (38%) were victim of sexual abuse previous to placement. Sexual abuse and having been exposed to multiple traumatic events (poly-victimization) both significantly predicted trauma symptoms, but poly-victimization explained a large part of the association between sexual abuse and symptom levels. Discussing the findings of the study, recommendations will be given on how to make foster care more trauma-informed.
A Research Study about Mental Health of Children in Residential Care

Speakers & Authors: Torill Tjelflaat

Aims
A research study about mental health of children in residential care will be described. The aim of the study is to learn about children and young people between the ages of 12 and 23 who are living in child welfare institutions, with an emphasis on their mental health and psychosocial adjustment. Their need for and use of health care for mental health problems, and identification of features of the institution which can be significant for the children’s and young persons’ health, adjustment and development will also be examined.

Methods
Topics of the study include: child development, education and work, mental health, psychosocial functioning and adjustment, health care, protective factors and institutional influences. The study is a national, quantitative study of 400 children and young people living in child welfare institutions. Data is collected using 21 different questionnaires/tests. These will be listed in the presentation. Respondents are the children, teachers, institutional contacts and leaders. The data will be combined with register data. Data collection so far: Informants contacted/participated: 319/200 - response rate 63. Institutions contacted/participated: 94/88 - response rate 94. Four PhD projects will be part of the study.

Key findings and implications
Data collection is not yet finished. Some key preliminary findings will be presented. The findings from the study will establish a research base to be used to improve the quality and the help needed for children and young people in residential care in Norway.

The project is funded by the Norwegian Directorate for Children and Family Affairs and the Norwegian Health Directorate.

Key words:
Residential care, Mental health, Institutional influences
Placement careers: stability and discontinuity

Identifying Divergent Foster Care Careers for Danish Children

Speakers & Authors: Peter Fallesen

Foster care children who experience placement disruption and foster care instability are at elevated risk for a host of poor outcomes, yet little work considers what these unstable foster care careers look like or what causes them. In this article, I start by using previous studies on foster care drift, instability, and placement disruptions to define the unstable foster care career as a subset of foster care careers. I then use administrative data on 30,239 Danish children born 1982-1987 who entered foster care to generate nine foster care careers, two of which meet the criteria for an unstable career. Children with a high number of risk factors associated with foster care entry were also the group most likely to enter an unstable career. I end by discussing implications for recent studies of the effect of foster care on children's later life outcomes.
Family matters? The effect of kinship care on foster care disruption rates

Speakers & Authors: Signe Hald Andersen, Peter Fallesen

During the last decades, many countries have witnessed social workers’ increased use of kinship care instead of family or group care. This type of care has the advantage of being cheap, just as it offers a more familiar environment to the child. Particularly this last element is emphasized as an important advantage compared to other types of care, and may secure a better social-emotional development of the child. Theory suggests that empathy and dutifulness of the caretaker sustains the kinship placement and this base may secure the stability of the placement to a larger degree than placements sustained by financial incentives as employed in other types of care (where the caretaker receives direct payments for his or her efforts). However little is known about the causal effect of kinship care, also with regard to its relative stability, and thus it too early to celebrate the rise of this type of care. Our study is the first to estimate causal effects of kinship care on placement stability defined as premature placement disruptions. For this purpose we use full sample administrative data and instrumental variables methods. Our results show that kinship care is as stable as other types of care, and only in cases where the kin caretaker is particularly empathetic and dutiful does this type of care prove more stable. Thus in terms of stability, most children do not benefit additionally from being place with kin. One may even suggest that placement instability in kinship care is worse than equal levels of instability in other types of care as it not only represents a conflict with the placement environment, but also with close kin.
Foster care: different paths and their implications

Making the right decision: Care pathways of children in foster care

Speakers & Authors: Cinzia Canali, Tiziano Vecchiato

Main aim: The province of Piacenza, which provides foster care services and supports the local services, carried out a research study in collaboration with the professionals working in the local foster care services in order to gather original data on the processes of foster care. This paper presents the results of the research.

Method: The research used a mixed approach: qualitative and quantitative. Four research paths: 1) Analysis of foster care campaigns in the last 5 years, 2) Focus groups with social workers and non profit organisations involved in foster care, 3) Analysis of care pathways for children in foster care and their outcomes in the years 2010-2012, 4) Survey with foster families.

Key findings: The presentation will focus on the key findings emerging from the research paths, specifically in relation to care pathways of 136 children in foster care in the period 2010-2012. Most findings will be related to the birth families and the experience of children: half of the children lived in families already marked by crisis and two children out of ten have already experienced out of home care. In most cases children as well as their parents, have co-existing problems: psychological, social and educational, as well as their parents.

25% of foster care placements are concluded (we analysed 136 cases) with the following results: 56% of children returned home (to both parents or one parent after separation/divorce), 26% went to live with a relative (without a foster care measure), 18% moved to another foster family or in a residential setting or remained in the same foster family, if 18 y.o. This research confirms some aspects of Italian foster care:

- foster care intervenes in situations that are already known to the services, situations that deteriorated or with some emerging crisis;
- foster care placements last several years, many more than expected and with little chance of reunification;
- work with birth families is carried out, also during the foster care period, but not enough to modify the conditions that led to the child's placement;
- the relationship between birth families and foster families is limited or absent in many situations. The role of social work is important as a mediator between the two families.
Placement careers: stability and discontinuity

Assessed young persons in secure units - trajectories in out-of-home care

Speakers & Authors: Sofia Enell

An analysis of Swedish young persons´ trajectories in out-of-home care will here be presented. The young persons concerned have, at the request of social service authorities, been assessed by a multi-professional team at secure accommodations. These assessments lead to recommendations for further interventions for the social service to decide about, recommendations expected to provide a more foreseeable and stable time in care. Research has shown that young persons in out-of-home care can encounter more complexity instead of desired stability and foreseeability. Strauss analytical concept “trajectory” has been used to analyse the characteristics of the social processes in which the young persons were involved. A trajectory is initiated when children and young persons are being subjected to interventions from child protection and it is formed by involved actors. The aim was to analyse a sequence of young persons´ trajectories in out-of-home care in relation to the assessment. The sequence constitutes an assessment during an eight weeks placement at a secure unit and the two following years. The young persons´ trajectories are analysed by the interaction of young persons and social workers; the central actors. The courses of events regarding stability and instability were connected to the analysis. Using a multi-method approach, young persons have been followed during the two-year-period. Interviews with 16 young persons and 16 social workers as well as surveys to social workers concerning 85 young persons were conducted.

The analysis displayed the specific characteristics of young persons´ trajectories. The courses of events in the diverse trajectories also differed to some extent. The young persons rarely perceived the courses of events as comprehensible and the assessment did not constitute a definite marker for increased stability and foreseeability. The courses of events after the assessments included additional placement instability, new social workers and new assessments. This instability was often connected to the context of the care system. In conclusion, despite instability at group level the young persons´ time in care was portrayed in unique and complex social processes. The result emphasise the importance for all professionals of paying attention to each young person´s experiences.

Key words: institutional assessments, trajectories, young persons
Placement careers: stability and discontinuity

The Very First Months in Care

Speakers & Authors: Helavirta Susanna, Riitta Laakso, Tarja Pösö

The presentation is based on an ongoing research project which aims to cast light on the 'black box' of child welfare care orders as interventions in the lives of children and young people. The institutional and personal processes of children are examined with social workers and the children themselves at six and 12 months after the placement in care.

The data consists of interviews between the social workers (or researcher) and the children in care as well as an overall survey of all the children taken into care in two Finnish municipalities using both the case-records and the professional knowledge of the social workers. By studying the processes the intention is to learn about the everyday lives of the children in care as well as how the services directed at the children and their families interact with, and influence, the children's life, and how they change during the time in care. The paper presents the data collection of the first round approximately six months after the placement started. The survey data includes all children taken into care during a certain period of time, altogether 38 children; 10 children have been interviewed.

The key messages from the first data collection round concern the interconnectedness of the institutional setting of child protection, ethics and methodology. There is certain type of silence describing the very first months in care. Silence describes both the institutional as well as the personal processes in this data. The presentation examines this notion of silence both as an issue for research and child welfare practice.
En praksisnær forskningstilgang som brobygning mellem forskning og praksis

Speakers & Authors: Cecilie K. Moesby-Jensen

På baggrund af et 5-årigt eksplorativt, kvalitativt casestudie i en dansk socialforvaltning - en familieafdeling - diskuteres det, hvordan studiets praksisnære forskningsdesign understøtter en dialog mellem forsknings- og praksisfelt. En af målsætningerne ved dette studie har været at bygge bro mellem forskning og praksis ved at arbejde med social læring på arbejdspladsen med henblik på at udvikle sagsbeholderes faglighed for at styrke indsatsen over for børn og unge i udsatte positioner.

I denne præsentation diskuteres forskellige brobygningsansatser mellem forskning og praksis, dels ansatser faktuelt udviklet undervejs i nærværende forskningsprojekt og dels mulige ansatser muliggjort af selve forskningsresultaterne. Selve undersøgelsens forskningsdesign har været lagt an på dette gennem: 1. Indgåelse af partnerskaber med kommunerne, hvilket muliggjorde et tæt samarbejde, og en betydelig åbenhed fra kommunernes side i forhold til at lade forskeren komme tæt på praksis. 2. Inddragelse af informanterne i forhold til indkredsning af forskningstematikker. 3. Deltagerobservation i forvaltningen - som muliggjorde løbende dialog mellem forsker og felt. 4. Afholdelse af fokusgruppediskussioner som refleksionsrum for drøftelse af dominerende tematikker identificeret under det etnografiske feltarbejde - det tematiske i diskussionerne blev sat i spil ved hjælp af konstruerede dilemmahistorier. 5. Diskussion af forskningsresultater på et seminar for sagsbehandlerne, tilrettelagt med gruppearbejde om resultat-genkendelighed og anvendelighed for praksis. 6. Udarbejdelse af diskussionsoplæg til drøftelse på sagsbehandlergruppemøder. Dette oplæg blev udarbejdet på baggrund af sagsbehandlernes diskussioner i grupperne på (forskningsresultat)seminaret (jf. punkt 5).

I præsentationen vil jeg endvidere berøre, hvad sagsbehandlerne selv mente, at de har fået ud af at deltage i et praksisnært forskningsprojekt.
Institutionsanbringelse og behandlingsinterventioner

Tværprofessionelt følgeskab i børn og unges skolegang og fritidsliv

Speakers & Authors: Ida Schwartz


Forskningsprojektet har været organiseret som et praksisforskningsprojekt i samarbejde med to kommuner og med involvering af en gruppe professionelle som medforskere. Forskningsprojektet bygger desuden på kvalitative interviews med de involverede parter (professionelle og forældre) og på deltagende observationer i de fire børns hverdagsliv på tværs af bosted, skole og fritidsaktiviteter.

Med udgangspunkt i en kritisk psykologisk forståelse af, at børn og unge lærer og udvikler sig gennem social deltagelse, peger forskningsprojektet på betydningen af, at professionelle finder sammen på tværs af børnenes kontekster om at skabe et professionelt følgeskab, som børn og unge kan bruge i deres hverdagsliv. Præsentationen vil give eksempler på, hvordan det tværprofessionelle samarbejde både kan skabe muligheder og barrierer i børn og unges livsforløb. Forskningsprojektet peger tillige på betydningen af, at kommunen tager det overordnede ansvar for, at det tværprofessionelle samarbejde organiseres således, at det har en tydelig ledelse, organisering og fordeling af ansvar.
Overgange fra anbringelse til voksenliv: udfordringer og muligheder

Et spørgsmål om relationer - Et kvalitativt studie om tidligere anbragte unge i efterværn

Speakers & Authors: Anemone Kierkgaard, Jin Lemming Drewsen

Oplægget tager udgangspunkt i et speciale fra Kandidatuddannelsen i Socialt Arbejde. Specialet omhandler de udfordringer, tidligere anbragte unge oplever i forbindelse med at gennemføre en ungdomsuddannelse. Via en eksplorativ og narrativ tilgang har vi undersøgt, hvilke udfordringer, der i særlig grad optager de unge, samt hvordan det sociale arbejde kan imødekomme og afhjælpe disse udfordringer.

Specialets empiriske grundlag består af syv narrative interviews med unge i efterværn i alderen 17-22 år.


Præsentationen vil slutte af med en perspektivering til anbringelses- og efterværnssystemet i Norge. Vi vil på denne baggrund af praksis i Norge diskutere, hvordan vi i Danmark kan være bedre til at sikre stabilitet og kontinuitet for anbragte og tidligere anbragte unge.
Resourceful or At Risk - The Danger of Social Categories in Research and Social Work

Speakers & Authors: Anna-Katharina Højen-Sørensen

Introduction: Social categories are used to determine which individuals are at an increased risk of unfavorable outcomes and they are a vital tool for the development of targeted interventions. This presentation takes a critical look at the Resourceful and At Risk categories, that are often employed in research and social work, and investigate the possible consequences of the preconceptions born out of these categories.

Method: The presentation is based on qualitative interviews with participants and professionals from two projects aimed at young single mothers and one project aimed at college-students residing at local dormitories. The interviews are a subsample of qualitative interviews, collected as part of an ongoing large-scale evaluation of 39 pilot projects aimed at improving outcomes for various groups of young people.

Key findings: The presentation shows, that the Resourceful and At Risk categories can create blind spots that can make interventions counterproductive and furthermore, how categories themselves can become a risk for the very people we seek to help.
Transitions out of care: challenges and opportunities

Outside Looking in: The Experiences of Young People Leaving Residential Childcare Institutions in Bangladesh

Speakers & Authors: Md. Tuhinul Islam

Children and young people enter residential care institutions for a variety of reasons but it has had an image, which, at the very least, is not a positive one. By examining the experiences of children and young people in Bangladesh, we can see that residential childcare has the potential to offer a positive option for many disadvantaged children or children in need/at risk. The aim of this doctoral study was to explore the experiences of care from the perspective of a group of young people who had lived in residential childcare institutions in Bangladesh. In the main the study looked at the care and well-being of children in three different types of institution - one run by an NGO (for sex workers' children), two run by the government and two faith-based orphanage (madrasah) run by the community.

Qualitative methods were employed for data collection, using in-depth semi-structured interviews with 133 young people (aged between 12 and 26) who had left the care system and yearlong observation of these five institutions where they had lived.

The main finding in this research is that time spent in residential childcare in Bangladesh was, on the whole, a positive experience for this group of young people, giving them opportunities for education, healthcare, relationships and social networks that they would not have had otherwise; after leaving care, their life chances of jobs, higher education and marriage and family life were improved as a direct consequence of this. Thus the findings of this study are quite challenging in a research context dominated by minority world conceptualisations.

It identifies a number of avenues for further research, suggesting that lessons for the minority world may be learned from this study: the notion that the whole community should take responsibility for its children; and attention should be paid to faith and religious beliefs in children's upbringing. The study has also demonstrated that improving financial resources may not necessarily lead to better outcomes from children and young people. Instead, building relationships with adults, peer groups, parents, and community offer the best chance for good outcomes.
Support in transition to adulthood

*Speakers & Authors: Inger Oterholm*

In my PhD project I have studied social workers’ judgments regarding support for young people leaving care in transition to adulthood. In Norway the youth can be supported from Child Welfare Services until they reach 23 years of age. However, several young care leavers are only given support for a short period of time after turning 18, even though they often struggle with difficulties which could imply a need of further assistance. When reaching 18 it is also possible to get support from Social Welfare Services, both as a supplement or as a replacement for support from Child Welfare Services. Many care leavers get support from Social Welfare Services, especially in comparison to other young people. What kind of support given to young people leaving care is subject to social workers discretion, as is the question of which service should give support.

The aim of my presentation is to compare and discuss social workers’ judgments in these two different organizations; Child Welfare Services and Social Welfare Services regarding support for young people leaving care. Both organizations have responsibilities regarding youth between 18 and 23 years of age. They can also give some similar measures. Nevertheless the organizations also differ on their main objectives; services for adults and children.

I have conducted qualitative interviews with social workers from both services. The interview data is analyzed in accordance with an institutional perspective with emphasis on institutional logics. The findings suggest differences in institutional logics between the two services. This implies different ways of thinking when meeting young care leavers which consequently could be of importance for youth leaving care. The importance of the organizational framework and how this influences the focus of the social workers discretionary practice will be discussed in my presentation.
Transitions out of care: challenges and opportunities

The influence of informal social support on the lives of young people leaving state out-of-home care

Speakers & Authors: Jacinta Waugh

This seminar will analyse the key literature dealing with the informal social supports available to young people leaving state care. Of particular concern is the question of how care leavers use informal relationships to meet their basic needs. The literature highlights the critical importance of supportive relationships to all young people, regardless of their level of social advantage, in the transition to adulthood. But it notes that, even allowing for some diversity of experience, care leavers do not develop the same informal networks of support that their mainstream counterparts acquire naturally. The positive, lasting relationships that form the basis of mainstream life are rare in the lives of care leavers. As a result they arrive at their notional independence less prepared for its challenges than young people from the mainstream, for whom independence tends to be a gradual, managed process. The abrupt cessation of the state's parental responsibilities at this critical time is all but calculated to compound the existing disadvantage. The difficulties faced by care leavers in trying to negotiate the complicated worlds of housing, education, employment, finances and health are well documented. The literature speaks to the likely involvement of negative social capital and opportunistic relationships in their post care outcomes. But relatively little is known about the actual character of these informal relationships, nor the specific ways that care leavers use them to meet their basic needs. The gap is in the detail. It is this gap my research aims to address. This Doctoral research is being carried out at Monash University, Australia.
Transitions out of care: challenges and opportunities

Young people leaving youth care in Flanders: taking the plunge into the unknown

Speakers & Authors: Sharon van Audenhove

Most young people succeed in making the transition to adulthood relatively smoothly. Young people in youth care experience considerable difficulties during their transition. Literature examining the way young people in care experience this transition is scarce. A better understanding of the experiences of the youth transitioning out of care is critical for the development of appropriate support and services to meet their needs.

The purpose of our qualitative study is to understand the experiences and needs of young people in youth care on the eve of and during their transition to adulthood.

To this end, a follow-up study was conducted. The young people were interviewed twice: once before they left the youth care and once 18 months after the first interview. The research data are derived from in-depth qualitative interviews with 71 young people (aged 17-20). The research data of the first phase of the follow-up is presented.

We identified three groups of young people: those with positive future expectations that do not expect any difficulties during their transitions, those with positive future expectations that expect difficulties that will eventually pass, and those with negative future expectations, which do not expect their transition difficulties will pass.

Most respondents (N=48) think the future is looking bright, because they are about to graduate or have graduated, and/or because they are very motivated to deal with their expected transition difficulties related to work, housing and finances. Although young people with negative future expectations (N=23) are not that motivated, some of them think a (future) partner and their parents may see them through their difficulties. They do not consider care workers as helpful assistance, however.

Our research has taught us that youth care workers should bear in mind that it is important to distinguish three groups of young people in order to prepare for their transitions and their further future. After all, young people with positive future expectations should be prepared differently than those with negative future expectations.

Key words: transition to adulthood, leaving care, future expectations
Identity construction in the transition to adulthood from different placements: a comparison of the narratives of young people from foster care, adoption and residential care

Speakers & Authors: Gillian Schofield

Identity development in adolescence, according to Erikson, requires young people to make sense of the past and present before making an identity commitment in the transition to adulthood. The aim of this presentation is to explore how different but similarly complex and discontinuous family and relationship histories impact on identity development and a sense of belonging in adolescence and early adulthood. The presentation will draw on data from research studies undertaken within the Centre for Research on Children and Families at the University of East Anglia. The studies on foster and residential care were led by Gillian Schofield and the study of adoption from care was led by Elsbeth Neil.

The foster care studies included a retrospective study of young adults (n=40), a longitudinal study (n=52) and a cross-sectional study (n=230) of children in foster care. The adoption from care study was a longitudinal study from the pre-School years through to late adolescence (n=60). The residential study was an evaluation of a transitions service offering support up to age 30 (n=20). Qualitative interviews with samples / sub-samples of young people in these studies were analysed thematically, with the analysis being both data generating and theory driven i.e. all studies explored how young people / young adults constructed their identities and sense of belonging, but also drew on theory and research on identity development.

The findings presented will focus on challenges affecting identity construction in transitions from different placements and the sense of ‘family’ membership and belonging. The challenges and opportunities for young people included generating a coherent personal narrative; managing memories and the search for truth; finding a sense of belonging; balancing autonomy and closeness. The findings suggest the importance of secure base relationships in adolescence and early adulthood, which enable not only fostered and adopted young people, but also young people from residential care, to feel supported while continuing to negotiate their identity and sense of belonging. Professionals need to understand the range of experiences in transition from different placements and the need for support into adulthood.

Key words: identity, transitions, belonging
Voices of children, youth and families

What levers for action to support children from families with interpersonal and material weaknesses?

Speakers & Authors: Claire Ganne

Some of the families known to child protection services aren't known because they are abusive, but because they cumulate different weaknesses: material precarity (such as economic resources and housing conditions), fragile social support networks and previous interpersonal difficulties (institutionalisation, family break up...). For these families, existing family-centered interventions, focusing on the relationship between the parent (especially the mother) and the child seem to be failing to take into account of all the dynamics which would enable these children to receive proper protection. Based upon research about trajectories of children housed as babies in maternity homes, we will explore the pathways and perceived quality of life of children aged 7 to 12, coming from vulnerable families and often known to child protection services. There are three empirical phases (quantitative analysis of two hundred trajectories, qualitative interviews with forty-nine mothers, and quality of life questionnaires and interviews with thirty-three children). The results highlight the necessity of taking into account their family’s environment, conjugal dynamics and housing trajectory when imagining how to effectively support these children.
Patterns of help-seeking among at-risk and normative adolescents based on the threat to self-esteem model

Speakers & Authors: Shlomo Romi, Zeev Kaim

Using the components of the Threat to Self-esteem Model, the present study examined variables which explain turning to various sources of help by at-risk and normative adolescents. According to the model, variables related to a decision to seek help are: help-receiver characteristics, help-giver characteristics, and the perception of the problem. Participants were 211 at-risk adolescents (through the Youth Advancement Services), and 271 normative adolescents. Participants filled in personality questionnaires and an attitudes questionnaire about help-seeking for personal problems. The findings indicate two factors - help-seeker's characteristics and help-giver characteristics - are equal contributors to explaining the willingness to seek help in both groups. Help-giver characteristics contributed more to explain variance in willingness to seek help, with the most influential factors being help-giver identity and formal and informal characteristics. Among personality variables examined, self-exposure contributed relatively highly to explaining the variance in help-seeking willingness. The group affiliation variable, a major one in this study, contributed only to variance in turning to parents and friends, but not to teachers. The findings reveal that, for both groups, the choice of help-giver is greatly affected by the help seeker's subjective perceptions of the help-giver's characteristics and identity. Therefore, adolescents should be exposed to the characteristic, roles, and unique contribution of various help-giving sources.
"It's nothing special". Investigating the role of violence in marginalised young people's everyday lives

Speakers & Authors: Tea Torbenfeldt Bengtsson

Violence has meaningfully been researched as the extreme physical culmination of a conflict and thus as a dramatic event. Research show that some people and in particular marginalized young people more often experience physical violence, both as the victim and as the perpetrator, than other young people. What is rarely investigated, however, is how the young people themselves understand violence in the context of their everyday lives. This paper analyses the role of violence in marginalized young people's self-narratives and opens up for new ways of understanding their experiences. The paper analyses 18 in-depth interviews with young people who in their childhood have been placed in out-of-home care. Drawing on Randal Collins theory of violence as a situated practice the paper demonstrates that violence is an everyday experience and that in these young people's narratives it is often not presented as a dramatic or special event. Rather, violence is seen as integrated in everyday practices and thus as a lived experience creating both limitations and possibilities depending on the context of the situation as well as previous experiences with violence.
Where is better: foster family or residential institution? Voices of children from Lithuania

Speakers & Authors: Dalija Snieskiene

About 50% of those children who need substitute home still live in large residential homes in Lithuania. There are many debates, where is better to live if the child's replacement is needed. The majority of international research shows that objective criteria supports alternative family care. But there is not any research how the children evaluate different forms of care in Lithuania. The voices of children should be heard in debates.

The aim of the paper is to reveal opinions of children about the different alternative placements in Lithuania.

Objectives of the presentation:
1) To present the dominated findings from literature review on related topics.
2) To present children's opinion about the main aspects of implementation of their rights in foster home and residential institution in Lithuania
3) to make interpretations of these findings to policy and practice.

To fulfill this aim there were used quantitative method of data collection. Research design is survey, done in 2014. 765 children living in institutions (48%) and in foster or related families (52%) from 7 to 18 year's old participated in this project. This research project was a part of bigger project "Sustainable transition from institutional to family and community based alternative care", financed by EEA Grants. The measurement to this survey was prepared in according with child care quality measurement from Scotland. The author of this paper collected information from January to the end of March 2014.

Key findings. The main findings shows, that many children living in the institutions would like to live with their families or to be adopted, no matter how living conditions (space, clothes, food) is good. The feelings being safe, listened and accepted are the main criteria of being satisfied with care. The majority of children from foster and related families are satisfied with their life. The results show, that children in institutional care (44.7%) twice more are affected by bullying because of their care placement, than those living in substitute family (20.7%), and this difference is statistically significant.

These and other findings shows, that the children want to be asked and to be heard. This is similar to Ben-Arieh, A. (2005) findings.

Key words: foster home, residential institution, child's opinion
Voices of children, youth and families

Being at home without a home? Experiences of children from evicted households

Speakers & Authors: Helene Oldrup

The home is seen as spatially and temporally bounded setting, a shelter for households, but also a setting for home life, our most emotional and intimate relations, being the key context for the family. Numerous studies have looked at deviations from this, such children of divorce with two homes, children with a parent who commute long-distance or transnational families. This paper looks at children with unstable homes, i.e. children whose families have been evicted due to faulty rental payment and who are living in various forms of temporary accommodation. There is a strong social policy focus on homelessness, however, there is less attention to families living with temporary housing and on what this means for their children. Drawing sociology of childhood and everyday life concepts, the study explores 1) the patterns of everyday life in time and space for these children, 2) what the absence of a 'home' means for childrens sense of self and relations. The study draws on a qualitative study of 14 families and interviews with 16 children and youth from these families.
Ahl
Ainsworth
Alaggia
Albar
Albers
Alcántara
Alink
Amorós
Andersen
Andersson
Anderssen
Andersson Vogel
Anglin
Arnau-Sabatés
Attar-Schwartz
Ayotte
Backe-Hansen
Baeten
Bain
Bakermans-Kranenburg
Balsells
Bang-Møller
Barbero Vignola
Barbosa-Ducharme
Barron
Barth
Bastiaanssen
Batayneh
Batstra
Bauduin
Baumann
Beckett
Bell
Bellonci
Beltman
Benbenishty
Bengtsson
Bernedo
Berrick
Berridge
Bertrán Tarrés
Biehal
Bjørknes
Boddy
Bolter
Brady
Brand
Branica
Bravo
Broekhoven
Brown
Bruun
Busschers
Calheiros
Cameron
Canali
Carl
Carole
Carvalho
Casas
Cashin
Castro
Catherine
Chamberlain
Chan
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Christensen
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Christensen
Chamberland
Clement
Clemmensen
Clifford
Connolly
Copley
Cusworth
Daly
Daniel
Danielle
David
Marta
Nina
Ragnhild
Janet
Flora
Eavan
Christian
Vanja
Amaia
Resy
Rebecca
Sanne
Inge
Maria Manuela
Nadine
Cinzia
Lacharité
Côté
João M. S.
Ferran
Michael
Maravillas
Sellenet
Patricia
Adrienne
Colin
Michael
Bernadette
Øivin
Catherine
Claire
Donald
Chris
Tessa
Christopher
Daan
Rami
Tea
Torbenfeldt
Isabel M.
Jill
75
118
70, 96, 210
181, 182, 184
245
12
19
9
302
117, 175, 217
120
20, 50
37, 91
214, 215
26
271
144, 157, 318
260
84
200, 266
303
18, 72, 133, 270
113
84, 288
39, 40, 41, 43
269
257
230, 231
14
224
259-60
93
215
155
165
229
70, 96
177
183
260
Hendricks Alyxia 101
Hendsbee Trisha 19
Hennig Timo 216
Hermansen Line Grove 126
Hestbæk Anne-Dorthe 1
Heutink Linda 298, 299
Hickey Andrea 64
Hicks Leslie 17
Hillenbrand Clemens 148
Hjulström Fredrik 38
Hoikkala Susanna 247
Højen-Sørensen Anna-Katharina 82, 324
Höjer Staffan 83
Höjer Ingrid 98, 168
Holden Martha 55, 57
Hollingworth Katie 53, 252
Holm Anders 219
Holmes Lisa 123, 201, 202, 203, 204, 307
Houston Stan 46
Huiskes Mike 104
Hunter Simon 151
Huysghen Joana 138
Hyde-Dryden Georgia 20, 51
Ibrahim Rawan 47
Iglésias Joana 138
Islam Md. Tuhinul 94, 325
Iversen Anette Christine Charles 56
Izzo Margot 104, 246
Jakobsen Turf 107
James Sigrid 178, 227
Jansen Danielle E. M. C. 110, 208
Jedud Boric Ivana 122, 141, 160, 226, 287
Jessen Jes 232
Johansen John Steen 78
Johansson Helena 168
Johnsen Anne-Kari 277
Johnson Daniel 111, 150, 229
Join-Lambert Hélène 85, 245
Joly Marie-Pierre 308
Jones Helen 93, 261, 262
Jones Lisa M. 10
Jones Nancy 173
Jud Andreas 10
Juffer Femmie 24
Justinich Michael 19
Kaim Zeev 331
Kallen Dagmar 299
Kalverboer Margrite 292, 293, 295, 296
Känkänen Päivi 143
Karim Samina 48, 134, 146
Karmsteen Kirstine 37, 91
Kavira Charmaine 173
Kearney Tony 13
Kelllow Maria 219
Keller Samuel 171, 241
Kelly Berni 45, 158
Kendrick Andrew 48, 74, 134, 135, 146
Kierkgaard Anemone 323
Kjaer Lars Bo 215
Kleefman Marijke 208
Knorth Erik J. 136, 207, 221, 237, 238, 246, 104, 110, 207
Knot-Dickscheit Jana 221
Koengether Stefan 170
Koan Bente Heggem 155
Kolar Elisabetta 142
Konijn Carolien 76, 120
Koopmans Carien 237, 238
Kreipke Helle 215
Kroneman Leoniek 125
Kuhn Frank 57
Kyriakou Alkaterini 127
Laakso Riitta 320
Lancot Nadine 77
Landsverk John 204
Lang Katrin 9
Larsen Mette 79
Larsson Annika 15
Lázaro Susana 217
Lehto-Lundén Tiina 145
Lichtwarck Willy 155
Liel Christoph 9
Liljegren Andreas 83
Long Maureen 271
Lopes Diniz 105, 106, 174
López López Mónica 122, 200, 235, 237, 238
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>Page Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>López-Pina</td>
<td>Jose Antonio</td>
<td>Conception</td>
<td>113, 313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>López-Soler</td>
<td></td>
<td>Concepción</td>
<td>113, 313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucet</td>
<td></td>
<td>Frederique</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luke</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nikki</td>
<td>164, 256, 257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lundén</td>
<td></td>
<td>Karin</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lundström</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tommy</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lurie</td>
<td></td>
<td>Jim</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lushey</td>
<td></td>
<td>Clare</td>
<td>307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madsen</td>
<td></td>
<td>Martin</td>
<td>231, 234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magalhães</td>
<td></td>
<td>Eunice</td>
<td>26, 97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maiter</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sarah</td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mangold</td>
<td></td>
<td>Katharina</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marijs</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lisaan</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marquis</td>
<td></td>
<td>Robyn</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marres</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ellen</td>
<td>301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin</td>
<td></td>
<td>William</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin</td>
<td></td>
<td>Eduardo</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mateos</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ainoa</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maurovic</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ivana</td>
<td>141, 160, 226, 287, 203, 307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McDermid</td>
<td></td>
<td>Samantha</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McHale</td>
<td></td>
<td>John</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McLean</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lavinia</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McMahon</td>
<td></td>
<td>Patricia</td>
<td>271, 304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McNamara</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lynne</td>
<td>271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McPherson</td>
<td></td>
<td>Theresa</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McShane</td>
<td></td>
<td>Gabrielle</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meagher</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sarah</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melis</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sarah</td>
<td>169, 241, 273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melkman</td>
<td></td>
<td>Philip</td>
<td>44, 92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mendes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Janneke</td>
<td>104, 246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metselaar</td>
<td></td>
<td>Christopher</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mikton</td>
<td></td>
<td>Paola</td>
<td>197, 263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milani</td>
<td></td>
<td>Meagan</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miller</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ian</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milligan</td>
<td></td>
<td>David</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moesby-Jensen</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cecillie K.</td>
<td>81, 321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohamed</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lhousni</td>
<td>261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mølholm</td>
<td></td>
<td>Anne-Kirstine</td>
<td>240, 244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molina</td>
<td></td>
<td>M. cruz</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mondy</td>
<td></td>
<td>Stephen</td>
<td>18, 72, 133, 270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mondy</td>
<td></td>
<td>Linda</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montserrat</td>
<td></td>
<td>Carme</td>
<td>303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mooney</td>
<td></td>
<td>Jennifer</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mor-Salwo</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yifat</td>
<td>282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moss</td>
<td></td>
<td>Romaine</td>
<td>18, 72, 133, 270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Munch-Petersen</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mette</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Munro</td>
<td></td>
<td>Emily</td>
<td>49, 52, 53, 252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naert</td>
<td></td>
<td>Jan</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nanninga</td>
<td></td>
<td>Marieke</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neumann</td>
<td></td>
<td>Anna</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nielsen</td>
<td></td>
<td>Alva Albæk</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nikolaidis</td>
<td></td>
<td>George</td>
<td>11, 127, 128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nilsen</td>
<td></td>
<td>Hedvig Torvik</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ntinapogias</td>
<td></td>
<td>Athanasios</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nunno</td>
<td></td>
<td>Michael</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nygaard Christoffersen</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mogens</td>
<td>28, 124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nygård</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reidunn Håøy</td>
<td>278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obers</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lisa</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O’Brien</td>
<td></td>
<td>Valerie</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O’Higgins</td>
<td></td>
<td>Aoife</td>
<td>115, 166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oldrup</td>
<td></td>
<td>Helene</td>
<td>82, 334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oriol Granado</td>
<td></td>
<td>Xavier</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oscarsson</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lars</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oeterholm</td>
<td></td>
<td>Inger</td>
<td>326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pålsson</td>
<td></td>
<td>David</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor</td>
<td></td>
<td>Crescencia</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patricio</td>
<td></td>
<td>Joana</td>
<td>105, 106, 174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petersen</td>
<td></td>
<td>Jan</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petersen</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ulla</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petersen</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mimi</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petrelius</td>
<td></td>
<td>Päivi</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petrova Dimitrova</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nelli</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piche</td>
<td></td>
<td>Anne-Marie</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pierlings</td>
<td></td>
<td>Judith</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pierrine</td>
<td></td>
<td>Robin</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pijnenburg</td>
<td></td>
<td>Hubert M</td>
<td>16, 297, 298, 301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinkerton</td>
<td></td>
<td>John</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinto</td>
<td></td>
<td>Vänia S.</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poirier</td>
<td></td>
<td>Marie-Andree</td>
<td>84, 130, 306, 308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posch</td>
<td></td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pössö</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tarja</td>
<td>190, 247, 320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premoli</td>
<td></td>
<td>Silvio</td>
<td>102, 122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramon</td>
<td></td>
<td>Vincent</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramsey</td>
<td></td>
<td>Susan</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refaeli</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tehila</td>
<td>119, 273, 283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reijneveld</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sijmen A.</td>
<td>104, 110, 136, 208, 246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reilly</td>
<td></td>
<td>Claire</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reimer</td>
<td></td>
<td>Daniela</td>
<td>286</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Urbanc Kristina 302
Uzozie Adimka 199
van Andel Hans 207
van Audenhove Sharon 328
van Brandenburg Mariette 298, 299
van de Poel Sigrid 212, 213, 215
van de Vall Annemarie 76, 120
Van Den Heuvel Rien 30
van Den Tillaart Jantine 76
van Der Helm Peer 298
Van Der Sman Paul 30
van Hattum Marion 299, 300, 301
van Holen Frank 22, 25, 67, 144, 206
van Ijzendoorn Marinus 7
van Os Carla 292, 293, 295, 296
van Puyenbroeck Bert 8
van Rijsingen Rinie 16
van Rijswijk Chantal 76
van Santen Eric 34
van Sloten Bep 122
van Vugt Judith 300
van Yperen Tom 121
Vanderfaeillie Johan 8, 22, 25, 67, 206, 222
Vanderplasschen Wouter 223
Vanschoonlandt Femke 22, 25, 67, 114
Vaquero Eduard 198
Vecchiato Tiziano 157, 318
Veerman Jan Willem 30
Vierbuchen Marie-Christine 148
Villaba Biarnés Andreu 118
Vinnerljung Bo 4, 62
Vis Svein Arild 71
Vostanis Panos 312
Wade Jim 70, 96, 264
Wall Marlyn 101
Ward Harriet 20, 50, 51, 202, 204, 262
Waugh Jacinta 327
Weegar Kelly 64
Wegner-Lohin Jaime 129
Westrup Illa 276
Stephensen James 176, 180
Wildeman Christopher 218
Wimberley Kristina 32

Winter Karen 158, 165
Wissink Inge 298
Witteman Cilia 237, 238
Wormdahl Irene 36
Wubs Dorijn 285
Wulczyn Fred 3, 40, 41, 42, 205
Yule William 275
Zanon Ombretta 197, 263
Zarokosta Foteini 11
Zeijlmans Kirti 199
Zeira Anat 282, 283
Zevulun Danielle 292, 293, 295, 296
Zhao Claire Ting 46, 242
Zijlstra Elianne 292, 293, 295, 296
Zizak Antonija 141, 160, 226, 287