



RESEARCH DIGEST

2003 Issue 4

Prepared by

Harriet Bretherton, Research Co-ordinator
Steve Huzzard, Team Manager Rochdale
Peter Little, FCA, Shropshire

Research studies and articles based on research

Author	Adshead G
Title	Dangerous and severe parenting disorder? Personality disorder, parenting and legal proposals
Journal	Child and Family Social Work
Date	November 2003
Volume/issue	Vol 8 Issue 4
Subject (key words)	Personality disorder, parenting
Summary	An argument for the provision of therapy for people with personality disorders, which includes information on the effect of the disorder on parenting.
Reviewed by	SH

Author	Allen M
Title	Into the mainstream: Care leavers entering work, education and training Summary
Date	October 2003
Publisher	JRF York
Subject (key words)	Adolescence, looked after, care leavers
Summary	<p>This research was carried out in North Yorkshire. 36 young people who had left care up to two years previously were interviewed in 2000 and again a year later. The aim of the research was to examine the factors which helped or hindered care leavers' transition to independent living. on the JFR website.</p> <p>Findings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Few young people did well at school and few continued with education or training. • Young people with a stable care history or who achieved some stability on leaving care were more likely to enter and remain in education or employment. • Professional and informal support including from families was crucial to a young person's success. • Despite the obstacles they faced, many of the care leavers demonstrated resilience and determination in overcoming them.
Reviewed by	HB

Author	Barnard M
Title	Between a rock and a hard place: the role of relatives in protecting children from the effects of parental drug problems
Journal	Child and Family Social Work
Date	November 2003
Volume/issue	Vol 8 Issue 4
Subject (key words)	Drugs, parents, grandparents
Summary	A Scottish study looking at 62 problem drug using parents in Glasgow, which can be summarised by quoting some of its headings: managing children in the context of drug dependency, the social support of relatives, extended care by relatives, monitoring and surveillance, diminished parenthood, the double edged sword of caring for a relative's children – sustaining parental drug abuse, and the loss of children to relatives. Whilst the children remained within the wider family, the situations often contained “a complex and volatile mix of practical and emotional concerns of relatives over the children's appropriate care and issues of responsibility and obligation to the child”. The perspectives of the children and the extended family are not included.
Reviewed by	SH

Author	Beckett C & McKeigue B
Title	Children in limbo. Cases where court decisions have taken two years or more
Journal	Adoption and Fostering
Date	Autumn 2003
Volume/issue	Vol 27 Number 3
Subject (key words)	Court proceedings, delay
Summary	The authors chart the relentless rise in the duration of care proceedings, from an average of 24 weeks in 1993 nationally to 47 weeks in 2001, and seek to establish the causes and effects. They examined 6 cases involving 14 children. As to causes, they identify court timetabling and ‘the long and repetitive assessment process’, the need for which they link to the low status given to local authority and social worker's evidence. They suggest that there are quite unrealistic expectations about the level of certainty that can be achieved through such expert assessment. They criticise ‘ponderous Dickensian proceedings’, which they see as a cause of avoidable harm to children.
Reviewed by	SH

Author	Bernardini S and Jenkins J
Title	An Overview of the Risks and Protectors for Children of Separation and Divorce
Date	2002
Publisher	Department of Justice Canada
Subject (key	Divorce, separation, risks, protective factors, outcomes for

words)	children
Summary	<p>This review of the research on outcomes for children following parental separation and on risk and protective factors was commissioned by the Department of Justice Canada.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The findings are similar to those in other reviews, such as Pryor and Rodgers, Divorce and Separation: the Outcomes for Children. Some children of separated parents are less well adjusted than children of intact families but the difference is slight. • The three major risk factors are lower family income following divorce, troubled child-parent relationships and conflict between parents. • There is little evidence that the absence of a parent in itself is a factor in child maladjustment. Authoritative parenting and the payment of child support reduce risk. • A constellation of risk factors is particularly detrimental. • Services should aim to enhance protective factors (warmth of child/parent relationships) and reduce risk factors (level of parent conflict). • Measures to determine which children are most at risk will enable services to be targeted.
Reviewed by	HB

Author	Bessner R
Title	The voice of the child in divorce, custody and access proceedings
Date	2002
Publisher	Department of Justice, Canada
Subject (key words)	Child participation, rights of the child, family proceedings
Summary	<p>This review of research and legislation relating to child participation in family proceedings was commissioned by the Department of Justice Canada. It draws on international as well as Canadian research. It examines the development of the concept of children's rights; models of legal representation of children; arguments for children's participation and how this might be most effectively promoted.</p>
Reviewed by	HB

Author	Broad B
Title	Young people leaving care: the impact of the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 (CLCA)
Journal	Child Right
Date	2003
Volume/issue	199
Subject (key words)	Care leavers, Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000,
Summary	<p>The research investigated the change in the provision of services to care leavers following the introduction of the CLCA. Questionnaires were sent to 52 leaving care projects working with 6,953 young people. Compared with previous studies, more care leavers were in further education and more were in work. The survey suggests that the CLCA has had a positive impact on the assessment and delivery of financial support to young people but little effect on young people's health. However, the quality of service provision was patchy and in relation to special groups such as asylum seekers, young people with disabilities and those leaving custody had shown no improvement. 40% of those entitled to a need assessment had not had one and 27% of those entitled to a Pathway Plan did not have one.</p>
Reviewed by	HB

Author	Brophy, J
Title	Diversity and Child Protection
Journal	Family Law
Date	September 2003
Volume/issue	33; pp 674 – 678
Subject (key words)	Diversity, child protection, assessment
Summary	<p>The author presents some findings about 'race' and cultural diversity in clinical writing and research, based on a literature review undertaken in 1999. The aims of the review were to identify writing and research by clinicians on ethnic minority clients especially where there was child protection litigation. Despite the two important debates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With differing perceptions of child ill-treatment, is it possible to have a transcultural definition of child abuse? • How can we offer culturally-sensitive social work in assessing children in need? <p>There is very little published work and the author argues for more effective dialogue between various disciplines interested in this area. Argues there remains a serious need to ask why black children are over-represented in care systems.</p>
Reviewed by	PL

Author	Brophy, J , Jhutti-Johal, J & Owen, C
Title	Assessing and Documenting Child Ill-treatment in Ethnic Minority Households
Journal	Family Law
Date	October 2003
Volume/issue	33; pp 756 – 764
Subject (key words)	Child protection, ethnicity, court reports
Summary	On the basis of an examination of court care files for 182 children, observations at 36 hearings and interviews with legal professionals, the authors conclude that appropriate descriptive information about ethnicity, culture, language and religion were available in a majority of cases but that a substantive treatment of relevant issues was less often available (usually only in the guardian's report). The authors argue that, in the interests of justice, there needs to be a 'clear and transparent' focus on these issues and that the information should be available in a consistent and coordinated form rather than spread over court documents. Expert reports, in particular, were criticised for lack of attention to these issues.
Reviewed by	PL

Author	Brown L
Title	Mainstream or margin? The current use of family group conferences in child welfare practice in the UK
Journal	Child and Family Social Work
Date	November 2003
Volume/issue	Vol 8 Issue 4
Subject (key words)	Family group conferences
Summary	An assessment of recent surveys on their use. Conclusion?– they remain on the margins of practice.
Reviewed by	SH

Author	Cree V
Title	Worries and problems of young carers: issues for mental health
Journal	Child and Family Social Work
Date	November 2003
Volume/issue	Vol 8 Issue 4
Subject (key words)	Young carers, illness, disability, mental health
Summary	The definition of 'young carers' varies but tends to mean a young person caring in some way for a relative with a physical or mental illness or disability, or drug or alcohol misuse problem. This study of 61 young carers in Edinburgh identified that in addition to the normal stresses of growing up, they also had to cope with their concerns for the person cared for, additional demands placed on them as carers, and the greater chance of major disruption and loss in their lives.
Reviewed by	SH

Author	Dale, P
Title	Serious Injuries and Discrepant Parent/ Carer Explanations
Journal	Family Law
Date	September 2003
Volume/issue	33; pp 668 – 673
Subject (key words)	Child abuse, assessment, court proceedings
Summary	<p>Reports on research conducted for NSPCC (2002) analysing part 8 reviews and/ or case files in 38 cases of infants (0 – 24 months) who were subject to ‘serious injuries with discrepant explanations’ (SIDE) of which 17 were fatal. Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasize the vulnerability of very young children • Criminal convictions were rare. Most parents were initially reticent and gave amended explanations as proceedings continued. Convictions were most likely when the carer was a learning-disabled, single mother. • 75% cases scored high on the presence of established child abuse indicators, however 25% did not, emphasizing the need to look beyond those indicators. • Analysis of outcomes suggested considerable inconsistency as a result of professional variables. <p>The author argues for high quality specialist assessments in these cases taking account of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A detailed investigation of the dynamics of the incident(s) leading to injury • Systematic, neutral, evidence-based enquiry • Incorporating the significant body of research • Systematic consideration of family strengths and the potential for change. <p>And argues that short assessments are inadequate.</p>
Reviewed by	PL

Author	Douglas, G & Ferguson, N
Title	Grandparents after Divorce
Journal	Family Law
Date	September 2003
Volume/issue	33; pp 653 – 658
Subject (key words)	Grandparent, contact,
Summary	<p>Against a background of pressure for greater rights and recognition for grandparents, this qualitative study is based on 115 interviews with parents, grandparents and children in 44 divorce cases involving children aged 8 – 16. Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The style of grandparenting in a given family was established before the parents divorced; • Divorce tended to accentuate existing roles – those closely involved, usually maternal grandparents, became more actively involved, those more distant, usually paternal grandparents, became more cut off; • There was a very wide diversity in approaches to grandparenting after separation in the extent to which

	<p>grandparents were constructively involved with their grandchildren and the extent to which they became embroiled in the dispute.</p> <p>The authors conclude that the courts cannot make any assumptions about the relationship between grandparent and child and argues that the legal system should not encourage litigation on the basis of status alone.</p>
Reviewed by	PL

Author	Dunn J
Title	The Adjustment of Children in Stepfamilies: Lessons from Community Studies
Journal	Child and Adolescent Mental Health
Date	2002
Volume/issue	7/4
Subject (key words)	Adjustment, stepfamilies, family transition
Summary	<p>This is a review of community (as opposed to clinical) studies of children living in step-families. The review is not systematic in that the criteria for the inclusion of the studies and for assessment are not described.</p> <p>This review concludes that children in step-families are on average more likely to have adjustment problems than children in intact families but the average differences are small and the individual differences between children are great.</p> <p>The review identifies the main factors which research associates with differences in adjustment. The interrelationship between the factors is complex and the direction of influence can be obscure. On average children show poorer adjustment in the following situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living in “complex” step-families (children from both parent’s previous relationship in the home) • Experiencing multiple transitions • Having a parent with mental health problems • Having a poor relationship with the resident parent • Having a poor relationship with the step-parent • Having a poor relationship with the non-resident parent • Where a parent has had negative past experiences • Where the children’s parents’ current relationship is poor or conflictual • Where there is little support from the extended family or friends • Where children were not listened to.
Reviewed by	HB

Author	Flouri E and Buchanan A
Title	The Role of Father Involvement and Mother Involvement in Adolescents’ Well-being
Journal	British Journal of Social Work
Date	2003
Volume/issue	33

Subject (key words)	Adolescence, fathers, mothers, child well-being
Summary	<p>The study aimed to test whether the adolescent's perception of their father's and mother's involvement was associated with their well-being.</p> <p>The data came from a confidential questionnaire distributed in schools and youth clubs and completed by 2,722 young people aged 14-18 years.</p> <p>Findings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The adolescent's perception of their father's involvement was associated with self-reported well-being. The same association was found for mother involvement. However the relationship between perceived involvement was stronger for fathers. • The relationship between perceived involvement with father and well-being existed regardless of whether the adolescent came from a disrupted or intact family. • The relationship between perceived involvement with father and well-being was the same for boys and girls. <p>It should be noted that the findings are ambiguous as the study was cross-sectional (data was collected at one point in time). It is not therefore possible to know whether adolescents with high well-being scores elicited high father (and mother) involvement, whether high parent involvement promoted adolescent well-being or whether some other factor was associated with both well-being and parent involvement.</p>
Reviewed by	HB

Author	Greenfields M
Title	New traveller families and post-separation parenting arrangements
Date	2002
Publisher	Unpublished Presentation to the Social Policy Association Conference, Middlesbrough July 2002
Subject (key words)	Travellers, parental separation, family proceedings
Summary	<p>The paper provides information about the culture, ethnicity, education and family life of new travellers.</p> <p>This qualitative research study is based on a sample of 23 travellers. It outlines their experience of post separation parenting and interactions with the family law system.</p> <p>Findings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travellers subscribe to a rhetoric of shared parenting. • For many shared parenting consisted of "block" contact where the child spent longish periods with each parent. • Travellers were reluctant to engage in legal proceedings but 12 of the sample had been so involved. • Travellers reported that their nomadic way of life had been a focus for criticism by their ex-partners. • Most travellers regarded the CWOs or SWs they met as ignorant about their culture and holding rigid and unsympathetic ideas about what constituted stability for a child.
Reviewed by	HB

Author	Howe D and Fearnley s
Title	Disorders of Attachment in Adopted and Fostered Children: Recognition and Treatment
Journal	Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry
Date	2003
Volume/issue	8/3
Subject (key words)	Abuse, neglect, adoption, disorders of attachment, foster care, long term placement, therapy
Summary	<p>The article reviews a limited number of outcome studies for adopted and fostered children concentrating on the progress of older placed children who have experienced a pre-placement history of abuse, neglect or rejection. From a clinical perspective, the development of attachment disorder in these children is manifested in subsequent severe emotional and behavioural problems. These behaviours can put great strain on the adoptive or foster parents.</p> <p>A therapeutic service, the Key Attachment Centre, is described offering treatment to the children and their families. A case study illustrates the types of behaviour associated with attachment-disordered children and the interventions used.</p>
Reviewed by	HB

Author	Humphreys C. & Harrison C.
Title	Focusing on safety – domestic violence and the role of child contact centres (LCD Report <i>Safety and Child Contact: An analysis of the role of child contact centres in the context of domestic violence and child welfare concerns</i> is reviewed in RD 03/1)
Journal	Child and Family Law Quarterly
Date	2003
Volume/issue	Vol. 15 No. 3
Subject (key words)	Contact, domestic violence
Summary	<p>The authors examine what they describe as the clash of cultures between intervention services for domestic violence, which find that parental separation is no barrier to continued violence and intimidation, and those facilitating child contact, which emphasise the need for children to have continuing relationships with both parents.</p> <p>Their research, commissioned by the LCD, used a wide range of survey methods, involving over 200 contact centres and their staff, and interviews with 20 FCAs 3 judges, and 17 parents. 21 children completed questionnaires.</p> <p>The authors express concerns that low vigilance, supported contact centres are being used to try to manage highly contentious child contact problems, where domestic violence is a continuing issue. They argue that high vigilance, supervised contact is required in such existing cases, and are concerned that where supervised contact is now available it is being used increasingly to deal with more complex and dangerous cases, where contact has previously been refused. They also argue that the presumption in the pro-contact culture that contact is invariably 'a good thing' is not supported by the research evidence of the effects on children of witnessing domestic violence.</p>
Reviewed by	SH

Author	Hunt J
Title	Researching Contact
Date	2003
Publisher	One Parent Families
Subject (key words)	Contact, child well-being, parental conflict, private law
Summary	<p>This is an extensive review of research studies relating to contact following parental separation. The focus is on British studies but key international research is included. This is an essential source document for anyone who wishes to know what light research throws on all aspects of contact in private law. The contents include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The value of contact for children • Patterns and levels of contact • Factors associated with the maintenance of contact • Parents who lose contact with their children • Contact problems • The impact of child abuse and domestic violence on contact

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The child's perspective • Parental attitudes and perspectives • Law and the legal system • Interventions <p>Research studies completed and in progress in the UK are listed and there are suggestions for further research.</p>
Reviewed by	HB

Author	Iwaniec D, Sneddon H & Allen S
Title	The outcomes of a longitudinal study of non-organic failure to thrive
Journal	Child Abuse Review
Date	July – August 2003
Volume/issue	Vol 12 Issue 4
Subject (key words)	Failure to thrive, neglect
Summary	<p>Can families with FTT children (infants with poor development) be helped to overcome the children's early disadvantage, using psychological programmes and group work?</p> <p>This rare 20 year study of 31 children provides some interesting answers.</p> <p>If the reason for the FTT was 'active', i.e. due to abuse (emotional, physical or sexual) the children were more likely to have a poor outcome. However abused children could attain good outcomes, if there was a positive and sustained change in their life or circumstances.</p> <p>If the reason for the FTT was passive, i.e. neglect, lack of parenting or feeding difficulties, the children were more likely to have a good outcome than the active group above. Intervention needed to be early, and address clear problems, such as feeding difficulties.</p> <p>The major cause of long term progress was a significant improvement in the quality of care given to the child and the emotional environment experienced by them.</p> <p>Long term improvements were poorer where there was little improvement shown soon after intervention or where the changes were not sustained.</p>
Reviewed by	SH

Author	James A, James A and McNamee S
Title	Constructing Children's Welfare a comparative study of professional practice
Report	Research Report submitted to the ESRC
Date	2003
Publisher	Unpublished
Subject (key words)	CAFCASS, Guardian, Children and Family Reporter, Family Court Advisor, Family Court Welfare Officer
Summary	<p>Aim – to explore the practice implication of the models of childhood held by Guardians and FCWOs</p> <p>Methodology –19 FCWOs and 19 GALs from one CAFCASS region were interviewed on 3 occasions over a period of 18 months supplemented by the reading of 38 court reports. Work relating to two cases was shadowed.</p> <p>Findings</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The conceptualisation of childhood of both groups was similar including assumptions about the age-relatedness of a child's competence, the importance of stability in family life and the meeting a child's current needs as a means of promoting their future development. • Practitioners attached importance to ascertaining children's wishes and feelings but greater weight was given to the welfare of the child where these principles were in conflict. • Both the FCWOs and the GALs demonstrated skilled and child focussed practice. FCWO reports tended to be more child focussed than those of GALs, more frequently quoting children directly. • FCWOs were more constrained than GALs in terms of the professional assumptions such as the importance of continuing contact, the need to reduce conflict, the importance of maintaining the "status quo" and of keeping siblings together. • GALs were more likely to interpret the needs of the child on an individual basis rather than in terms of broad principles. • Children's views tended to be interpreted rather than presented directly in reports.
Reviewed by	HB

Author	Lipscombe J, Farmer E & Moyers S
Title	Parenting fostered adolescents: skills and strategies
Journal	Child and Family Social Work
Date	November 2003
Volume/issue	Vol 8 Issue 4
Subject (key words)	Adolescents, fostering, parenting
Summary	Based on interviews with 68 young people and their carers, the research concluded that foster carers would benefit from training in specific parenting skills and strategies, and that LAs need to regularly review foster carers abilities in these areas, as they face new challenges.
Reviewed by	SH

Author	Mantle, G
Title	Representing Children in Family Court Reports
Journal	Representing Children
Date	June 2003
Volume/issue	16(1) pp 47 – 56
Subject (key words)	Private law, court reports, children's wishes and feelings
Summary	The article draws on a study of 'family court service' records of 221 families with 363 children, an average of 1.68 children per family. 13% had three or more children, 14% at least one child with special needs, 47% at least one child over 7 years and other children not the focus of enquiries are directly affected by decisions in at least 1/3 of cases. The author expresses the view that considerable skill, time and flexibility are needed to properly assess the wishes and feelings of this diverse group of children and questions the effectiveness of current private law practice.

Reviewed by	PL
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Author	Neil E, Beek M and Schofield G
Title	Thinking About and Managing Contact in Permanent Placements: The Differences and Similarities Between Adoptive Parents and Foster Carers
Journal	Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry
Date	2003
Volume/issue	8/3
Subject (key words)	Adoption, foster care, contact, long term placement
Summary	<p>The article draws on two research studies relating to three samples of children:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adoption Questionnaire Sample - Questionnaire to social workers about on contact arrangements post adoption in relation to 168 children 2. Adoption Interview Sample - Interviews with adoptive parents of 35 children where contact was taking place and with 15 of the birth relatives 3. Growing Up in Foster Care Sample - Questionnaires and interviews with the carers, birth relatives and social workers of 58 children in long-term foster care. <p>It is not clear from the article how the Adoptive Interview Sample were selected and how representative they are of either adoptive parents where contact is taking place or of all adoptive parents.</p> <p>The research studies indicated that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct contact was both more prevalent (90%) and frequent (70% at least once a month) in the foster care sample than the adoption sample (17% direct contact and 3% at least once a month). • In the Adoption Interview sample, contact was unproblematic whereas the picture was more complex in the Growing Up in Foster Care sample where only 3% rated contact as entirely unproblematic and a third described the children as experiencing stress and potential harm. • A key difference between the position of the adoptive parents and foster carers was that the adoptive parents had chosen to maintain contact with the birth parents and they had control over the pattern of contact. The foster carers had little control over the decision to promote contact or the contact arrangements. • Contact was a less significant event for the adopted children than for the foster children. • A key element in successful contact appeared to be the empathy of the adoptive parent or foster carer towards the birth parent and a belief that the child needed to have knowledge of their birth family. <p>The authors argue that empathy and sensitivity are essential requirements for adoptive and foster parents and that the successful management of contact should be assessed as evidence of the possession of these characteristics. However, given the lack of clarity about the selection of the Adoptive</p>

	Interview Sample this conclusion has to be tentative. Furthermore there was no control group of foster or adopted children where contact was not taking place.
Reviewed by	HB

Author	Olsen R and Wates M
Title	Disabled parents: examining research assumptions
Date	2003
Publisher	Research in Practice (RIP)
Subject (key words)	Disability, children as carers, research
Summary	<p>This is the most recent of the research reviews produced by RIP. It aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to bring together the research literature on disabled parents • to challenge the assumptions behind many of these studies about the needs of children and parents where a parent is disabled. In particular it challenges the assumption that parenting by a disabled adult is intrinsically pathological. <p>The methodology of the review is deliberately not "systematic" (an assessment of research findings based on explicit criteria for inclusion and evaluation) because the reviewers are critical of many of the assumptions behind existing studies and are therefore critical of the findings.</p> <p>In examining the assumptions behind research studies, the review asks how far the needs of families where a parent is disabled are the same as those of all families and how far they may be different. In so far as children in families with a disabled parent may have unmet needs this may be due primarily to the lack of adequate and appropriate universal and specialist services rather than to the parent's inability to care for the child. The views of parents are seen as critical in developing improved services to support them in their parenting role.</p> <p>The review covers definitions, the need for statistical information, models of disability research, (personal, ecological and organisational) the involvement of parents in research, the creation of appropriate methodologies, gaps in research and a checklist for good practice.</p>
Reviewed by	HB

Author	Richards, A
Title	Second Time Around for Grandparents
Journal	Family Law
Date	October 2003
Volume/issue	33; pp 749 – 755
Subject (key words)	Grandparents, residence,
Summary	<p>Census results suggest that 1% of all grandparents have dependent children living with them and that this group is in poorer health and financial circumstances than other grandparents.</p> <p>In 2001, Family Rights Group undertook a questionnaire survey of 251 grandparents living with dependent children (180 responded) and then had discussions with an overlapping sample that attended focus groups around the UK. 104</p>

	<p>grandparents in the sample had their care of grandchildren formalised by a court order.</p> <p>Findings:</p> <p>Whilst appreciating the warmth and closeness of the relationship with their grandchildren, grandparents caring for children following a family crisis were found to be at risk of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social isolation • Poor financial support and sometimes substantial loss of savings as a result of court proceedings, even when these were actively supported by the local authority • Poor acknowledgement of their role by agencies e.g. the children's schools • Poor access to other support services.
Reviewed by	PL

Author	Rodgers K B and Rose H A
Title	Risk and Resilience Factors Among Adolescents Who Experience Marital Transitions
Journal	Journal of Marriage and Family
Date	November 2002
Volume/issue	63/4
Subject (key words)	Adolescence, parental separation, resilience, peer groups
Summary	<p>The researchers used the concept of resilience to examine familial and extrafamilial factors associated with adolescent well-being in intact, step and divorced single parent families. A sample (2011) of 11 to 16 year olds answered a questionnaire administered in class. The research suggested that the support of parents and their monitoring of adolescents' behaviour is of primary importance to adolescent well-being. Monitoring and support are lower in step and single families than intact. However, the support of schools, peers and neighbours also contribute to adolescent well-being. Friends who could be relied on were a particularly positive factor for adolescents in single parent families.</p>
Reviewed by	HB

Author	Roker, D & Eden, K
Title	Taking 'Social Action': How some British Young People are Bringing About Change in Society.
Journal	Representing Children
Date	June 2003
Volume/issue	16(1); pp 31 - 46
Subject (key words)	Young people, consultation,
Summary	<p>Following a national review, this was a longitudinal study of 22 youth social action groups made over 3 years using observations and individual interviews. Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of groups were not freestanding but associated with a 'parent' organisation. • Groups tended to be clustered around population centres • Membership was much more diverse than stereotypically

	<p>white, middle class.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people tended to join groups through personal connection rather than having a high motivation in terms of the objects of the group. • Funding and adult facilitation were key elements of success. • Young people seemed able to communicate effectively and 'make a difference' but also to benefit from a sense of purpose, gaining presentation skills and an understanding of diversity.
Reviewed by	PL

Author	Rushton A
Title	The adoption of looked after children: A scoping review of research (57 pps) Summary (8 pps)
Date	2003
Publisher	Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) Policy Press
Subject (key words)	Adoption, long-term placement, looked after children
Summary	<p>This Review aims to identify key findings from published research on the adoption of children from care and to identify gaps in research.</p> <p>The Review covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment, assessment, matching and preparation • Adoption outcomes • The relationship between the child's previous experiences and current difficulties • Contact after adoption • Adoption support <p>Findings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research findings do not provide clear indicators for what constitutes a good match between child and potential adopters. • The models for the preparation of adoptive families vary but have not been evaluated. • Similarly models for the preparation of children for their new families have not been evaluated. • Outcomes for healthy children placed at birth are positive but there is little research evidence on young children placed after neglect or abuse. • Studies on children placed after infancy show disruption rates of about 20%. The picture is less positive for adolescents. • Adoption is "worth the risk" for children placed late from care but it does not work for a minority. • Higher levels of disruption are associated with older age at placement, adverse previous experiences of the child, behavioural difficulties at placement, the existence of a child of similar age in the adoptive family. • There has been no rigorous study of the short and long term effects of contact between adopted children and their birth

	<p>parents. Studies suggest that adoptive families are able to cope with contact particularly if the adoptive family maintains an element of control over the arrangements. (See Neil E in this RD)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services to support adoptive families have not been systematically evaluated.
Reviewed by	HB

Author	Rushton A, Mayes D, Dance C and Quinton D
Title	Parenting late-placed children: The development of new relationships and the challenge of behavioural problems
Journal	Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry
Date	2003
Volume/issue	8(3)
Subject (key words)	Adoption, attachment, late placed children, permanent placement, abuse and neglect, fostering
Summary	<p>Methodology</p> <p>The study was prospective and longitudinal. Parents and social workers were interviewed at the beginning and end of the first year of placement and parents completed questionnaires. The sample was of 61 children between 5 and 9 who had been recently been placed with adoptive or permanent foster families. Children with severe learning disabilities or profound physical handicaps were excluded.</p> <p>Findings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 73% of children had formed an attached relationship with one or both parents at the end of the first year. • There were no differences between the attached and non-attached children according to age, gender, ethnicity, number of pre-placement moves, length of time in care or history of abuse. • The one factor which distinguished the attached and non-attached children was a history of active rejection by birth parents. • New parents had more difficulty in responding warmly and sensitively to non-attached than attached children. • Non-attached children had more behavioural, emotional and social problems than attached at the start of the placements and the difference grew by the end of the year.
Reviewed by	HB

Author	Sellick C and Howell D
Title	A review of good practice in fostering (66 pages) Summary
Date	2003
Publisher	SCIE (Social Care Institute for Excellence)
Subject (key words)	Fostering, care,
Summary	<p>Only the Summary of this SCIE Review has been read for this entry.</p> <p>This is one of a series of Knowledge Reviews commissioned by</p>

	<p>SCIE which aim to tap practitioner and user knowledge as well as knowledge from more traditional research studies. The aim was "to find as many examples as possible of good and innovative fostering practice." More than 76 fostering agencies were contacted and telephone interviews were held with 50 staff. Examples of good practice are given. The Review is not systematic in that not all sources relating to fostering were read and the response from agencies was self-selecting. The Review covers the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruiting and training foster carers • Retaining carers and creating job satisfaction by career choice • Creating placement choice by using partnership working and commissioning • Fostering children with complex and special needs • Providing additional services to the children and young people • Evaluating fostering services through user participation
Reviewed by	HB

Author	Smart C, May V, Wade A and Furniss C
Title	Residence and Contact Disputes in Court Volume 1 Summary
Date	September 2003
Publisher	DCA
Subject (key words)	Contact, residence, court proceedings
Summary	<p>Aim To gain a better understanding of cases that are brought to court.</p> <p>Methodology A random sample of 430 cases in which s 8 applications had been made in 2000 to three county courts was studied using court files. 281 cases were analysed in more detail.</p> <p>Findings The report covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An analysis of residence cases • An analysis of contact cases • The court process including features of protracted cases • The treatment of violence and abuse • Complex disputes • Children's welfare • Children's voices <p>The report focuses on all applications and there is little analysis of the contribution to the process of the Section 7 report. These were ordered from CAFCASS in 41% of cases and from Social Services in 10% and from one or the other or both in 47% of cases.</p> <p>The full report is being sent to all teams. Further copies can be ordered free from 020 7210 8520.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Section 7 (CAFCASS) report was order in 41% of cases

	<p>and a Section 7 (Social Services) 10%. In 47% of cases a CAFCASS and /or a Social Services report was ordered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 59% of cases were residence applications and 41% contact • In most residence applications (77%), the status quo was preserved
Reviewed by	HB

Author	Smart C, Neale B and Flowerdew J
Title	Drifting towards shared residence?
Journal	Family Law
Date	December 2003
Subject (key words)	Shared parenting, children's participation, residence
Summary	<p>A sub-sample of 30 children who had originally been interviewed 3-4 years ago were reinterviewed. The original research on shared residence and children's experience of parental separation is described in <i>The Changing Experience of Childhood: Families and Divorce</i> (2001) Smart, Neale and Wade Polity Press. The current sample were from predominantly white and middleclass families and were aged 11 to 21.</p> <p>Findings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From a child's point of view their experience was of <i>dual residence</i> rather than shared residence. • Two thirds of the children were still in shared residence arrangements at the second time point. • Children's experiences of the arrangements varied widely. • Features of positive shared residence arrangements were the prioritisation of the children's needs, flexibility over the arrangements and the children feeling at home in both households. Parents would check if the arrangements suited the children and modify them if they did not. • Features of problematic shared residence were the prioritisation of the parents' needs, inflexibility and children who did not feel settled in one or both homes. Parents were ignorant of or ignored their children's preferences. • There were costs to children in all shared residence arrangements but these were outweighed by benefits where children had a good relationship with both parents and where their views were respected. • Most children found it very difficult to change the arrangements once they were in place. • For many children the pressure of living in two homes was significant, lasted many years and often became more stressful as they grew older.
Reviewed by	HB

Author	Stuart S
Title	Seen but not heard? Research into the experiences of children involved in contact and residence disputes and the involvement with CAFCASS

Date	February 2003
Thesis	MA in Advanced Social Work Studies, Reading University
Publisher	Unpublished
Subject (key words)	Children's participation, contact, residence, private law, CAFCASS, FCA
Summary	<p>This is a small qualitative study of children who had been the subjects of welfare reports. 10 children were interviewed after the proceedings had ended.</p> <p>The aim of the study was to hear from children how they experienced their contact with the FCA and whether they felt involved in the overall process.</p> <p>The thesis includes a chapter on the ethical dilemmas and practical problems which arise when doing research with children.</p> <p>Findings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The children liked the FCA and felt listened to. • Most children had little understanding of the process, failing realise that what they said would be included in a report seen by their parents and a judge. • Most children did not feel part of the process. They wanted to be consulted but also felt that these were adult decisions. • Only three of the children were engaged in an other way than questioning although several found questioning boring. • For five of the children English was not their first language. None were offered interpreters.
Reviewed by	HB

Author	Tisdall E, Marshall K, Cleland A and Plumtree A
Title	Listening to the views of children? Principles and mechanisms within the Children (Scotland) Act 1995
Journal	Journal of Social Welfare and Family Law
Date	2002
Volume/issue	24(4) 385-399
Subject (key words)	Children's participation, Scotland
Summary	<p>The authors were commissioned to conceptualise and evaluate the ways in which decision-making in children's lives takes account of their views in the context of the CA (Scotland) 1995. They found within the Act inconsistencies in the application of the principle that children's views should be sought.</p>
Reviewed by	HB

Author	Warman A and Roberts C
Title	Adoption and <i>Looked after</i> Children – an International Comparison
Date	2003
Publisher	Oxford Centre for Family Law and Policy, University of Oxford
Subject (key words)	Adoption, international comparisons, looked after children,

Summary	<p>In the context of Government policy to increase the number of children adopted from the care system, the Nuffield Foundation funded a comparison of adoption legislation and practice in eight countries (Denmark, England and Wales, France, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Portugal, USA, Scotland, Sweden). Experts from each country attended an international seminar and later took part in a discussion based on vignettes which raised key issues.</p> <p>Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different countries approach the needs of children in long-term care in different ways. • Only in the UK and USA is adoption the preferred option for children who cannot live with their birth parents. Other countries prefer the use of long-term fostering. This option is not seen as producing insecurity for children and carers. • In France long-term rehabilitation would be pursued with the severing of birth ties as an exceptional measure. • In Denmark the resource emphasis is on preventing children entering the care system. • New Zealand has pioneered support for kinship placements as the option of choice. This approach has been questioned in the USA and Sweden where the quality and safety of kinship placements is an issue. • Support for contact in adoptive and long-term placements varied between countries. • In the Netherlands, services are available to all new adoptive parents and their children. • Attitudes to racial and ethnic matching of adoptive parents and children vary greatly. In the Netherlands and France it does not play a major role in decision making. • Attitudes to involving children also varied with it being a legal requirement in Denmark for children to be consulted.
Reviewed by	HB

Author	Wild L and Richards M
Title	Exploring parent and child perceptions of interparental conflict
Journal	International Journal of Law, Policy and the Family
Date	2003
Volume/issue	17/3
Subject (key words)	Conflict, interparental conflict, child perceptions, emotional reaction
Summary	<p>Fifty 9-11 year olds were interviewed about their perceptions of conflict between their parents and their reactions. 71 of their parents responded to questionnaires on interparental conflict. All lived in intact families.</p> <p>Child and parent reports of parental conflict were moderately strongly correlated. Children's adjustment was more strongly related to their perceptions of their parents' conflict than to the parents' own rating of the conflict. Children were negatively affected by the frequency and intensity of their parents' conflict and by conflict which was unresolved.</p> <p>The generalisability of the findings is limited by the sample which was all white, mostly middle-class and all from intact</p>

	families.
Reviewed by	HB

Author	Wilson A and Edwards J
Title	School-based support work for children whose parents have separated Findings
Date	2003
Publisher	Joseph Rowntree Foundation
Subject (key words)	Separation, school-based support, interventions
Summary	<p>Only the Findings have been read for this review</p> <p>The project aimed to compare the acceptability and impact of individual and group-based support for 69 children in 7 primary schools</p> <p>Findings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of children were positive about the opportunity to be with people who had time to listen and let them talk. • Children and parents noted that relationships within and outside the family seemed to improve. • 6 months after the project ended on a variety of measures children showed sustained improvement • However few of the differences measured were statistically significant. • Some children felt uncomfortable about talking about personal issues and some parents felt that the children were more difficult to deal with.
Reviewed by	HB