



BCN Newsletter: 13 May 2011

Better Care Network

To the Better Care Network:

We're pleased to share Everychild's recently launched report,
**Scaling Down: Reducing, Reshaping and Improving Residential Care Around
the World**

<http://www.bettercarenetwork.org/docs/Scaling%20Down%20.pdf>

EveryChild's newly launched paper summarizes the evidence base on residential care to promote better decision making among policy makers and child welfare practitioners. It calls for an end to the unregulated and unplanned growth of residential care in many parts of the world, with priority given to ending residential care for children under three, and care in large scale facilities. The paper examines the role of small group homes and children's villages in the continuum of care options, arguing for a careful and limited use of such facilities only for children for who family-based care is not appropriate or available. The paper calls for improvements in the quality of any residential care than continues to be used, identifying key elements of high quality care. Finally, the paper outlines strategies for reducing reliance on residential care, including increasing political will, preventative work to reduce overall numbers in the care system, and strategies to promote alternatives, such as foster care.

This paper is the first in a series of papers on children's care choices. If you would like to learn more about the series and how to contribute to debates regarding the subjects raised in the series, please email:
policy@everychild.org.uk

Best,
Kathleen Riordan and Ghazal Keshavarzian

Better Care Network Secretariat

IN THIS ISSUE

[New in BCN's Library](#)

[Alternative Care News](#)

[Jobs and Consultancies](#)

[General Information](#)

New Resources

Overlooked: Children with Disabilities in Residential Care

Alexandra L. Trout, Kathryn Casey, M. Beth Chmelka, Catherine DeSalvo, Robert Reid, and Michael H. Epstein

While estimates suggest that 10% to 31% of children in residential care are identified as with a disability, little is

known about their characteristics or functioning as compared to nondisabled peers. This study evaluated data of 123 children with ($n = 34$) and without ($n = 89$) disabilities in residential care to determine demographic, behavioral, mental health, and educational characteristics. Data included demographic, behavior checklist, and standardized mental health and academic measures. Results indicated that both groups presented elevated risks; however, scores for children with disabilities revealed even greater levels of need. Primary risks were found on indicators of behaviors (e.g., social functioning), mental illness (e.g., anxiety), and academic performance (e.g., general knowledge and reading). Implications, limitations, and recommendations for future research are discussed.
<http://www.bettercarenetwork.org/BCN/details.asp?id=24929&themeID=1004&topicID=1028>

Assessment of USAID Child Welfare Programs in Russia

Terra P Group

March 2009

The child welfare programs, funded by USAID in Russia, were designed to pilot, disseminate, and help institutionalize modern child welfare services, particularly, child abandonment prevention and professional support of vulnerable children, child welfare institutions, and substitute families. This report reviews program results and sets out recommendations for future program design. The programs that were evaluated have contributed to child welfare reforms by: designing and piloting a continuum of services that prevent child abandonment, neglect and abuse, and support children without parental care; expanding social work to the layer of child neglect and deprivation that was previously impenetrable to modern welfare interventions; creating a cohort of social workers who understand, believe in, and practice a pro-active approach to preventing child abandonment and neglect, and providing multi-disciplinary support to parents and children in substitute families; and contributing to the legislative and regulatory process in pilot regions to create an enabling environment for the new strategies and methods;

<http://www.bettercarenetwork.org/BCN/details.asp?id=24930&themeID=1002&topicID=1017>

The Psychosocial Support Source Book for Vulnerable Children in Malawi

STOP AIDS NOW

STOP AIDS NOW! has recently published the Psychosocial Support Source Book for vulnerable children in Malawi. This Source Book is a practical guide for service providers working with children in Malawi. It aims to improve psychosocial support services to orphans and other vulnerable children, by bringing together available knowledge and experiences in a user-friendly manner. The publication presents strategies and tools in the PSS service area in Malawi. STOP AIDS NOW!

<http://www.bettercarenetwork.org/BCN/details.asp?id=24931&themeID=1004&topicID=1025>

Summary Report of the Fourth CSO Forum on the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC)

The 4th Forum on the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) was held between 18 and 20 March 2011 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. As is customary, the Forum was organised ahead of the 17th Ordinary Session of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) also taking place in Ethiopia. Ninety-seven activists from 23 countries (of which 19 were in Africa) attended the Forum, which is a framework for strategic partnership to improve child rights in Africa. The following recommendations were made to the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child in relation to children without appropriate care:

- The committee should strongly consider having a day of general discussion on children living and/or working on the street with the relevant stakeholders, including children, with the goal to establish agreed-upon indicators that would inform policy, programmatic interventions and research.
- The committee should urge State Parties to ratify and domesticate the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally-Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention) to grant greater protection to women and children.
- The committee should adopt a General Comment on article 24 of the African Children's Charter giving consideration to issues relating to alternative care including inter-country adoptions in the best interest of the child within the African context.
- Should give an advisory opinion on article 13 of the African Children's Charter, giving due consideration to the language that promotes the dignity of children with disabilities.

- Call upon states to properly implement laws and policies passed and adopted for the rights and well-being of children with disabilities.
- <http://www.bettercarenetwork.org/BCN/details.asp?id=24932&themeID=1001&topicID=1010>

Alternative Care News and Conferences

NEWS: The Adoption Crusade, Christianity Today

Christian Alliance for Orphans President, Jedd Medefind responds to the recent article from The Nation on the role of Evangelical Christian community in intercountry adoption

<http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2011/aprilweb-only/adoptioncrusade.html>

CONFERENCE: 5th Biennial Conference of the Child and Family Research Center NUI Galway

The 5th biennial conference of the Child and Family Research Centre NUI Galway will address the challenges and opportunities in effectively realising children's rights to be cared for safely within their families. It has been devised intentionally in order to offer practitioners and other key stakeholders the space to listen, reflect and discuss these current challenges facing services for children. To learn more, visit:

<http://www.crin.org/resources/infoDetail.asp?ID=24749&flag=event>

CONFERENCE: Encountering Children: Dignity, Autonomy and Care

The University of Zurich hosted by the Research Centre for Ethics, June 8th - 9th, 2011 will host their international Conference, Encountering Children: Dignity, Autonomy and Care. Learn more at:

<http://www.ethik.uzh.ch/ufsp/agenda/children.html>

SEMINAR: Understanding Children's Human Rights

The London School of Economics, Center for the Study of Human Rights will host a 6 week course on Understanding Children's Human Rights

To learn more, visit: <http://www2.lse.ac.uk/humanRights/teaching/childrensHumanRights.aspx>

JOB and CONSULTANCY POSTINGS

CONSULTANCY: Care and Child Protection Systems, UNICEF Headquarters

UNICEF Headquarters Child Protection seeks a consultant on Care and Child Protection Systems. The objective of the assignment is to investigate three case studies from Guatemala, Cambodia, and Liberia and determine whether or not there has been an impact related to the child protection system through working on the issues of prevention of unnecessary family separation, strengthening alternative care provision, and family reunification.

http://www.bettercarenetwork.org/BCN/details_news.asp?ID=24934&themeID=1001&topicID=1010

JOB POSTINGS: CARE Haiti

Care Haiti seeks qualified candidates for their Protection and Rights for Children, Women and Youth portfolio. The following positions are currently being recruited:

- Program Director
- Senior Gender Advisor - CARE Haiti
- Senior Child Protection Advisor - CARE Haiti
- Grant Manager - CARE Haiti

Protection and Rights for Children, Women, and Youth

For more information and to submit applications please see www.care.org/careers

General Information

As of 13 May, the listserv has 2492 participants who are working on issues related to the care and support of vulnerable children across Europe, Africa, the Middle East, Asia and the Americas.

The purpose of the newsletter is to enable members to exchange information on matters of mutual concern. If you would like to share a document, raise a specific issue, or reach out in any other way to the Network, please send the information to us at kriordan@unicef.org. In the interest of keeping messages consolidated, we will manage announcements on the newsletter and send out a few messages each month.

We would like to involve as many people as possible who are concerned with better care issues in the Network. Please advise anyone who would like to be added to the newsletter to send us a message at kriordan@unicef.org with "listserv request" in the subject line. Alternatively, visit the homepage of the Better Care Network website, and click on the upper right box where it says "click here to sign up for our email announcements".

<http://www.bettercarenetwork.org>