

# FRANCE

## Overview of residential child care

### Journal abstracts

After a Long-Term Placement: Investigating Educational Achievement, Behaviour, and Transition to Independent Living.

Author: Dumaret, Annick-Camille; Donati, Pascale; Crost, Monique.

Publication info: Children and Society 25. 3 (May 2011): 215-227.

Abstract: This study describes the transition towards independent living of 123 former fostered young people reared for long periods in a private French organisation, SOS Children's Villages. Three generations of care leavers were analysed through a postal survey and interviews. Their narratives show typical pathways after leaving care. Two-thirds became independent without major problems by the age of 24-25. Analyses have shown that the absence of severe emotional and behavioural disorders, and diplomas obtained, improved their odds of becoming independent. Results suggest a vital need to implement appropriate therapeutic care during placement and to develop care leaver support well beyond the age of 18, in order to help them personally and academically and to ensure their successful transition to adulthood.

Questionnaire Guide d'Évaluation des difficultés psychologiques de jeunes enfants pris en charge par la Protection de l'Enfance = Questionnaire Guiding the Evaluation of psychological disorders in young children protected by a welfare system.

Author: Mouchenik, Yoram; Gaboulaud, Valérie; Pérouse de Montclos, Marie-Odile; Monge, Suryana; Baubet, Thierry; et al.

Publication info: Enfance 0013-7545 62. 2 (Apr 2010): 143-166.

Abstract: For children protected by welfare systems, the evaluation of psychological disorders and mental health is now an international key issue. Placements in foster care have dramatically increased around the world. Better attention is needed to children's mental health and to the quality of services provided in out-of-home care. The aim of this paper is to present the first results of a validation procedure concerning a new screening tool, the QGE (Questionnaire Guiding the Evaluation of psychological disorders in young children). The QGE was used for the assessment of psychological disorders in young children displaced in three residential homes and foster care of the Parisian Area Child Agency. The QGE scores are compared to LCE (list of child behaving), the French validated version of the Achenbach Child Behavior Check List (CBCL). The QGE is a hetero-evaluation rating scale for children aged 4 to 6 years, filled by parents or child welfare workers. One of its specificity is to assess PTSD in case of traumatic events in the child's life. The QGE appears to be useful to collect caretakers' perceptions about the child and sounds promising to address children's psychological needs. The first results highlight the metrological sensitivity of the tool.

Foster care: A role for social pedagogy?

Author: Petrie, Pat.

Publication info: Adoption and Fostering 31. 1 (Apr 2007): 73-80.

Abstract: Social pedagogy, still an unfamiliar concept in Britain, is concerned with education in its widest sense, encompassing but going much beyond formal school-based learning. Pat Petrie reports on studies of social pedagogy in four countries conducted at the Thomas Coram Research Unit and discusses potential benefits of the social pedagogic approach for fostering in England. She argues that this would fit well with developing English policy towards children and children in care and can bridge the tensions inherent in foster care, combining a personal, relational approach with an insistence on reflection.

Adoption and Child Welfare Protection in France.

Author: Dumaret, Annick-Camille; Rosset, Dominique-Jeanne.

Publication info: Early Child Development and Care 175. 7 (November 2005): 10.

Abstract: This article presents the French Child Protection system, which is managed by Child Welfare of the local authorities (Aide Sociale a l'Enfance) and by Judicial Juvenile Protection depending on the central government (Protection Judiciaire de la Jeunesse) Children's judges are involved in child protection. The majority of children in care live in foster families and were placed after court orders All the administrative and judicial measures on families are revised each year, even in case of long-term placements Foster carers received professional training and are supported by the teams of the foster care agencies Working on child-parent ties is a necessity because the majority of the birth parents retain their parental responsibility. In the French tradition, there is a great reluctance to break family ties. The authors present the adoption policy and practice with its two systems (full adoption and simple adoption) and the foster family care system. The evolution of care situations is argued.

**Organisational Issues and Relationships between Siblings in the Fostering Process.**

Author: Chapon-Crouzet, Nathalie.

Publication info: *Les Sciences de l'éducation pour l'ère nouvelle* 38. 2 (2005): 25-42.

Abstract: During the exploration of the emotional relations within fostering, we have to focus our glance on the organizational issues and the relations between the siblings. Three models of composition of siblings in foster-families were studied; siblings living in the same foster-family; siblings living in different foster-families; and half-siblings not fostered or living in different foster-families. Siblings living in the same foster-family were studied with common parental and living situations in the same foster-family. Where siblings were living in different foster-families, in spite of common parental relationships, the sibling relations in this case were mainly in a process of reconstruction. Where half-siblings were not fostered or living in different foster-families, there was an asymmetry in the assumption of responsibility by non-fostering of the children born of a recombined maternal family. The relations between the half-siblings depend on the mother, and the relationships to half-siblings consanguineous are almost non-existent. The separate fostering of children through formal legal decisions requires a rebuilding of family relationships through a period together outside the fostering context to enable the children to find their identity.

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**Caretakers of Children with HIV in Extended and Foster Families: The French Situation.**

Author: Donati, Pascale; Dumaret, Annick-Camille.

Publication info: *European Journal of Social Work* 4. 2 (Jul 2001): 173-183.

Abstract: In the context of HIV infection, the disappearance or inability to assume their parental role of one or both parents has focused attention on the generation of grandparents who are responsible for the offspring. It is only when they are unable or no longer able to do so that uncles or aunts, or, even to a lesser extent, friends, take on this role. The Aide Sociale a l'Enfance ASE (Child Welfare Authorities) step in as a last resort when there is no kinship option. However, the environmental vulnerability of these families and their psychosocial risk factors, which preceded the advent of HIV, are often behind the children's admission to ASE care. Analysis of the interviews carried out on 36 family members and 20 professional foster families records their involvement on a day-to-day basis with the children, for the most part HIV-infected. It also highlights the constraints and difficulties involved in what is an extreme form of family solidarity, compared with the structured support of institutional care, which in turn has its own limitations.

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**Paths toward Autonomy: The Living Conditions of Fostered Children in Western France in the Early 20th Century.**

Author: Jablonka, Ivan.

Publication info: *History of the Family* 6. 3 (2001): 401-421.

Abstract: To test the validity of widespread notions about the unhappy lives of abandoned French children placed in foster care around the turn of the twentieth century, the article uses the case files and inspectors' reports of the Romorantin agency to analyze the nature of fosterage: the children's continuing links to their biological parents, to their foster families, and with the Assistance Publique system, which administered the fosterage system and the agency. The Romorantin agency was located in Sologne in the centre of France, and placed out in the countryside only children "abandoned" in Paris. The analysis suggests that although the lives of fostered children were characterized by constraints and, at times, mistreatment, in many respects, these children were able to experience more autonomy and choice to shape their lives than their peers in "normal" families. A close reading of the sources shows their lives to have had less of the stereotyped unhappiness usually attributed to them.

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**Adult Outcome of Children Reared for Long-Term Periods in Foster Families.**

Author: Dumaret, Annick-Camille; Coppel-Batsch, Marthe; Couraud, Simone.

Publication info: *Child Abuse and Neglect* 21. 10 (Oct 1997): 911-927.

Abstract: Studies the long-term impact of adverse childhood experiences, specifically those resulting from family breakdowns that were followed by a period of stability in a foster care environment. Semistructured interview and institutional data and recollections of foster families among 59 individuals (reared for 5+ years in foster care, out of care for 5+ years, and ages 23+) were converted into social integration scores. Findings reveal that most adults were well-integrated socially, with only 10% in situations of failure. Parental problems and deviance, and childhood problems such as neglect, had significant effects on social integration scores. On a positive note, the intergenerational repetition of "child placement" behaviors, significant in the previous generation, had practically disappeared, highlighting the therapeutic assistance provided by the foster care agency.

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**Foster children: risk factors and development at a preschool age.**

Author: Dumaret, A C; Duyme, M; Tomkiewicz, S.

Publication info: *Early Child Development and Care* 134 (1997): 23-42.

Abstract: Children from disadvantaged and deprived environments, adopted after the age of 4, had below-average IQ scores. Parental psychosocial antecedents, medical and health problems and difficulties in infancy were more frequent than in the general population. 48% had emotional and/or behavioural problems. Findings showed that late age of placement, neglect and abuse increased emotional and/or behavioural problems in a statistically significant way.

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The SOS children's villages: Part 2: behaviour of children reared in a permanent foster care.

Author: Dumaret, A.

Publication info: Early Child Development and Care 34. May 88 (May 1988): 267-277.

Abstract: The present study has investigated the behavioural development of 157 children aged 7-15 reared in a long term placement. They had been in a SOS children's village for 4 years. Some behavioural problems appear when 2 or 3 groups of siblings are reared together. The proportion of behaviour problems for such children reared in a monoparental foster care is equivalent to those of children reared in working class families whether adopted quite early or remaining in their natural families.

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