



Non-compulsory care for children and young people: What next for Scotland? Learning from research on Section 25

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The perspective from abroad

- The study on Section 25 contributes to the scarce body of literature about 'non-compulsory care' in child welfare internationally
 - The study will be influential also outside Scotland
- Many observations are similar to the findings of our study about *Consent and objection in child welfare decision-making in Finland* despite the differences in the child welfare systems

Not black or white

- Optimism that it is possible to find a fair balance between the strengths and weaknesses of non-compulsory care
 - The strengths and weaknesses as seen by social workers are very similar to the Finnish study (p. 79)
- The report suggests steps forward requiring more reflective use of non-compulsory care
 - and a variety of practices to support the use of non-compulsory care (e.g. training, information for parents and children)

The ban of term 'voluntary' ?

- Weak definitions of voluntary or non-compulsory care are similar in Finland as well
 - Lack of objection = consent?
 - Active consent?
 - Compulsory = decided by the court?
- The ban of the term 'voluntary' does not fully solve the complex nature of 'non-compulsory care'
 - The weaknesses and problems of the term would still remain and they are not only academic

The position of children in 'non-compulsory care'

- 'Power dynamics' in non-compulsory care (p. 98) is even more complex for children than for their parents

Forced consent, forced objection

- More understanding of their position is needed in the future if the intention is to include children