



# SUCCESSFUL TRANSITIONS IN AFTERCARE THROUGH CARE- LEAVERS ATTAINMENTS

Presented at the

**“Setting Sail from a Safe Port:  
Giving our children confidence to move  
forward  
with safe and permanent relationships”**

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We're committed to the cause of India's vulnerable children and youth

We are Udayan Care

Our movement was sparked off in early 1994

The situation of millions of vulnerable children in India compelled a few committed individuals to combine their efforts and thereby ignite social change

Since then, we've worked relentlessly to raise the standards of child and youth care in India; and expanded our programs to empower girls through higher education and provide skilling and training for job readiness to youth from underprivileged sections of society





# CHILD & YOUTH CARE

CONTEXT &  
ISSUES

Investing in the brighter future of children and young people  
is critical for sustainable development



Children and youth  
constitute more  
than 50% of the  
population in India



Over 31 million OHC  
children in India



Only 1.4% of them  
receive any sort  
of formal care in a  
shelter or orphanage



Domestic adoption  
is abysmally low  
Only 3737 adoptions  
(CARA 2015-2016)



Too many others are  
often forced into a  
life as sex workers,  
child labourers,  
or beggars on the  
streets



18 million children  
live or work on the  
streets to support  
themselves



Aftercare  
programmes almost  
non-existent



\*Out of Home Care or OHC children are those who are abandoned, orphaned or at risk of separation from their biological families and hence need care and protection.

# Need for Aftercare



Children aging out of alternative care are vulnerable to unemployment, psychological stress, physical and mental illness and homelessness



Absence of pillars of support increases the risk and vulnerability



Risk of losing out on all investment and care made during childcare stage if not assisted in key areas such as counselling, finance, employment, accommodation



Adequate aftercare program supports young adults to become independent, self reliant, ego resilient and responsible citizens through continuum of care; and enables their reintegration & rehabilitation in society



## Policy Framework on Aftercare

### International

## THE UN GUIDELINES FOR ALTERNATIVE CARE OF CHILDREN

**Systematically aim at preparing children to assume self-reliance and integrate fully in the community**

**Focus on acquisition of social and life skills through participation in the life of the local community**

**Process of transition should take into consideration children's gender, age, maturity and particular circumstances**

**Special efforts should be made to allocate to each child, whenever possible, a specialized person who can facilitate the child's independence when leaving care**

**Aftercare should be prepared as early as possible, well before the child leaves the care setting**

**Imparted educational and vocational training so that they are financially independent**

**Young people should have access to social, legal, health and financial services**

# Policy Framework on Aftercare

India



Juvenile Justice Act, 2015

## Integrated Child Protection Scheme



Recognition to aftercare till the age of 21 years



Provides both financial and non-financial support



Defines a framework for aftercare transition, planning and extra time beyond childhood to stimulate and generate higher educational and employment outcomes for young adults



District Child Protection unit to identify voluntary organisations



Order for placement in Aftercare is given by Child Welfare Committee



Where young  
lives shine



# Challenges at Policy & Practice levels

Aftercare still remains a largely unaddressed area and not a priority with govt.

Very few government run Aftercare facilities for all youth; few NGOs running their own facilities without getting government's involvement and recognition

Lack of data

No national tracking system to identify the journeys of care-leavers



# Background of Children entering Alternative Care



- Extreme economic deprivation
- Double/ single orphaned, or abandoned
- Lost children; families untraceable
- Street children, trafficked children, child labor
- Victims of familial or societal emotional, substance, physical and sexual abuse
- Belong to no particular religion, caste or creed
- Share common scars inflicted by poverty, social apathy and abuse, neglect, malnutrition, ill health, emotional trauma and lack of education



# Udayan Ghars

(Sunshine Homes)



An 'Udayan Ghar' is a residential loving home; where vulnerable children are cared for in a compassionate family environment

A close-knit group of around 12 children of the ages 6 to 18, as a unit, live in these group homes called Udayan Ghars, with separate Ghars for boys and girls  
There are 2 multi-unit homes too



## Child & Youth Care

Group homes  
'L.I.F.E' ('Living  
in Family  
Environment')

A committed team of Carers:  
'Mentor Parents' who are  
lifetime volunteers,  
social workers, residential,  
staff and mental health care  
professionals



The first Udayan Ghar was set up in 1996

14 Ghars spread across 4 states



# UDAYAN GHARS

## Child & Youth Care

### What sets Udayan Ghars apart

#### Continuum of Care



Individualised care



Care for Physical and  
Mental Emotional  
Well-being



Quality education &  
Vocational training



Community Orientation



Opportunities for  
growth



Mentor Parents & Staff



Capacity Building



Aftercare



Alumni network



Researching our own  
systems with child  
participation





# After Care Programme

for Udayan Youth over 18



30 Aftercare youth  
in Colleges and  
Vocational studies

35 alumni  
in jobs

30 married  
25 grand  
children

## Why have an After Care programme?



Young adults at this critical stage are not fully equipped to handle life all by themselves



Continuum of care from childhood through adolescence



The After Care Programme helps the Udayan youth to transition smoothly to life as self-reliant adults



Helps provide permanency and on-going family-like relationship for young adults by supporting their educational, career counselling, emotional, social and financial needs



# Developmental Goals



## Our presence

At present we have 2 dedicated After Care Homes for adult Udayan youth; one each for girls and boys, in Greater Noida and Gurgaon

We also support several young adults who live in hostels or separate housing

Attain Education & Vocational Skills

Gain independent living skills

Become emotionally resilient

Ability to form healthy adult relationships; family life: Be able to care for their own children

Gainful employment / Career

Value diversity; respect people irrespective of their caste, class, or ethnic and cultural background

Become law abiding, socially responsible citizens

## Plans 2017-18



Research of 300 Youth leaving care across 3 cities in India

Aims to address the challenges faced by them as independent adults



Aftercare Outreach Pilot Project  
Helpline  
Referrals and linkages  
Network of Alumni, Mentors and Youth



# Aftercare



## Sustained Engagement

- Planning begins at 14 years; child participation: goal setting
- Counseling and monitoring to help them avoid pitfalls (alcohol/drug, mental health crises, credit trouble or unemployment, homelessness)
- Some have complex needs; need additional support due to higher risk behaviours
- Even after they leave aftercare, as alumni they become peer mentors, members of aftercare committee, donors, change-makers and supporters

## Skill Development

- Developing core capacities in life skills, job readiness, skills in their own health management, finance, insurance, investment, housing, and gaining access to broader social networks
- Support for higher education or vocational training as per their talent and need
- Education (regular/NIOS), life skills, career planning, professional training, internship opportunities at corporates and guidance leading to independence
- Early Start is encouraged - part time jobs, manage independent kitchen as part of the process of equipping them with life skills

## Permanency and Attachment

- Key to successful transition
- Long-term relationships through Mentor parents' continuity
- Permanent support network: stability/time/space
- Continuous practice of trauma based understanding
- Contact with birth and extended family encouraged
- Own sisterhood / brotherhood, the relationships that they develop with each other, while in childcare; continues even during aftercare

## Research Report by Udayan Care



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## Research and Evidence of Careleavers attainment at Udayan Care



**Making a successful  
transition from children's  
home to independence**

**The Ecological Systems Theory by  
Urie Bronfenbrenner**

## **OBJECTIVE**

- Understand the Aftercare program at Udayan Care
- Understand the nature of development of youth through their own eyes using the prism of ecological systems theory of human development

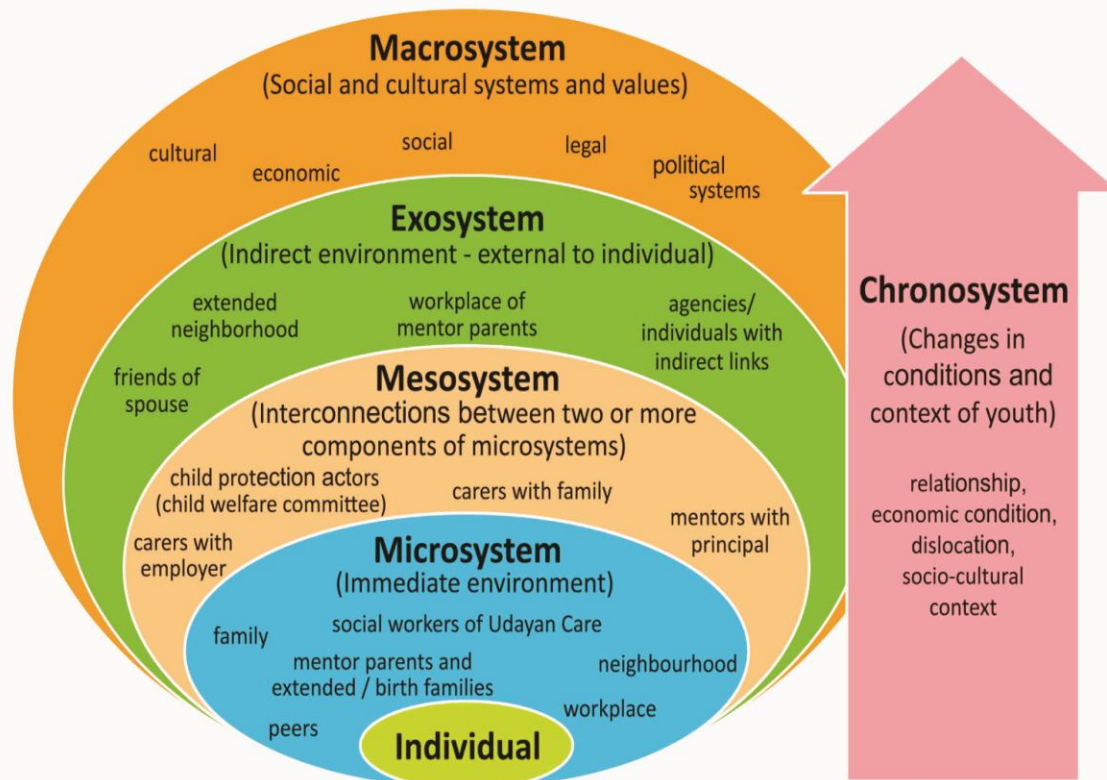
## **Methodology**

- Exploratory survey
- Both quantitative and qualitative data
- Interviews of youth under Aftercare program and Alumni.
- Purposive sampling was conducted on the young adults
- A total of 60 young adults participated (45 Aftercare & 15 alumnae)
- The Likert scale was used for the component on resilience

# Research Report by Udayan Care

## Making a successful transition from children's home to independence

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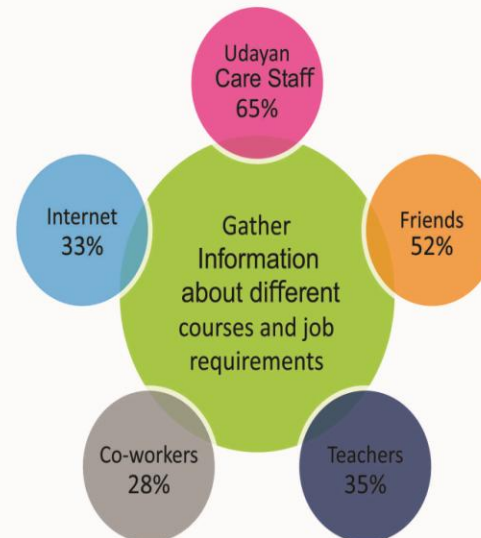
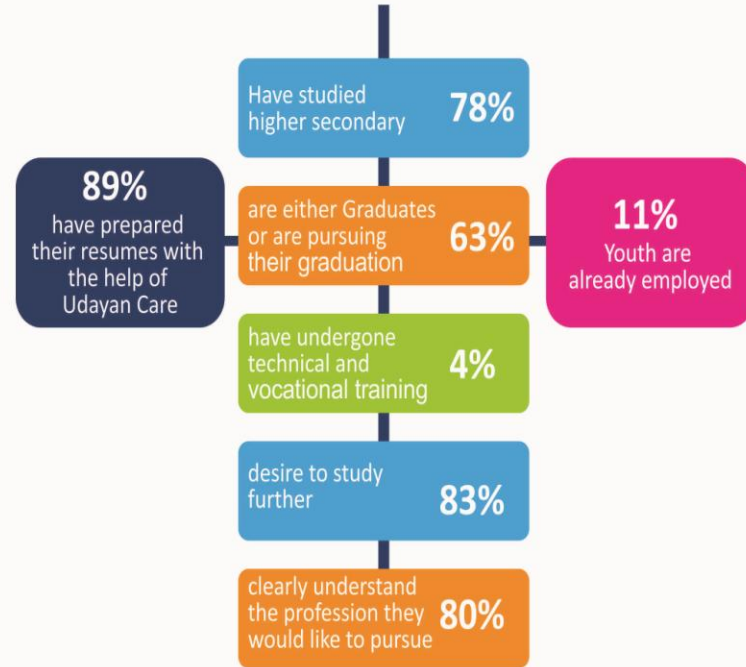


# Research Report by Udayan Care

**Making a successful  
transition from children's  
home to independence**

**MICROSYSTEM**  
immediate environment

The Ecological Systems Theory by  
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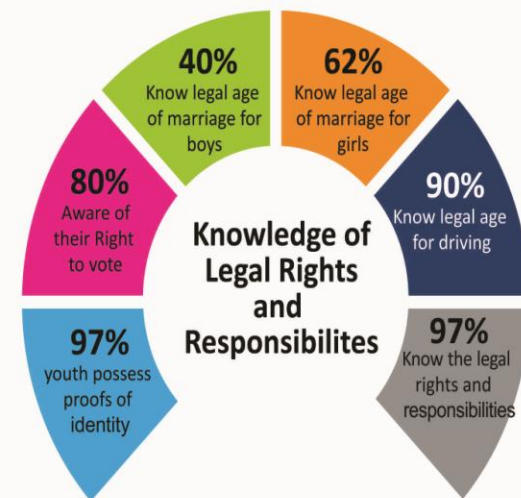
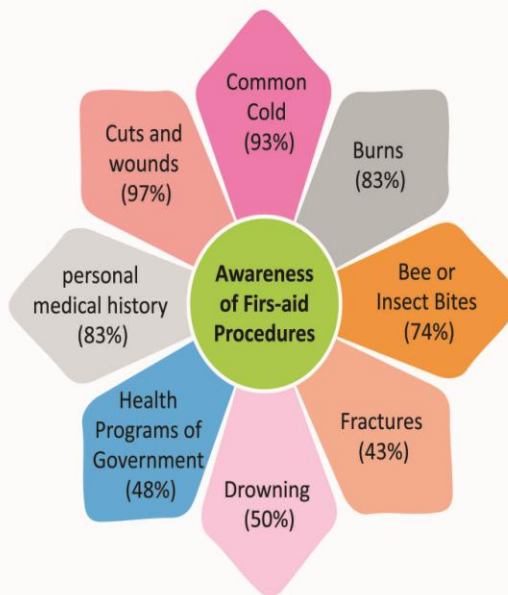


# Research Report by Udayan Care

Making a successful  
transition from children's  
home to independence

## MICROSYSTEM immediate environment

The Ecological Systems Theory by  
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# Research Report by Udayan Care

## Making a successful transition from children's home to independence

### MICROSYSTEM immediate environment

The Ecological Systems Theory by  
Urie Bronfenbrenner



**Housing:** Udayan Care supports the youth in the form of leaving grant, household material and assistance for taking sound decisions regarding housing. They are aware of the issues that one needs to look into while getting a house on rent or starting independent living like sanitation, water supply, safety and security, availability of key facilities like market, hospital, school etc., and electricity supply.

The youth have learned different aspects of managing household matters from various actors in the microsystem like mentor parents, friends, siblings. Various models of housing include scattered, group housing or living in own facilities.



**Goals and Aspirations:** As a microsystem actor, Udayan Care has contributed to the process of shaping the goals and aspirations of youth through proper guidance by mentor parents, training, emotional support and motivation. During interaction with youth, they expressed their desire to complete education, enter into professions of their choices, be successful in life, and be good human beings.

# Research Report by Udayan Care

## Making a successful transition from children's home to independence

### Mesosystem inter-connections

The Ecological Systems Theory by  
Urie Bronfenbrenner

## Mesosystem

- Mentor parents and carers interact with principals and teachers of academic institutions, employers of youth, people in the neighborhood, and others in the microsystem.
- Interaction takes place between interns and volunteers and the potential employers including corporate houses. This strengthens career development initiatives.
- Interactions also take place between carers of Udayan Care and peers of youth, friends of youth and his or her family, spouse and healthcare facility, volunteers and educational and vocational institutions, and among many other actors of microsystem. These interactions help the youth in finding accommodation, getting into employment, and managing critical situations of life.



# Research Report by Udayan Care

## Making a successful transition from children's home to independence

### **Exosystem** indirect environment

The Ecological Systems Theory by  
Urie Bronfenbrenner

## Exosystem

The family of mentor parents is an appropriate exosystem ecology. As a result of high degree of attachment between the mentor parents and the youth, the family members of mentor often get involved in the mentoring process. They visit the youth periodically and help them in whichever way they can, thereby complementing the work of mentor parent. There are also other external settings like extended neighborhood of the youth, workplaces of mentor parents, friends of spouse and other family members, which have a bearing on the lives of youth.

# Research Report by Udayan Care

## Making a successful transition from children's home to independence

### Macrosystem

The Ecological Systems Theory by  
Urie Bronfenbrenner

### Macrosystem

1. Journey of the youth starts from Sunshine Homes
2. Exposed to a peaceful, law-abiding and caring society
3. Middle class localities or controlled environment like hostels of residential facilities: Opportunities for self-growth than scope for deviant action.



# Research Report by Udayan Care

**Making a successful  
transition from children's  
home to independence**

**Chronosystem**  
changes over time

**The Ecological Systems Theory by  
Urie Bronfenbrenner**

## Chronosystem



## Sense of Mastery

## Sense of Relatedness

## Emotionality

## RESILIENCE

Indicators	Agree or Strongly Agreed
I can think of more than one way to solve a problem	63%
I am confident in my ability to take charge	72%
I can easily adjust to change	67%
No matter what happens, things will be all right	65%
I enjoy solving difficult problems	46%
I can control what happens to me	61%
I set clear objectives for myself	54%
I can let others help me when I need to	81%

Indicators	Agree or Strongly Agreed
I can make friends easily	65%
I can calmly tell a friend if he or she does something that hurts me	58%
If people let me down, I can forgive them	70%
I can depend on those closest to me to do the right thing	65%
I can trust others	40%
I can share my feelings easily	59%
People comfort me when I'm upset	67%
I have a best friend	77%

Do not commit mistakes while upset **18%**

Do not remain upset for many days **33%**

Do not react without thinking when upset **30%**



# Research Report by Udayan Care



## FINDINGS FROM THE RESEARCH STUDY

- Results need to be seen in the background of children as the history of trauma and long-term psychological difficulties are unique to their situation
- Applying the ecological theory establishes the contributions of multiple stakeholders to the effectiveness of Aftercare model at Udayan Care
- Mentor parents as lifetime volunteers contribute to the long term attachment and emotional bonding with young adults
- A strong sense of continuum of care and connected sense through community outreach contribute to their successful social reintegration





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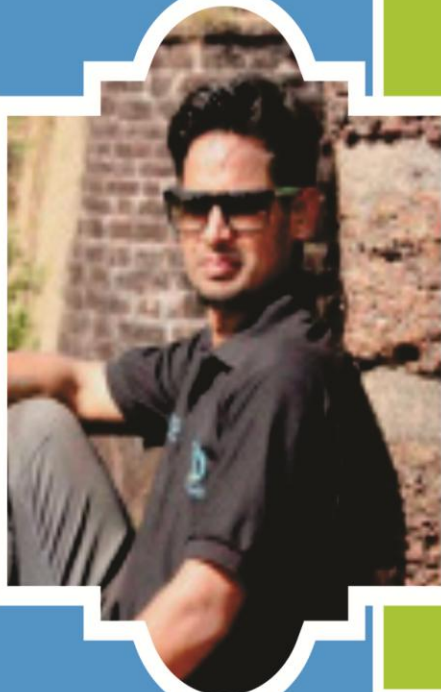
# Journeys of Hope





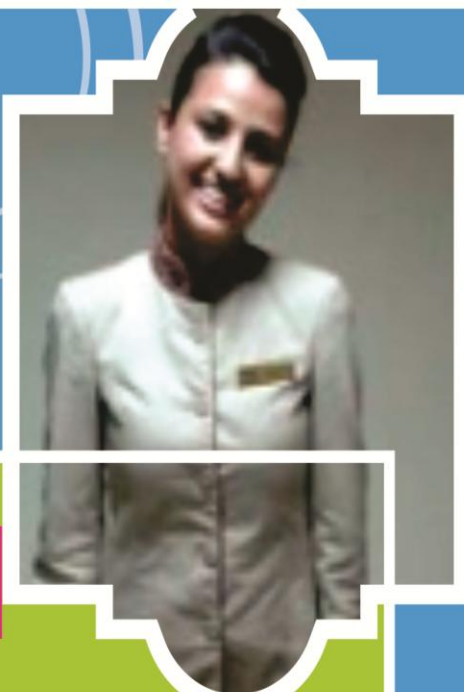
# UDAYAN GHARS

## raja



- Raja was 10 years when he came to Udayan Care in 2003 after losing both his parents
- Raja completed his degree in travel and tourism from University of Delhi and today, he is successfully running his own travel and tourism firm, iTour Beat

## Ruchi



- Ruchi came to Udayan Care in 2000 at 14 years through another organization. Before this, she had undergone many changes in living arrangements which has a traumatic impact on her mind
- At Udayan Ghar, Ruchi build self confidence, learnt to trust others and forged strong bonds
- In 2011 she graduated in hotel management and started working in Marriot Hotel. Today, Ruchi is well settled in Dubai with her family which includes her husband and a child

# UDAYAN GHARS



## Shalu

- Shalu was just 10 years old when she came to Udayan Care along with her 4 sisters after her mother expired and father was unable to take care of them due to his poor health.

- She was awarded with a gold medal for topping her batch securing 9.26 CGPA in B. Pharma in Jan'17.

- She is now employed at a pharmaceutical company and has become self reliant.



## Prakash



- Prakash came to us as a young & delicate child who had experienced loss of parents and exploitation.

- Provided with required love, care, protection and opportunities to develop, Prakash grew out to be confident, intellectual and hardworking adult

- Completing his B.Tech in civil engineering with an outstanding score of 78%, he is currently working in a reputed construction company.



# In Conclusion

The key to any Aftercare program is being responsive to young peoples' needs

Relationship and trust is the only way to do this\*

**Anchored** – teenagers in transition to the adult world need to belong to somewhere & someone

**Accountable** – the mere presence of key people to keep things on track, Someone who'll care even if they mess up. And someone who'll celebrate with us when we succeed

**Accessible** – when they hit a crisis, they can turn to someone they've learned to trust

(\*Source: Johny Mathew, who uses a TraumaRecovery Model to deal with the developmental problems in children).



## Group Exercise:

- What aftercare model exists in your country?
- Does your country have proper aftercare guidelines?
- Is there any research done on aftercare?
  - If you want to share please email me at [kiranmodi@udayancare.org](mailto:kiranmodi@udayancare.org)



**THANK YOU**

**24 years of transforming lives**



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