

Residential Care for Children and Youth: Relationships, Protection and Growth

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FUNDAÇÃO
CALOUSTE
GULBENKIAN

Ambivalence in Residential Child Care

Last resort	or	Positive choice
Risky	or	Safe
Institutional	or	Homely
Lacks stability	or	Stable and secure
Limiting	or	Empowering

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK & SOCIAL POLICY





It's a boring colour scheme - grey, brown, black, beige... The only colour in the room is the fire extinguisher.

(young person)

UN Guidelines for Alternative Care

Alternative care should:

- Minimize disruption and facilitate reintegration
- Temporary and of the shortest possible duration
- Residential care when appropriate, necessary and constructive
 - Negative experiences of the family
 - Keeping siblings together
 - Specialized care and treatment
 - Children and youth may prefer residential care



MOVING FORWARD:
Implementing the 'Guidelines for
the Alternative Care of Children'



Moving away from institutions

Negative features of institutions

- Group sizes tend to be larger and the number of children per caregiver is large
- Groups tend to be similar in terms of age and disability
- Caregivers for any child tend to change constantly
- Other adults tend to come and go in children's lives
- Caregivers tend to be poorly trained and focus on physical care
- Caregiving tasks tend to be carried out with a lack of warmth, sensitivity and responsiveness



The kitchen works well in terms of being the hub of the house because its got that huge table and that's where most people congregate.

(staff member)

Developing safety and protection

Recruitment, selection and training of staff

- Recruitment procedures and vetting
- Education, training and support
- Regulation of the workforce

Inspection, monitoring and standards

- Guidance and standards
- Regulation of services
- Corporate parenting

Listening to children and children's participation

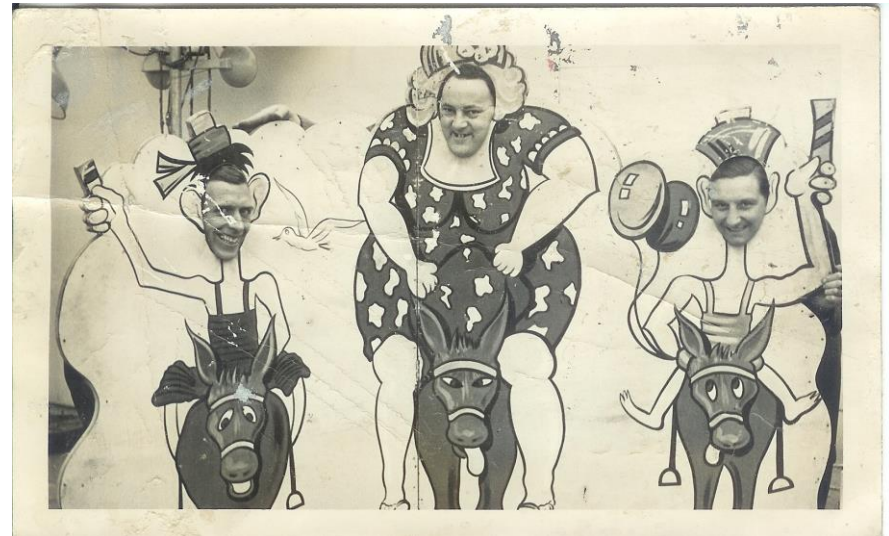
- Complaints procedures and helplines
- Advocacy and children's rights services
- Participation in decision making

Relationship-based Care

Family-like but not family

Looking for:

- “a sense of normality”
- “intimate familiarity”



They didn't treat it like residential, they treated me like family, basically... there was one worker who treated me like a daughter... it was more like a family home than residential

(Female, 17)

Relationship-based Care

Quality of relationships

- Empathy, approachability, willingness to listen, persistence, reliability

A sense of relatedness through

- Routines, rhythms of daily living
- Sharing of food
- The living space and environment
- Involvement in cultural and leisure activities

Growth of children and youth

Promoting resilience and healthy development

- Physical growth and health
- Emotional growth and mental health
- Social growth and relationships
- Educational growth
- Creative growth and the arts





Somewhere

**There's a place for us
Somewhere a place for us
Peace and quiet and open air**

Wait for us

Somewhere

**There's a time for us
Someday a time for us
Time together with time to spare**

Time to learn

Time to care

Someday, somewhere

**We'll find a new way of living
We'll find a way of forgiving**

Somewhere

There's a place for us

A time and a place for us

Hold my hand and we're half way there

Hold my hand

And I'll take you there

Somehow

Someday, somewhere