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Overview of residential child care

Journal abstracts

Why do children placed out-of-home because of parental substance abuse have less mental health problems than children placed for other reasons?

Author: Havnen, Karen Skaale; Breivik, Kyrre; Stormark, Kjell Morten; Jakobsen, Reidar.

Publication info: Children and Youth Services Review 33. 10 (Oct 2011): 2010-2017.

Abstract: The purpose of this paper was to compare children placed out-of-home because of parental substance abuse (PSA) with children placed for other reasons (NPSA), and to explore the association between PSA and mental health problems in a Norwegian sample of 6- to 12-year-old children in out-of-home care (N=109). Several group differences were found related to the children themselves, their families and the Child Welfare case. The PSA children had less total difficulties, conduct problems and emotional problems than the NPSA children assessed by the teachers on the Revised Rutter Scale. However, both groups had far more mental health problems than children in general. The most important variable explaining the group difference in all subgroups of mental health problems was the extent of prosocial behavior in the children, but being placed for behavioral problems also explained a significant part of total difficulties and conduct problems. Variables like gender, discipline problems and socioeconomic conditions did not have a significant effect. The conclusion of the study was that prosocial behavior might be regarded as an important protective factor against mental health problems, which is an argument for investing in programs focusing on enhancing the placed children's mastering strategies. [Copyright Elsevier B.V.]

The Concept of 'Family' Among Norwegian Adolescents in Long-Term Foster Care.

Author: Ellingsen, Ingunn T; Shemmings, David; Stand amposlashrksen, Ingunn.

Publication info: Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal 28. 4 (Aug 2011): 301-318.

Abstract: In Norway, about 8,000 children live in foster homes (about 3,300 in age group 13-17). What does 'family' mean to these children? We explored the views and feelings about 'family' among 22 adolescents who are living in long-term foster care. Three patterns emerged. Most of the participants expressed confidence and adjustment in the foster home placement and felt bonded to both their foster family and to their birth family. Other adolescents expressed a strong sense of membership to their birth family but not to their foster family, and the remaining adolescents described a weak bond to birth family but a strong bond to their foster family. The main implications of the three patterns are discussed in the light of policy and practice.

Comparing Fostering in Scotland and Norway with an Emphasis on the Use of Private Actors.

Author: Begg, Ingvild Sigstad.

Publication info: Child Care in Practice 17. 2 (Apr 2011): 131-142.

Abstract: During the last couple of years the Norwegian media have on several occasions highlighted failings in the Child Welfare Services, and in particular the failure of finding good foster carers for children and young people who need it. An additional discussion has been the use of private actors in the care market, a discussion that to some extent appears to be based on an assumption that private foster carers do not exist. In Scotland the Scottish Government recently approved the new Looked After Children (Scotland) Regulations 2009, and have during the last couple of years focused on improving the services for looked-after children and young people. In Scotland the private care market increased from six to 29 independent providers of foster care from 2004 to 2007. Both countries are struggling when it comes to finding enough foster carers. By comparing the two countries' regulations it could be claimed that Scottish regulations provide a better chance of safeguarding the quality in the work related to looked-after children and young people.

Treatment Outcomes and Mediators of Parent Management Training: A One-Year Follow-Up of Children with Conduct Problems.

Author: Hagen, Kristine Amlund; Ogden, Terje; Bjornebekk, Gunnar.

Publication info: Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology 40. 2 (Mar 2011): 165-178.

Abstract: This effectiveness study presents the results of a 1-year follow-up of a randomized controlled trial of Parent Management Training. Families of 112 Norwegian girls and boys with clinic-level conduct problems participated, and 75 (67%) families were retained at follow-up. Children ranged in age from 4 to 12 at intake (M=8.44). Families randomized to the control group received an active treatment alternative as would be normally offered by participating agencies. Multi-informant, multisetting outcome measures were collected and results from both intention-to-treat and treatment-on-the-treated analyses are presented. In two separate indirect effects models, assignment to Parent Management Training-the Oregon model predicted greater effective discipline and family cohesion at postassessment, which in turn predicted improvements in several child domains at follow-up.

Managing loss and a threatened identity: experiences of parents of children growing up in foster care, the perspectives of their social workers and implications for practice.

Author: Schofield, Gillian; Moldestad, Bente; Hojer, Ingrid; Ward, Emma; Skilbred, Dag; et al.

Publication info: *British Journal of Social Work* 41. 1 (Jan 2011): 74-92.

Abstract: Parents of children growing up in foster-care have been a largely neglected group in policy, practice and research, in spite of the fact that these parents are often vulnerable adults who experience a profound loss and a threat to their identity. Parents' involvement through contact is also likely to have an impact on children's stability and security in the foster family. This article draws on data from parallel qualitative studies at the University of East Anglia, England, the University of Bergen, Norway, and the University of Gothenburg, Sweden. Interviews and focus groups with parents showed a great deal of similarity in the situation experienced by parents in the three countries. But all three studies found great diversity in how parents managed their loss and their threatened identity over time, including varied strategies for managing cognitive dissonance. What parents shared was the need to be treated by social workers with respect and empathy; to receive information about the children; and to be involved, where possible, in the children's lives. Focus groups with social workers, who had to balance the needs of children and parents, found there was a need for guidance in this difficult work. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press

"If only" and "despite all": Narrative configuration among young people living in residential care.

Author: Jansen, Anne; Haavind, Hanne.

Publication info: *Narrative Inquiry* 21. 1 (2011): 68-87.

Abstract: First-person narratives are meaning-making devices that can be used as powerful tools to direct developmental changes. For young people who have endured difficulties in their lives, the selection and configuration of such experiences may contribute in significant ways to how they come to understand themselves and what possibilities they hold. Repeated interviews with young people living in residential homes provided by Child Protection Services have demonstrated how the young people give accounts of their past and present as well as their future prospects. Some tell stories that speak of how things have turned out well despite everything that has troubled them. The hindrances to their development are turned around and adversity is spoken of as something from which they have benefitted. Others dwell on how things might have been better if only previous conditions had been otherwise. They get "stuck" because the things that could have made a difference belong to the past. The exploration of narrative configurations in the format of "Despite all" and "if only" may illuminate how personal accounts of events have significance in terms of subjectivation and further development. The configuration of self-narratives offers alternative understanding of how out-of-home placement sometimes fails as a measure to support development and how some young people manage despite adversity.

Victim or Troublemaker? Young People in Residential Care.

Author: Jansen, Anne.

Publication info: *Journal of Youth Studies* 13. 4 (August 2010): 423-437.

Abstract: Young people who live in residential care are caught between discourses of being a victim of abuse and inadequate care or being a troublemaker by their own conduct. Both discourses are rooted in the reasons for placement, and they will offer subject positions that are experienced as troubled. Repeated interviews with young people living in residential care provided by child protection services demonstrate how the youths position themselves within such prevailing discourses and negotiate social claims and expectations of appropriate development. While some try to normalise their problematic behaviour and thereby reject being a troublemaker, others insist that they are victimised as a result of the placement and thus displace the cause of their troubles. The study shows that, in this negotiation of possible subjectivities, some youths manage to take advantage of the placement in surprising ways, while others get blocked in their own developmental efforts.

Neuropsychological screening of children of substance-abusing women attending a Special Child Welfare Clinic in Norway.

Author: Hjerkin, Bjoerg; Lindbaek, Morten; Skogmo, Idar; Rosvold, Elin Olaug.

Publication info: *Substance Abuse Treatment, Prevention, and Policy* 5 (Jul 20, 2010): 17-17.

Abstract: Exposure to alcohol and illicit substances during pregnancy can have an impact on the child for the rest of his/her life. A Special Child Welfare Clinic (SCWC) in Norway provides care for pregnant women with substance abuse problems. Treatment and support are provided without replacement therapy. We performed a neuropsychological screening of 40 children aged four to 11 years whose mothers had attended the SCWC during pregnancy, and of a comparison group of 80 children of women without substance abuse problems. The children were presented with tests chosen from Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, third version (WISC-III), Nepsy, Halstead-Reitan and Raven's Progressive Matrices, Coloured Version. The tests were grouped into five main domains; (1) learning and memory, (2) visual scanning, planning and attention, (3) executive function, (4) visuo-motor speed and dexterity and (5) general intellectual ability. No children in the study had test results in the clinical range in any domain. Bivariate analyses revealed that children of short-term substance-abusing mothers (who stopped substance abuse within the first trimester) had significantly lower test scores than the comparison group in three out of five domains (domain 2, 3, 4). Children of long-term substance abusers (who maintained moderate substance abuse throughout pregnancy) had significantly lower test results than the comparison group in one domain of the test results (domain 1). All but one child in the long-term group were or had been in foster homes. Most children in the short-term group stayed with their mothers. Multivariate regression analyses revealed that foster care minimum 50% of life time was associated with better scores on domains (1) learning and memory, (2) visual scanning, planning and attention, and (3) executive functions, while no significant associations with test scores was found for

substance abuse and birth before 38 weeks of gestation. Children raised by former substance abusing mothers scored worse on the neuropsychological screening than children who had substance abusing mothers and mostly were raised in foster homes. This indicates that it is important to focus on the environment in cases where help and support are provided to presently or formerly addicted women raising children.

Arranging stability for children in long-term out-of-home care.

Author: Christiansen, Oeivin; Havik, Toril; Anderssen, Norman.

Publication info: Children and Youth Services Review 32. 7 (Jul 2010): 913-921.

Abstract: There is a widespread concern for children in public care who experience repeated moves and a lack of opportunity to settle down. The aim of the present analysis was to examine the placement histories of children in long-term out-of-home care and to gain knowledge of important factors that affect stability as reported by children, parents, and social workers. Within a prospective research design, the placement histories of 70 Norwegian children were followed through eight years, at several time points. Both counting and qualitative analyses were conducted. The findings emphasize the significance of carrying out a thorough investigation of the specific circumstances of each placement and placement change when the question of breakdown and stability is raised. The informants' accounts of placement breakdowns reflect the considerable responsibility assigned to foster carers for ensuring stability for children in care. The paper discusses premises and implications of this assumption, and points out that more realistic expectations and increased attention to the children's views and attitudes of the placement may contribute to greater stability in care.

Linking research, policy and practice in welfare services and education in Norway.

Author: Ogden, Terje; Kärki, Freja Ulvestad; Teigen, Katrine Stegenborg.

Publication info: Evidence and policy 6. 2 (May 2010): 161-178.

Abstract: In Norway, links between research, policy and practice are in a process of development, with initiatives to both strengthen the knowledge base for evidence-based policy and practice and increase the demand for research-based interventions. Examples of these initiatives from the fields of mental health, education and child welfare are provided, including institutions for research and development and the implementation of evidence-based programmes. The initiatives are set in the context of some basic facts about Norway and its research system. The implications of 'importing' evaluated intervention programmes from other countries are discussed, and the relative merits of a 'what works' or broader approach to evidence-based policy and practice are assessed. Reprinted by permission of the Policy Press, University of Bristol

An Institutional Comparison of Child Protection Systems in Australia and Norway Focused on Workforce Retention.

Author: Healy, Karen; Olstedal, Siv.

Publication info: Journal of Social Policy 39. 2 (Apr 2010): 255-274.

Abstract: By any standard, child protection work is a demanding field of social services work. Throughout much of the post-industrial world, child protection agencies face significant problems in recruiting and retaining front-line staff with the abilities required to undertake this often complex and stressful work. The capacity of these agencies to achieve their social policy objectives can be compromised by workforce instability. Despite a growing body of evidence about the contribution of local organisational and caseworker characteristics to workforce turnover, policy-makers face a dearth of information about how the broader institutional context of child protection systems contributes to challenges in workforce retention. This lack of evidence is notable given the varying rates of caseworker turnover observed internationally, particularly between social policy regimes where different institutional contexts shape workforce conditions. This article aims to contribute to the evidence base for improving workforce retention in child protection services through an institutional comparison of child protection systems in Queensland (Australia) and Norway. We analyse the role of the institutional conditions in shaping the nature and scope of child protection work, characteristics and responsibilities of caseworkers, and their financial remuneration for this work. We discuss how these institutional effects help to explain the differences in workforce turnover among child protection workers in Queensland and Norway.

What works? A 15-year follow-up study of 85 young people with serious behavioral problems.

Author: Helgeland, Ingeborg Marie.

Publication info: Children and Youth Services Review 32. 3 (Mar 2010): 423-429.

Abstract: Adolescents with serious behavioral problems, such as truancy, criminality, drug abuse and vagrancy, provoke a range of reactions. What measures can help these young people onto a more positive track? A child welfare project in a Norwegian county in the early 1980s examined alternative initiatives for boys and girls with the most serious behavioral problems. The adolescents were followed up at the age of 30, by means of interviews, surveys and official data. This article focuses mainly on quantitative analyses. The study shows that three-quarters of the female participants and about half the male participants were living lives traditionally viewed as satisfactory for 30-year-olds, i.e., 'ordinary' lives. The findings indicate that out-of-home initiatives in a family-similar setting (with adults and adolescents living together on an everyday basis) seem to give a chance to re-socialization. Well-resourced foster homes and treatment collectives for young drug abusers gave the young people an opportunity to learn step-by-step to have confidence in adults as significant others, to live meaningful and 'ordinary' daily lives and gradually to break with friends with antisocial conduct. [Copyright Elsevier B.V.]

From concerned to convinced: reaching decisions about out-of-home care in Norwegian child welfare services.

Author: Christiansen, Oeivin; Anderssen, Norman.

Publication info: *Child and Family Social Work* 15. 1 (Feb 2010): 31-40.

Abstract: Placing children in out-of-home care constitutes one of the strongest public interventions in families. This paper explores how Norwegian Child Welfare Service (CWS) workers present their reasons as well as their work processes in the course of deciding to place children in out-of-home care. The analysis is based on interviews with 83 social workers and concerns 109 children recently removed from their homes. Three central elements were identified in the social workers' accounts: (1) a description of worrying conditions in the family; (2) the workers' long-term back-and-forth process, which revolved around experiences from the case, particularly around interactions with the parents; and (3) a triggering factor that made the out-of-home placement take place when it did. These elements underline the need to include both substance (conditions related to the child and his/her family) and procedure (conditions related to the work on the case) to understand what leads CWS to removing children. Both types of conditions put the parents, rather than the children, in the centre of the workers' attention, which may be explained by the position and role of the CWS workers as street-level bureaucrats. The findings emphasize the importance of acknowledging the contradictory position of CWS workers. Reprinted by permission of Blackwell Publishing.

Negotiating Identity: Conflicts between the Agency of the Student and the Official Diagnosis of Social Workers and Teachers.

Author: Berg, Kari.

Publication info: *European Educational Research Journal* 9. 2 (2010): 164-176.

Abstract: This article aims to demonstrate the interplay between the individual's negotiation of his/her identity in compulsory school and the systems of communication and practice of professionals in the welfare state. It looks at the case of "Tom," whose custody has been taken over by the Child Welfare Service and who now lives in a child welfare institution. The article discusses how Tom constructs and negotiates his identity within educational and institutional frameworks, which are in turn influenced by professional agencies, alliances, and power relations.

What works for whom? Gender differences in intake characteristics and treatment outcomes following Multisystemic Therapy.

Author: Ogden, Terje; Hagen, Kristine Amlund.

Publication info: *Journal of Adolescence* 32. 6 (Dec 2009): 1425-1435.

Abstract: Aims of the study - We investigated whether girls and boys had similar referral symptoms and background characteristics at intake to Multisystemic Therapy (MST) and whether adolescent girls with serious behavior problems benefited as much from MST treatment as did boys. We also examined gender differences in rate of co-morbidity at intake and whether the families of boys and girls referred to MST differed in their evaluation of the treatment received. Method - Participants were 117 Norwegian adolescent girls (35%) and boys (65%), ranging in age from 12 to 17 (M = 14.58), referred to MST treatment in the first and second year of the program operation. Results - Gender differences appeared for some referral reasons, intake characteristics and treatment changes, but the similarities between girls and boys far outnumbered their differences. Conclusions - Although girls may present a somewhat different problem profile than do boys and their risk factors for developing conduct problems may be somewhat different, MST seemed flexible and robust enough to be effective for most adolescents in the present sample, regardless of gender. [Copyright Association for Professionals in Services for Adolescents. Published by Elsevier Ltd.]

Implementing and Evaluating Evidence-Based Treatments of Conduct Problems in Children and Youth in Norway.

Author: Ogden, Terje; Amlund Hagen, Kristine; Askeland, Elisabeth; Christensen, Bernadette.

Publication info: *Research on Social Work Practice* 19. 5 (Sep 2009): 582-591.

Abstract: This article sums up 8 years of experience with evidence-based programs in the treatment of conduct problems in children and youth. A conceptual model describing the implementation components relevant to the Norwegian project is presented and discussed. Next, we describe a case study of the implementation strategy accompanied by outcomes from the clinical trials of Multisystemic Therapy (MST) and Parent Management Training, 'the Oregon model' (PMTO). The national implementation strategy for evidence-based treatment programs is a combination of a "top-down" and "bottom-up" approach to implementation based on collaborative efforts of a national center for dissemination, implementation, and research and the public child and adolescent service system operating in the municipalities. The strategy further includes recruitment of candidates for training through the various service systems and the establishment of permanent networks for collaboration, supervision, and support.

The nature of social pedagogy: An excursion in Norwegian territory.

Author: Stephens, Paul.

Publication info: *Child and Family Social Work* 14. 3 (Aug 2009): 343-351.

Abstract: In this paper, I examine the nature of social pedagogy, a discipline with deep roots in Continental Europe but not in the UK. Things are changing, however. The politicians in Westminster are listening to the people at the Thomas Coram Research Unit in London. The message is unequivocal. It is time to learn from social pedagogical approaches to working with looked-after children in other European countries. Why is this? The government wants to prepare an early years professional

who can combine the skills of a social worker with those of an educator. Based on case studies of successful approaches to improving the well-being of looked-after children in Denmark, France and Germany, the Thomas Coram researchers have found a child care professional who can pull this off: the social pedagogue. As a professor of social pedagogy in a Norwegian university that educates social pedagogues, I want to shed light on a discipline that might help British stakeholders in child care settings to draw selective lessons from a promising Nordic model.

Gender differences in intake characteristics and behavior change among children in families receiving parent management training.

Author: Kjoebli, John; Ogden, Terje.

Publication info: *Children and Youth Services Review* 31. 8 (Aug 2009): 823-830.

Abstract: Participants were 323 families with children (aged 4-12 years), among whom 87 (26.9%) were girls. Gender differences before treatment with Parent Management Training - the Oregon model (PMTO) and pre-post gender differences in behavioral change (regression analyses) were examined. At pre-treatment, girls demonstrated less externalizing problem behavior according to parents and teachers, but more internalizing problems according to parents. Teachers reported girls to be more socially competent than boys and they reported more comorbidity among boys than girls. At post treatment, girls had more likely changed in a positive direction according to teacher ratings of externalizing behavior and social competence, but not according to any of the parent-reported variables. In sum, girls were not more at risk than boys at intake to treatment and PMTO appeared to be an equally effective intervention for girls and boys. The few gender differences in outcomes indicated that girls benefited more from PMTO than boys. The limitations and practical implications of the findings are discussed. [Copyright Elsevier B.V.]

Mental Health Problems in Norwegian School Children Placed Out-of-Home: The Importance of Family Risk Factors.

Author: Havnen, Karen Skaale; Jakobsen, Reidar; Stormark, Kjell Morten.

Publication info: *Child Care in Practice* 15. 3 (July 2009): 235-250.

Abstract: The main aim of this article is to explore the association between mental health problems in children placed out-of-home and family risk factors reported as reasons for placement. The sample consisted of 109 Norwegian children aged 6-12 years. Mental health problems were assessed by the Revised Rutter scales reported by the parents and the teachers shortly after placement. On the basis of the reported reasons for placement, three risk indexes were constructed: parental risk, interactional risk, and child neglect and abuse risk. The analyses showed that 70% or more of the placed children had symptoms of mental health problems, boys more often than girls. Parental risk and interactional risk each accounted for a significant part of the variance in the children's mental health, while child neglect and abuse did not. Our data, however, indicated that children placed out-of-home mainly due to parental risk had less mental health problems than other children, while children placed due to interactional risk or child neglect and abuse had more problems. The study indicates that family-related reasons for placement reported by the child welfare workers are important indicators for assessing mental health problems in children placed out-of-home.

Social pedagogy and the teacher: England and Norway compared.

Author: Kyriacou, Chris; Ellingsen, Ingunn Tollisen; Stephens, Paul; Sundaram, Vanita.

Publication info: *Pedagogy, Culture and Society* 17. 1 (Mar 2009): 75-87.

Abstract: Social pedagogy as practice refers to actions on the part of adults to promote the personal development, social education and general well-being of the child alongside or in place of parents in a range of educational and social care settings (e.g. pre-school play groups, residential care homes, youth clubs). This paper focuses how the notion of social pedagogy as practice has been applied in England and Norway in the context of recent developments in policy and practice regarding the interface between education services and childcare and welfare services. In Norway, the notion of social pedagogy reflects many aspects of the way the term is often understood in continental Europe. In England, the term is only just beginning to be used in this way following a major policy development, 'Every Child Matters', which has led to a review of the role of the teacher in the context of integrating education and child welfare services. The paper considers the implications of such recent developments for changes in the role of the teacher.

Kinship Foster Parenting: Gender, Class and Labour-Force Participation.

Author: Holtan, Amy; Thornblad, Renee.

Publication info: *European Journal of Social Work* 12. 4 (2009): 465-478.

Abstract: Objective: Knowledge about gender, class and labour-force participation of kinship foster parents in European countries is scarce. This study examines the gendered structure and generational pattern of kinship foster parenting in Norway and compares class components and labour-force participation of kinship foster mothers to the larger female population and to non-kinship foster mothers. Method: The analysis is based on survey data on relationships between foster parents and child, social demographics and placement characteristics from 123 kinship and 88 non-kinship foster mothers of children in state custody. Labour Force Survey and Education Statistics from Statistics Norway were used to compare the kinship sample to the average female population. Findings: Kinship foster care in Norway is gendered, in that it is women who assume the responsibility for relatives' children. Kinship foster care reflects class differences in that the educational level of kinship foster mothers and their household income are lower than the average female population and of non-kinship foster mothers in Norway. The labour-force participation of kinship foster mothers in Norway is comparable to that of the country's female population in general, except for women aged 35-55 with children under seven, among whom labour-force

participation is lower than for the female population.

Family types and social integration in kinship foster care.

Author: Holtan, Amy.

Publication info: *Children and Youth Services Review* 30. 9 (Sep 2008): 1022-1036.

Abstract: Objective The aim of this article is to address the complexity of relationships in kinship foster care and explore the social integration of foster children. The article analyzes the meaning of family and parenting from the perspectives of the child, the foster parents, and the biological parents. Method The study is based on qualitative methodological design supplemented by a quantitative study of long-term kinship foster care in Norway. This article draws mainly on interview data from children aged 9-12 (N = 17) placed in long-term kinship care, biological parents (N = 14), and foster parents (N = 47), representing a total of 29 placements. The methodological approach partly employs the principles of Grounded Theory, combined with abductive strategies, family and kinship theories. Findings based on three criteria derived from the analysis of the interviews-power, understanding of the assignment, and solidarity-I have developed a typology of negotiated relationships among kinship caregivers, biological parents, and foster children. These are archetypal constructions whose purpose is to illustrate the internal variation of family understanding in kinship foster home undertakings. The article clarifies the criteria for constructing the types of family and discusses the social integration of kinship foster children on their basis. [Copyright 2008 Elsevier B.V.]

Treatment Effectiveness of Parent Management Training in Norway: A Randomized Controlled Trial of Children with Conduct Problems.

Author: Ogden, Terje; Hagen, Kristine Amlund.

Publication info: *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology* 76. 4 (August 2008): 607-621.

Abstract: This study was a randomized control trial (RCT) of Parent Management Training--The Oregon Model (PMTO) in Norway. A sample representing all health regions of Norway and consisting of 112 children with conduct problems and their families participated in the study. Families were randomly assigned to either PMTO or a regular services comparison group. PMTO was delivered via existing children's services, and families were recruited using the agencies' regular referral procedures, making this the first effectiveness study of PMTO and the first RCT of PMTO conducted outside of the United States. Using a multiagent-multimethod approach, results showed that PMTO was effective in reducing parent-reported child externalizing problems, improving teacher-reported social competence, and enhancing parental discipline. Age level and gender modified the effects of PMTO treatment on other outcomes. In a path model, participation in PMTO was associated with improved parental discipline, and effective discipline predicted greater child compliance, fewer child-initiated negative chains, and lower levels of child externalizing problems. Findings are presented along with a discussion of the implications for practice and research and the challenges accompanying effectiveness trials.

Social Competence and Antisocial Behavior: Continuity and Distinctiveness across Early Adolescence.

Author: Sorlie, Mari-Anne; Hagen, Kristine Amlund; Ogden, Terje.

Publication info: *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 18. 1 (Mar 2008): 121-144.

Abstract: The degree of continuity and distinctiveness in social competence and antisocial behavior was examined in a longitudinal structural equation model. Participants were 391 typically developing Norwegian middle school students (51% boys), their parents, and teachers and were assessed when they were approximately 13 years of age (a school cohort in 8th grade) and again 17 months later, when they were about 15 years old (in 10th grade). Social competence showed considerable stability across middle school, more than did antisocial behavior. Low social competence at age 13 predicted antisocial behavior at age 15, over and above the variance explained by the earlier assessment of antisocial behavior. While social competence and antisocial behavior both showed a relatively strong negative association concurrently and demonstrated considerable overlap, results suggested that the two constructs should be considered separate dimensions. Findings are presented within a transactional framework and implications for prevention efforts and directions for future research are discussed.

Bridging the Gap between Science and Practice: The Effective Nationwide Transport of MST Programs in Norway.

Author: Ogden, Terje; Christensen, Bernadette; Sheidow, Ashli J; Holth, Per.

Publication info: *Journal of Child and Adolescent Substance Abuse* 17. 3 (2008): 93-109.

Abstract: The successful nationwide transport and evaluation of Multisystemic Therapy (MST) programs in Norway is described. This description is provided within the context of the nation's movement towards the adoption of evidence-based practices (EBPs) during the past decade, the conduct of a multisite randomized clinical trial to examine the effectiveness of MST in Norway, and the development of a center for effectively implementing and researching EBPs for child and adolescent problems. Data on Norwegian adolescent substance use, treatment, and research is summarized. Finally, challenges that have been addressed and overcome in achieving the large-scale adoption and implementation of MST are presented from the context of innovation diffusion. System-level barriers and strategies regarding funding, practice norms, local ownership, engaging stakeholders, geography, referral gatekeepers, and risk assessment are noted, as are practitioner level barriers and strategies regarding language, cultural appropriateness, caseload and compensation issues, and background and skill deficits. The Norwegian approach, in many ways, serves as an excellent model for importing and sustaining EBPs on a large-scale basis.

Immediate Impacts of PALS: A School-Wide Multi-Level Programme Targeting Behaviour Problems in Elementary School.

Author: Sorlie, Mari-Anne; Ogden, Terje.

Publication info: *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research* 51. 5 (November 2007): 471-492.

Abstract: The article describes the main outcomes of the intervention programme "Positive behaviour, interactions and learning environment in school" (PALS). PALS is an adapted Norwegian version of the School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support model, developed in the United States with school-wide interventions aiming at the prevention of behaviour problems and the promotion of social competence through a supportive learning environment. The effectiveness was evaluated with a quasi-experimental design in four elementary schools, two years after implementation. An equal number of comparison schools were included in the study. Informants were students (n = 735) in third to seventh grade and teachers working at least 50% (n = 82). The immediate reductions in teacher-observed problem behaviour ranged from moderate to large, while the results based on student ratings of social competence and classroom climate were less encouraging. Differential effects were found and implementation quality was together with teacher collective efficacy significantly related to better outcomes. The programme and results are discussed in relation to prior research, limitations of study design, and future implementation and research.

Coping Styles, Learning Environment and Emotional and Behavioural Problems.

Author: Thuen, Elin; Bru, Edvin; Ogden, Terje.

Publication info: *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research* 51. 4: 347-368. (September 2007).

Abstract: The main aim of this study was to explore associations between students' perceptions of learning environment factors and their reports of emotional and behavioural problems (EBP) and to what degree students' coping styles could influence this relation. The study was conducted as a survey among a representative sample of 2006 Norwegian ninth-graders. Results showed that students' coping styles accounted for some of the covariance between learning environment factors and EBP. This indicates that associations found between learning environment factors and EBP to some degree could be reflections of students' coping styles, in the sense that coping styles affect students' perceptions of the learning environment or the learning environment itself. However, two-thirds of the covariance between learning environment factors and EBP was not accounted for by individual students' coping styles. The unique effect of learning environment factors on variances in off-task orientation, externalising problems and emotional problems was 22%, 13% and 4%, respectively.

Building Strength through Enhancing Social Competence in Immigrant Students in Primary School: A Pilot Study.

Author: Ogden, Terje; Sorlie, Mari-Anne; Hagen, Kristine Amlund.

Publication info: *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties* 12. 2 (June 2007): 105-117.

Abstract: In the present pilot study we examined how a school-wide intervention model, "Positive behavior, interactions and learning environment in school" (Norwegian acronym: PALS) contributed to risk reduction in immigrant students through the promotion of social competence. The aims of the PALS project were to promote social competence through positive behavior support and to prevent and reduce problem behavior in students. Teachers and students in selected grade levels at four elementary schools and four comparison schools participated in a quasi-experimental evaluation spanning over 20 months. The present study was conducted with a subset of the students, namely the 6.7% (n = 49) immigrant students who had Norwegian as their second language. Consistent with the social learning theory underlying the PALS model, teacher reports indicated that immigrant students in the intervention group were significantly more socially competent than were their counterparts in the comparison group at post-test when school differences at pre-assessment were accounted for. A significant decrease in internalizing problem behavior was registered in teacher ratings along with a marginally significant positive trend in teacher-rated academic progress. No intervention effect was registered in teacher-rated externalizing problem behavior or in student ratings of social competence. In order to measure potential generalizing effects of school-wide intervention programs, we discuss the need for larger samples and longer follow-up periods.

To Lose Custody of a Child.

Author: Ellingsen, Ingunn T.

Publication info: *Nordisk Sosialt Arbeid* 27. 4 (2007): 263-274.

Abstract: The child welfare services are required by law to provide follow-up for parents when children are placed in residential or foster care. This article reports the results of interviews with eight mothers about how they experienced follow-up after out-of-home placement. The mothers found contact with the child welfare services to be difficult and they failed to express their feelings of grief and shame. They were afraid that the expression of their feelings would have a negative impact on their chances of regaining custody of their children. The mothers who had lost custody found it difficult to obtain any positive benefits from their contact with the child welfare services.

Multisystemic Treatment of Serious Behaviour Problems in Youth: Sustainability of Effectiveness Two Years after Intake.

Author: Ogden, Terje; Hagen, Kristine Amlund.

Publication info: *Child and Adolescent Mental Health* 11. 3 (Sep 2006): 142-149.

Abstract: Background: Multisystemic Treatment (MST) is an intensive home- and community based intervention for youths with serious behaviour problems. The aim of this study was to examine the effectiveness of MST compared to 'regular services' (RS) two years after intake to treatment. In particular, our goals were to investigate whether MST was successful at preventing placement out of home, and to examine reductions in behaviour problems in multi-informant assessments. Method: Participants were 75 adolescents who were randomly assigned to MST or Regular Child Welfare Services (RS) at 3 sites across Norway. Data were gathered from youths, caregivers and teachers. Results: MST was more effective than RS in reducing out of home placement and behavioural problems. Discussion: The sustainability of treatment effects was evident, supporting the MST approach to the treatment of serious behavioural problems in youth. Site differences and the moderating effects of age and gender are discussed.

Leadership in Interprofessional Collaboration -- The Case of Childcare in Norway.

Author: Willumsen, Elisabeth.

Publication info: *Journal of Interprofessional Care* 20. 4 (Aug 2006): 403-413.

Abstract: This study addresses leadership in interprofessional collaboration in childcare services (residential care). The aim was to explore the managers' (n = 6) experiences and present their views on how they exercised leadership in the residential institutions as well as how they organized and facilitated collaboration with relevant professionals and service users. Data was collected through open interviews. Qualitative content analysis was used to analyse the interviews, and three categories emerged; "external responsibility," "sustaining communication" and "internal responsibility." The overarching concept was identified as "facilitating interaction processes and ensuring cohesion." The main findings were related to the managers' experiences of linked processes of leadership and collaboration, perceptions of the structures of communication, their responsibility as well as the interaction processes. The managers exercised leadership in terms of self-governance and co-governance, and used strategies, such as governing images and influencing the voluntary aspect of collaboration.

Does MST Work? Comments to a Systematic Research Overview and Meta-Analysis of MST.

Author: Ogden, Terje; Hagen, Kristine Amlund.

Publication info: *Nordisk Sosialt Arbeid* 26. 3 (2006): 222-233.

Abstract: We comment on a systematic review and meta-analysis of Multisystemic Therapy (MST) presented by Littell, Popa, and Forsythe (2005) for the Campbell Collaboration. The authors concluded, based on 8 evaluations of MST, that it is premature to determine the effectiveness of MST as compared to other services. In this article, we argue that the foundation on which this review is based is insufficient and assert that it is the meta-analysis that is premature. In consequence, the review seems unfit for evaluating the effectiveness of MST on adolescent behavioral problems, particularly for the Nordic countries.

Implementation of parent management training at the national level: the case of Norway.

Author: Ogden, Terje; Forgatch, Marion S; Askeland, Elisabeth; Patterson, Gerald R; Bullock, Bernadette M.

Publication info: *Journal of Social Work Practice* 19. 3 (Nov 2005): 317-329.

Abstract: This article describes early aspects of the nationwide implementation of an evidence-based program (EBP) in Norway and the design for studying program fidelity over time. The EBP is the Parent management Training, Oregon Model (PMTO). The project is a combination of a 'top down' initiative at the governmental and ministry level, and a 'bottom up' initiative from practitioners seeking effective interventions in the prevention and remediation of behavior problems in children and youth. The main components of the implementation strategy were to (a) establish a national implementation and research center; (b) provide for regional and local participation at country and municipal levels; (c) establish a comprehensive therapist recruitment, training, and maintenance program; (d) create a network for collaboration, supervision, and quality control; (e) conduct clinical outcome research; and (f) study the implementation process. Following the training of three successive generations of PMTO specialists, a study was designed to examine how individual, family, interventionist, organizational, and community characteristics influence program adoption and implementation, as well as how these factors impact upon how PMTO specialists provide the intervention to families with competent adherence to the model. Within the framework of the collaborative North American and Norwegian project, challenges and facilitators in the process of the continental crossing of the PMTO model are discussed. Reprinted by permission of Carfax Publishing, Taylor and Francis Ltd.

Collaboration between Service Users and Professionals: Legitimate Decisions in Child Protection -- A Norwegian Model.

Author: Willumsen, Elisabeth; Skivenes, Marit.

Publication info: *Child and Family Social Work* 10. 3 (Aug 2005): 197-206.

Abstract: The aim of this study is to examine the conditions for achieving free and open communication in collaboration. The context is child protection where 'the best interest of the child' is at stake. First, a theoretical standard based on free and open communication and equal partnership (deliberation) is presented. Secondly, an explorative analysis is undertaken of

the collaboration process between professionals and service users in two review groups regarding two young people, Jane and Tom, both of whom appear to have psychosocial problems living in residential care. Thirdly, on the basis of this analysis, recommendations on how to improve collaboration in review groups are made. The findings show that collaboration has several functions: formal decision-making, legitimate decision-making and learning. There is a need to clarify the purpose of collaboration and strengthen structural arrangements as well as develop guidelines for handling challenges at different levels.

A comparison of mental health problems in kinship and nonkinship foster care.

Author: Handegard, Bjorn Helge; Holtan, Amy; Ronning, John A; Sourander, Andre.

Publication info: *European Child and Adolescent Psychiatry* 14. 4 (Jul 2005): 200-207.

Abstract: Objective: Knowledge of the emotional and behavioural problems of children in kinship foster care is scarce. No data on such problems in European countries have been published. This study compares child psychiatric problems and placement characteristics of children living in kinship and nonkinship foster care. Methods: A total of 214 children in kinship and nonkinship foster care, aged 4-13, participated in the study. The Child Behavioral Checklist (CBCL) was completed by their foster parents and demography and placement information was collected. Results: Of the nonkinship group, 51.8% scored above the borderline on the CBCL Total Problem score, as did 35.8% of the kinship group. The kinship group had fewer previous placements, were more often fostered within their local community and had more contact with their biological parents. Kinship foster parents had lower social status, in terms of educational level. Variables significantly related to high level of the CBCL Total problems score were male gender and location of foster home outside community of birth family. Positive outcome was significantly associated with placement within the child's own community, which in turn was related to kinship placement. Conclusions: Placement in kinship foster care should be considered as a viable possibility.

Parents' Collaboration and Participation in a Residential Child Care Setting.

Author: Willumsen, Elisabeth; Severinsson, Elisabeth.

Publication info: *International Journal of Child and Family Welfare* 8. 1 (Mar 2005): 19-31.

Abstract: This study addresses user participation as a democratic right as well as a means to promote service users' citizenship. The aim of this study is to explore parents' (n = 6) experiences of collaboration and participation with professionals working in child protection service in Norway. The empirical material was collected through open interviews with the parents of young people with psychosocial problems who were accommodated in residential care. The collaboration was structured around core group meetings held approximately every six weeks attended by professionals, parents and sometimes the young people involved. Content analysis was used to analyse the interviews and the emerging themes were concentrated around four categories; "support the child," "fight for help and services," "struggle for an ordinary daily life" and "keep up self-esteem." The over-arching concept was identified as "reconstruction of parenthood." The findings show the emergence of two levels of collaboration and participation: (1) The formal level, also contributing to the parents' status as citizens, (2) The interactional level, also contributing to active citizenship.

The Educational Achievements of Looked after Children. Do Welfare Systems Make a Difference to Outcomes?

Author: Weyts, Arabella.

Publication info: *Adoption and Fostering* 28. 3 (Oct 2004): 7-19.

Abstract: This article explores the relationship between welfare tradition and ideology, placement type, and educational outcomes by comparing the educational experiences and attainments of older, long-stay looked after children in four countries with contrasting welfare systems. The nature and severity of children's needs were charted to enable like-with-like comparisons. It was found that welfare systems influenced children's placement patterns and use, as well as the services offered. The effects on children's education, however, were less clear cut, although those whose educational needs were met did better in other areas of their life. The implications for childcare policy, international comparisons, and the harmonization of children's services are discussed.

Multisystemic Treatment of Antisocial Adolescents in Norway: Replication of Clinical Outcomes Outside of the US.

Author: Ogden, Terje; Halliday-Boykins, Colleen A.

Publication info: *Child and Adolescent Mental Health* 9. 2 (May 2004): 77-83.

Abstract: Background: MST is an intensive home- and community-based intervention for youths with serious antisocial behaviour and other serious clinical problems, which has been effective at reducing out-of-home placements and producing favourable long-term clinical outcomes in the US. The aims of the study were to determine the degree to which these outcomes would be replicated in Norway for youths with serious behaviour problems and to conduct a randomised trial of MST by an independent team of investigators. Method: Participants were 100 seriously antisocial youths in Norway who were randomly assigned to Multisystemic Therapy (MST) or usual Child Welfare Services (CS) treatment conditions. Data were gathered from youths, parents, and teachers pre- and post-treatment. Results: MST was more effective than CS at reducing youth internalising and externalising behaviours and out-of-home placements, as well as increasing youth social competence and family satisfaction with treatment. Discussion: This is the first study of MST outside of the US and one of the first not conducted by the developers of MST. The findings replicate those obtained by MST's developers and demonstrate the generalisability of short-term MST effects beyond the US.

Why Do We Not See the Poverty?

Author: Andenaes, Agnes.

Publication info: Nordisk Sosialt Arbeid 24. 1 (2004): 19-33.

Abstract: Why do we not pay more attention to the problems of poverty within the field of child protection? This is the main problem presented in this article based on a nationwide, Norwegian study of 109 children aged 6-12 years who have been placed out of home by the child protection services. Low income, low education, a tenuous connection with the labor market, and unstable and bad housing conditions are features that characterize the daily life of these parents (mainly single mothers) and their children. Historic, decontextualizing models of developmental psychology are criticized for making material aspects of life relatively invisible, and theoretical alternatives are pointed out.

The Validity of Teacher Ratings of Adolescents' Social Skills.

Author: Ogden, Terje.

Publication info: Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research 47. 1 (2003): 63-76.

Abstract: Examined the validity of teacher ratings of adolescents' social skills in a followup of a cohort sample of 395 students from seventh to ninth grades. Findings show multi-informant consistency in ratings; teacher ratings consistently covaried with teacher ratings of problem behavior and academic competence, nominations by peer students, and grade point average in selected subjects.

Residential Care in Norway.

Author: Tjelflaat, Torill.

Publication info: International Journal of Child and Family Welfare 5. 3 (Sep 2002): 96-101.

Abstract: This paper provides a background to residential care in Norway, and discusses the present state of Norwegian research in the field. The status and role of residential care are explored in light of the fact that the family perspective has traditionally been the most prevalent ideology in Norwegian social policy and child welfare. Attention is given to the meaning of "care" and to the consequences of a lack of definition of care with respect to the status of residential care on the care continuum. The author defends the position that foster care and residential care are complementary rather than hierarchically better or worse. Finally, suggestions for improvement in residential care are offered.

Leisure for Youth in Residential Care: An Important Context for Intervention.

Author: Safvenbom, Reider; Samdahl, D M.

Publication info: International Journal of Social Welfare 9. 2 (Apr 2000): 120-127.

Abstract: Compares patterns of free-time activity among a sample of adolescents (N = 20) under the care of the Child Welfare Organization (Oslo, Norway) and a comparison group of noninstitutionalized adolescents (N = 27) from neighboring schools. The Experience Sampling Method was used to collect data on 1,220 situations sampled during after-school hours, with particular attention given to the nature of the activity, social group, and location. The dependent variable was the respondent's desire to do that activity more or less often. Compared to the reference group, adolescents in the youth protection group were significantly more likely to say they wanted more self-involving activities and found this type of engagement within the privacy of their institution rather than in public arenas. Results are discussed in relation to the potential for intervention to enhance the leisure opportunities of institutionalized youth.

Competent Girls and Problematic Boys? Sex Differences in Two Cohorts of Norwegian 10- and 13-Year-Olds.

Author: Backe-Hansen, Elisabeth; Ogden, Terje.

Publication info: Childhood 3. 3 (Aug 1996): 331-350.

Abstract: In an examination of social competence, sex differences were explored from a resource-oriented as well as a problem-oriented viewpoint. Two samples were used: a cohort sample of 931 10- and 13-year-olds from 13 municipality schools in eastern Norway, and 140 children referred to these schools' psychological services. Social competence was assessed via the social skills rating system and self-report in the cohort sample, and teachers and parents rated social and academic competence and problem behaviors. Data were gathered for the referral sample from 31 professionals. Sex differences in social competence and problem behavior were more marked in the 10-year-olds than in the 13-year-olds. Also, 10-year-old boys' assessments of competence correlated more highly with teachers' and parents' assessments than did those of girls who rated themselves much lower than did teachers and parents. Boys were assessed as having more problematic behavior than girls. Cluster analysis showed that sex differences were smaller from the children's vs. the adults' (particularly teachers') perspectives. Areas in which both boys' and girls' developmental opportunities could be improved are discussed.

Permanency Planning Principles in the Norwegian Child Welfare System and Their Application to Practice.

Author: Slette, Sigbjorn.

Publication info: Child Welfare 72. 1 (1993): 77-88.

Abstract: Offers detailed descriptions of 10 basic principles that guide Norwegian child welfare practice.

Teachers' Assessment of the Social Climate in Comprehensive Senior High Schools: A Procedure for Diagnosing the School Organization with Survey Feedback.

Author: Ogdén, Terje; Skogstad, Anders; Kristiansen, Svein.

Publication info: Nordisk Psykologi 37. 2 (1985): 119-133.

Abstract: In a questionnaire survey conducted in 4 Norwegian comprehensive senior high schools, teachers (N not given) assessed meetings, influence, communication, goal priorities, and the school climate or 'ethos'. Small but significant differences were found among the schools on 4 indexes (subscales); however, the variance in data was attributable more to the formal, rather than the informal, structure variables of the schools.

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