



## DANMARK - DENMARK

### Overview of residential child care

### Journal abstracts

**Risk Factors of Entry in Out-of-Home Care: An Empirical Study of Danish Birth Cohorts, 1981-2003.**

Author: Ejrnaes, Mette; Ejrnaes, Morten; Frederiksen, Signe.

Publication info: Child Indicators Research 4. 1 (Jan 2011): 21-44.

Abstract: This paper presents the results of research on children's risk of being placed in out-of-home care. The purpose is: firstly, to compare children placed in out-of-home care with non-placed children, secondly, to estimate the children's risk of entry into care and finally, to compare the results of this study with the results from similar studies. The study is based on register data from the Statistics Denmark. The sample includes all children with Danish citizenship who were born 1981-2003. In order to estimate the risk of being placed in out-of-home care, we use information about the child, the mother and the father. We discovered that especially children who had a mother on disability pension, children who came from broken homes but also children whose mothers were unemployed or receiving social assistance and children whose mothers had a conviction had a high risk of being placed in care. The mother's characteristics are more important risk factors than the corresponding risk factors of the father. The results, the applied method and the epidemiological inspired analysis make an opportunity to discuss the central concepts and methods of calculation of statistical association, risk, prediction and causal inference in applied sociology and social work.

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**Denmark's Boernehavens: A Place to Grow.**

Author: Mecham, Neil A.

Publication info: Young Children 65. 6 (November 2010): 38-40.

Abstract: During the author's trips to Denmark as an instructor of American college students studying abroad, he led groups to visit several "boernehavens," which are the Danish equivalents of U.S. preschools for children ages 3 to 5. Danish society values confident individuals who can take initiative when faced with challenges and opportunities. Pedagogues (teachers) at the boernehavens reflected these values by encouraging independence in the children they taught. In most boernehavens, pedagogues build strong connections with children and their families because they practice looping (Hume 2007). Rather than changing rooms and teachers each year, Danish children typically enjoy the stability of the same pedagogue for three or more years. Another striking feature of most Danish boernehavens is how seamlessly they incorporate the natural world. Danish pedagogues make a conscious effort to include in their curriculum as much of the natural world as possible, which of course includes the weather. Children are taught to dress appropriately so that they can enjoy the outdoors no matter what. Some forest boernehavens are actually located in the woods, while teachers at other boernehavens take their children to the woods several times each week (Wagner 2004). Some schools are fortunate enough to have natural space just outside their gate, while others carve out a portion of the playground and designate it as the nature area.

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**'What Troubled Children Need' Constructions of Everyday Life in Residential Care.**

Author: Jakobsen, Turf Boecker.

Publication info: Children and Society 24. 3 (May 2010): 215-226.

Abstract: This article argues that key values of child protection work are not the appropriate point of departure for contemplating the welfare of children in professional care. Central values, such as 'comfort', 'recognition' or 'appreciation' say very little about the social practices of residential care. Using data from an ethnographic study in Denmark, the article demonstrates that ideas about the needs of troubled children are realised in dissimilar ways, creating highly different living environments for institutionalised children. The principles behind these construction processes are explored, and the profound ambiguity of values in childcare is discussed as an effect of residential care's being an 'institutional' or 'human service' type of organisation.

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**When family becomes the job: Fostering practice in Denmark.**

Author: Kjeldsen, Christian Chrstrup; Kjeldsen, Marianne Bruhn.

Publication info: Adoption and Fostering 34. 1 (Apr 2010): 52-64.

Abstract: This article by Christian Chrstrup Kjeldsen and Marianne Bruhn Kjeldsen discusses the provision of foster care in Denmark and considers the results of recent domestic studies of foster carers as well as current debates and changes concerning the substitute care of children. It suggests that Denmark's emphasis on preventative services and the low use of adoption influence the characteristics of children who enter the care system because the separation from their families of children who are at risk of harm is delayed. It is also the case that despite Denmark's reputation as a welfare-oriented state, the fostering system displays many tensions and difficulties similar to those reported in the UK and US. Some of these

problems can be attributed to the role afforded to foster carers, especially the requirement not to get too attached to the children, and the division of responsibility between professionals and carers. As a result, it is argued that some children in need of long-term emotional care miss out and their placements disrupt unnecessarily.

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Prevalence of mental health problems among children placed in out-of-home care in Denmark.

Author: Egelund, Tine; Lausten, Mette.

Publication info: *Child and Family Social Work* 14. 2 (May 2009): 156-165.

Abstract: This paper concerns the prevalence of mental health problems among children in family foster and residential care within a Danish context. All children, born in Denmark in 1995, who are or formerly have been placed in out-of-home care (n = 1072), are compared with a group of vulnerable children of the same age, subjected to child protection interventions but living at home (n = 1457, referred to as the 'in home care children'), and to all contemporaries who are not child protection clients (n = 71 321, referred to as the 'non-welfare children'). Prevalence data are established on the basis of national administrative register data, including data on psychiatric diagnoses of the children, and on survey data scoring children in out-of-home care, in home care children, and non-welfare children by means of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ). Results show that 20% of children in out-of-home care have at least one psychiatric diagnosis compared to 3% of the non-welfare children. Almost half of the children in care (48%) are, furthermore, scored within the abnormal range of SDQ, compared to 5% of the non-welfare children.

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A Nordic Approach to Early Childhood Education (ECE) and Socially Endangered Children.

Author: Jensen, Bente.

Publication info: *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal* 17. 1 (March 2009): 7-21.

Abstract: In this paper I examine the Nordic model, i.e. a child-centred and holistic approach, in order to discuss Early Childhood Education (ECE) as a key policy instrument for fighting social inequality. Since 1999 it has been an important goal for the Danish government to ensure equal opportunities for all by starting with early intervention. This is especially relevant in Denmark, where greater than 95% of all children attend day-care. International research shows that early interventions can make a positive difference, and as shown in US Randomised Controlled Trial (RCT) studies, the effects are lasting. On the other hand, international research does not address the two different main approaches to the ECE systems (holistic/academic) nor to the questions of how pedagogic initiatives and framework conditions work as prerequisites for success (best practice). An analysis of research into the situation in the Nordic countries shows growing awareness of how to identify target groups for ECE-intervention as well as an increased focus on pre-school school teachers' education and the need for new assessment and evaluation methods for determining best practice. Since it would appear that the ECE system fails to provide equal social and intellectual opportunities to all children, further development in this area is required. Based on an analysis of the Nordic situation, some preliminary results of a recent Danish intervention involving some 60 centres and 2700 pre-school children are presented and discussed.

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Breakdown of care: The case of Danish teenage placements.

Author: Egelund, Tine; Vitus, Kathrine.

Publication info: *International Journal of Social Welfare* 18. 1 (Jan 2009): 45-56.

Abstract: This article analyses the breakdown of teenage placements in Denmark from survey data on 227 teenagers placed in care during 2004. We explore frequencies of breakdown, time of breakdown occurrence and factors possibly causing breakdown. These are factors related to (i) the teenager, (ii) the parents, (iii) the care environment and (iv) the casework process. Results show that 26 per cent of the teenagers in the study experienced placement breakdown. Thirty per cent of these breakdowns occurred within the first 4 months of placement. A factor significantly increasing probability of breakdown was emotional problems of the teenager. A factor significantly reducing placement breakdown was the teenager having continuity with the same caseworker throughout the placement. System- and policy-related factors also proved to have an influence on breakdown rates. We discuss possible policy implications of these findings.

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The politics of ideals of care: Danish and Flemish child care policy compared.

Author: Kremer, Monique.

Publication info: *Social politics* 13. 2 (Jul 2006): 261-285.

Abstract: Most European welfare states today have said farewell to the male breadwinner-female caretaker model. Still, child care policy has a different pace and shape in each country. This article studies the (late) origins as well as the diversity in Danish and Flemish (Belgian) child care policy. In Denmark, a universal child care provision was made possible because of the advocacy coalition of women with social pedagogues. They promoted the ideal of professional care. To combat the ideal of full-time motherhood, the Flemish Catholic women's movement strived for subsidizing childminders - the ideal of surrogate motherhood-supported by the Christian Democratic Party. Both strategies led to comparatively high levels of child care provisions, but also to very different contents and shapes. In short, one of the factors that shaped child care policy is the promotion of different (moral) ideals of care by the women's movement, together with other-often more powerful-allies, and backed up by parental preferences. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.

The role of social pedagogy in the training of residential child care workers.

Author: Jackson, Robin.

Publication info: *Journal of Intellectual Disabilities* 10. 1 (Mar 2006): 61-73.

Abstract: A requirement for most people working in residential child care in Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands is a qualification in social pedagogy. Social pedagogy is not narrowly concerned with a child's schooling but relates to the whole child - body, mind and spirit. This article describes the first social pedagogy course to be introduced and professionally recognized in the UK: the BA in Curative Education Programme. This 4-year programme blurs the line between 'classroom learning' and 'learning in practice'. A unique feature of the programme is that most students 'live the course' in residential care communities for children or adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The life-sharing aspect of the programme ensures that the principles of dignity, value and mutual respect can be meaningfully translated into practice. The social pedagogic model presents a timely challenge to current care philosophy and practice.

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"How Can You Know? You're Not a Foster Child": Dilemmas and Possibilities of Giving Voice to Children in Foster Care.

Author: Warming, Hanne.

Publication info: *Children, Youth and Environments* 16. 2 (2006): 28-50.

Abstract: Based on Axel Honneth's Theory of Recognition and an empirical action research project entitled "Bornetinget" (Children's Parliament), conducted in Denmark by the author, this article discusses dilemmas and possibilities of giving voice to children in foster care. The Bornetinget project aimed to give voice to foster children so that their knowledge about "the life as a child in foster care" could find its way to social workers and foster parents as well as politicians, thus influencing, democratizing and qualifying social work with children and youth in foster care. "Bornetinget" was established with a core group of 15 foster children, aged 10-13, and a web-based "foster children's public forum." This article focuses on learning about participation from the Bornetinget experience, both as a model of participatory research practice and for the insights it provides in relation to how we understand participation in research and social work practice.

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Social Pedagogy and Care: Danish and German Practice in Young People's Residential Care.

Author: Cameron, Claire.

Publication info: *Journal of Social Work* 4. 2 (Aug 2004): 133-151.

Abstract: Summary: Although social pedagogy is unfamiliar in the UK, in many European countries it is the main discipline underpinning residential care work with children and young people. Social pedagogy is about the relationship of the individual to society and a pedagogic method of working in residential care is about how to achieve the integration of disadvantaged young people into the wider society in which they live. Findings: This article argues, using an exploratory cross-national study of social pedagogy, that pedagogic practice offers a unified, coherent and holistic approach to working in residential care. Vignette data from two countries, Denmark and Germany, are used to provide practice examples. A remarkable consensus of views about practice emerged from the tutors, practitioners and students who took part. Young people's views were also sought, and these largely concurred with the approaches advocated by the adult informants. Applications: Three themes are discussed which illuminate the pedagogic approach: the active vs. the passive child; physical care or contact; and heart, brains and hands working in combination. Some questions for English policy, training and practice are posed. [Reprinted by permission of Sage Publications Ltd., copyright 2004.]

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All-round friends.

Author: Petrie, P; Boddy, J; Cameron, C.

Publication info: *Community Care* 12 (Dec 2002): 34-35.

Abstract: In other parts of Europe looked-after children benefit from workers who are trained in social pedagogy, which embraces a range of skills not normally found in UK qualifications. Looks at the lessons for practice with children in the UK that can be learned from Denmark and Germany in particular.

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Social Background and Placement Course -- The Case of Denmark.

Author: Hestbaek, Anne-Dorthe.

Publication info: *International Journal of Social Welfare* 8. 4 (Oct 1999): 267-276.

Abstract: Data from a 1996 nationwide mail survey of social workers and professionals at placement settings and interviews with 760 parents in Denmark are drawn on to describe the social characteristics of families with a child placed outside home, and, further, to examine whether differences in regard to the parents' social background are correlated with different placement courses. A range of hypotheses on the correlation between social background and the course of placement are examined. It appears that children from low-resource families come into contact with the social system earlier, and are placed outside the home at an earlier age than children from high-resource families. Low-resource children are more often placed in foster care, and are more often subject to contact restrictions. Whether these differences reflect a sociocultural discrimination are considered, along with whether available supportive measures are adequate in relation to the serious problems of the families concerned.

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Public- and Private-Sector Out-of-Home Care in Denmark

Author: Browning, Charles J.

Publication info: Social Service Review 68. 1 (Mar 1994): 20-32.

Abstract: Draws on interviews conducted in 1990 with government officials in each of 12 municipalities in the greater Copenhagen, Denmark, area to discover why Danes make little use of resources from the private sector in their model child care program. With their welfare system under mounting strain at the same time tax money is being curtailed, special attention is paid to the expensive out-of-home placement practices of local child welfare operations. There is now token experimentation with kith as alternatives to traditional child care institutions and foster homes, but resistance to placements in extended family households continues. Welfare administrators and politicians yield to the judgment and the decisions of a professional system dominated by social caseworkers.

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Out-of-home care in Denmark

Author: Jorgensen, P Schultz.

Publication info: Child Welfare 70. Mar/Apr 91 (Mar 1991): 107-113.

Abstract: Paradoxically, Denmark has a large number of children in out-of-home care because it has a comprehensive child welfare system. Families turn to it for help, and under present social conditions of unemployment and family disruptions, the system is strained. Describes a large-scale, government-funded effort to improve the system's policies, programs, and flexible use of placement-treatment centres.

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