

Family Strengthening & Alternative Care

A GLOBAL MONTHLY NEWS WRAP-UP & RESOURCES

This monthly wrap-up is intended to serve as a compendium of the latest developments in the area of family strengthening and alternative care. We hope you will find it useful and be able to use it in your day-to-day work on research, writing, and practice on child and youth care.

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EXCITING CONTRIBUTIONS ALERT!

Got ground-breaking insights, resources, best practices, recent developments or the latest industry news?

Share them with us, and get acknowledged



GENERAL ALTERNATIVE CARE NEWS

INTERNATIONAL

- [Bill to improve graduation rate of foster youth passes unanimously through state legislature](#)

The news article reports on the unanimous passage of a bill aimed at improving the graduation rate for foster youth through the state legislature. This legislative action reflects efforts to address educational disparities and provide support for foster youth to achieve academic success.

- [Missouri's first intergenerational community for foster families and seniors now under construction](#)

The news article discusses the construction of Missouri's first inter-generational community foster families, where seniors and foster children will live together. This innovative project aims to create a supportive environment for both seniors and foster children, fostering connections and enriching the lives of all involved.

- [From the Field: Why an organisation founded to care for orphans no longer has a children's home](#)

The news article discusses the transition away from residential care models towards family-based solutions for vulnerable children in South Africa, of Beautiful Gate South Africa organization. It highlights the benefits of reuniting children with their families, the financial and societal costs associated with institutionalized care, and the positive impact of family strengthening programs on children's well-being and community transformation.

- [Kinship foster care 'not explored as an option' for most children, research warns](#)

The news article discusses research findings that reveal a low percentage of children in the care system in England and Wales are placed with kinship foster carers, despite potential benefits. Family Rights Group calls for urgent action to prioritize family-based care and strengthen regulation to ensure the well-being of children in the care system.

- [San Antonio's THRU Project helps foster youth through terrible circumstances](#)

The opinion piece discusses the challenges faced by the foster care system in Texas, highlighting the broken nature of the system and the detrimental effects on children who age out of care. It praises the work of organizations like THRU Project in providing support and guidance to youth transitioning out of foster care and calls for systemic reforms to ensure all foster children receive adequate support.

- [From orphanages to family set-up, foster care parents recall journey](#)

The article discusses the experiences of foster parents in Kenya, who have opened their homes to children in need. It highlights the challenges and rewards of fostering, including the adjustment period for both the children and the foster families, as well as the importance of support networks and misconceptions about foster care in communities.

ASIA

- [What is kinship care? Wildly under-supported but effective](#)

The article highlights the importance and effectiveness of kinship care, where relatives care for children in need, often resulting in better long-term outcomes. It discusses the challenges faced by kinship caregivers, such as lack of support and resources, and calls for better support systems and policy reforms to ensure that every child has access to love, stability, and belonging, regardless of their family situation.

- [Indonesia joins global initiative on protection of children online](#)

The news article discusses Indonesia's adoption of a global initiative on child protection in the digital space, with the Ministry of Communication and Informatics collaborating with relevant agencies to ensure a safe online environment for children. The government is preparing a draft regulation focusing on the roles of digital technology makers, the government, and society in safeguarding children online.

- [New Data Shows a Consistent Decrease of Children in Foster Care](#)

The latest data from the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), continue to show a decrease in the number of children in foster care for the fourth consecutive year. The report attributes this decline to efforts focused on prevention services, family support, and safe family reunification, indicating a shift towards prioritizing family-based solutions in child welfare.

- [Singaporean asks why couples struggling to conceive don't consider adoption](#)

The opinion piece discusses why some married couples in Singapore may not consider adoption as a viable option when struggling to conceive. It outlines factors such as cost, genetic concerns, the complexity of the adoption process, and the emotional capacity required to love a non-biological child, as highlighted by Singaporean Redditors.

- [The Power of Collaboration: A beacon of hope for children](#)

The news article discusses the 3rd World Without Orphans (WVO) conference in Chiang Mai, Thailand, which brought together global leaders and experts to address the plight of vulnerable children and promote family-based care solutions. It highlights collaborations, progress in child care and protection, and the importance of networking and shared vision in transforming the lives of children.

- [Keeping children under parental care must be a top priority](#)

The news article discusses the plight of children in Bangladesh, with over 3.4 million living on the streets without parental care and 1.77 million engaged in child labour. It emphasizes the importance of family support, adherence to international conventions on children's rights, and the need for effective measures to prevent family separation and promote family-based alternative care arrangements.

INDIA

- [India surpasses 4000 adoption mark](#)

The news article discusses India's achievement of surpassing the 4000-adoption mark, signalling progress in the country's adoption landscape. Despite this milestone, the article acknowledges the persistent challenges that hinder the adoption process, shedding light on areas for improvement within India's adoption system.

- [95 children being illegally taken from Bihar to UP rescued by CWC](#)

Child Welfare Committee (CWC) rescued 95 children, aged between 8 and 15 years' old who were being illegally transported from Bihar to Uttar Pradesh highlighting efforts by the Child Welfare Committee (CWC) to prevent child trafficking and ensure the safety of minors.

- [How SC verdict on childcare leave opens up possibilities for women](#)

The Supreme Court's ruling emphasizes women's constitutional entitlement to participate in the workforce and receive childcare support. It addresses the challenges faced by working women in managing household and care responsibilities while maintaining paid employment.

- [Adoption: Pitfalls aplenty](#)

The news article reports on the arrest of social media influencer Sonu Srinivas Gowda for the illegal adoption of a girl child, shedding light on the legal framework of adoption in India and the challenges surrounding the adoption process. It also discusses societal issues such as illegal child adoption and the societal pressure on couples to adopt, emphasizing the need for adherence to adoption protocols and awareness of legal procedures.



NEW RESOURCES IN THE ALTERNATIVE CARE SPACE

PUBLICATIONS

- [Kinship care and Special Guardianship: what it is and what it means](#)

This booklet, published by *CoramBAAF*, offers a colourful and accessible introduction to the concepts of kinship care and special guardianship for children and young people. Through vivid illustrations and jargon-free language, it aims to help children who may be moving to or have moved to kinship care or special guardianship understand what these arrangements entail.

- [Better Care Network \(BCN\) Newsletter: February 2024](#)

Better Care Network published its February newsletter capturing the perceptions of children affected by the conflict in Ukraine through focus group discussions over a two-year period; a new study on a child's right to family life when placed in public care; a new brief containing high-level guidance and recommendations to consider in designing frameworks to scale up, coordinate and support the transition of individual residential care services and much more.

- [Udayan Care bi-monthly Newsletter](#)

Udayan Care published its bi-monthly newsletter *Sunrise*, Vol. 18, Issue 2 presents stories that highlight resilience, heartwarming milestones, and the steadfast spirit of the Udayan Care family over three decades. It includes coverage of the organization's 30th-anniversary gala, successful job fairs, and inspiring success stories, showcasing the profound impact they are creating together.

- [Development of foster care in the Europe and Central Asia Region](#)

The report published by *UNICEF* discusses the development of foster care in the Europe and Central Asia (ECA) region within the context of global child care system reform. It emphasizes the importance of family support mechanisms, prevention of unnecessary family separation, and the transition from institution-based to family-based care services to ensure better outcomes for children and societies.

- [‘The worst day of my life’: Foster carers’ experiences of allegations](#)

This new study published in *Adoption & Fostering Journal* Vol 48, Issue 1, investigates the prevalence, nature, and outcomes of allegations against foster carers in the UK, utilizing data from The Fostering Network's State of the Nation's Foster Care (SOTN) 2021 survey.

- [The Future of Foster Care and Child Protection in India and Sri Lanka](#)

This new study published in *Institutionalised Children Explorations and Beyond Journal* Vol 11, Issue 1 examines the transition from institutional care to family-based alternative care, particularly foster care, in India and Sri Lanka. Legislative changes and collaborative efforts are explored within the context of aligning practices with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

STUDIES

- [The effect of single mothers' employment on their children's mental health in young adulthood: Random effects model for longitudinal data](#)
This longitudinal study examines the impact of single mothers' employment during pregnancy and their children's preschool years on their adult children's self-esteem and depression. Findings indicate that higher frequency of employment during this period is associated with improved mental health outcomes in adult children.
- [Mapping key actors in family support. A European perspective](#)
The study focuses on mapping various organizations involved in family support provision across Europe, highlighting differences in networking progress and low representation of front-line practitioners in national networks. It aims to bridge the gap between European-level policies and local/national structures to enhance the delivery of quality family support systems and services.
- [Working with emotions in social work practice. A pride-building model for institutional care of young people](#)
The study emphasizes the importance of social workers and treatment staff possessing emotional awareness to effectively facilitate rehabilitation. It introduces a model for identifying emotions, particularly shame and pride, within the interaction between staff and young clients in institutional care.
- [Feasibility and acceptability of a family navigator program to support foster parents of youth with mental health concerns](#)
The pilot study evaluates the PROACTIVE Family Navigator Program's acceptability and feasibility among foster parents of children with mental health need to demonstrate excellent feasibility and acceptability, as indicated by positive satisfaction ratings from both participants and navigators.
- [Strive to enhance supervised family time visits for children in foster care: Outcomes from a pilot study with randomization](#)
The study evaluates the effectiveness of the Strive Supervised Family Time Program in improving parental engagement, visit quality, and parenting skills among parents involved with the child welfare system in Washington State. Through a randomized controlled trial, parents participating in the Strive program showed higher engagement and quality in parent-child visits compared to those in the supervised visitation as usual group.

POLICY BRIEF

- [Model foster care guidelines, 2024](#)
The guidelines published by *Ministry of Women and Child Department* establish procedures and responsibilities for the implementation of foster care in India, building upon previous legislation and frameworks such as the Juvenile Justice Act and Adoption Regulations.

TOOLKITS

- [Start here: Safe and secure practice guide](#)
This practice guide developed by *Australian Childhood Foundation* in partnership with the *Eastern Metropolitan Regional Family Violence Partnership* is for understanding and responding to children and young people affected by family violence. It can be used by individuals, teams or whole workplaces.
- [What is community development?](#)
The resource sheet introduces community development as a process facilitated by community development workers, emphasizing empowerment, collective action, and social justice. It underscores the holistic approach and values of community-led initiatives in addressing issues and creating stronger, more connected communities.



YOUNG VOICES THAT APPEAR IN THE MEDIA

- [I spoke up, but social services refused to listen](#)
The youth narrates the traumatic experiences of growing up in an abusive household and the failure of social services to intervene despite repeated attempts to seek help. Despite enduring immense hardships, the individual perseveres, excels academically, and dedicates themselves to advocating for foster youth.
- [Peering into the window of opportunity](#)
This narrative captures the journey of overcoming adversity, from experiencing homelessness and a life-altering injury to finding self-acceptance, academic success, and a commitment to helping others in need.
- [What unhealed advocacy looks like](#)
This piece highlights the dangers of advocating from a wounded state and the trans-formative power of moving from wounds to scars, offering wisdom and insight gained from lived experiences to drive systemic change.
- [Teens entering foster care face high-stress situations](#)
The news article shares a personal journey of a teenager's experience entering the foster care system close to adulthood, highlighting the challenges faced and the lack of adequate support. It emphasizes the importance of providing guidance and support tailored to the needs of older foster youth, particularly in navigating life skills and transitions into adulthood, underscoring the crucial role of supportive figures like teachers in filling this gap.



OPPORTUNITIES AND EVENTS (JOBS, CONFERENCE ALERTS, CALL FOR ABSTRACTS)

- [Getting started in Kinship- 22nd May 2024](#)
- [Getting Started in Fostering- 29th May, 2024](#)
- [Getting Started in Adoption- 5th June, 2024](#)
- [2024 Annual Meeting for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, 4th & 5th June, 2024](#)
- [8th International Conference on adoption and research \(ICAR8\)- 8th to 12th July, 2024](#)
- [Biennial Together for Families International Virtual Conference- 22nd to 24th October, 2024](#)
- [Call for Papers: Institutionalised Children Exploration and Beyond Bi- Annual Journal \(September 2024 and May 2025 Issues\)](#)

 **HEAR FROM OUR READERS**

*"I must say, it very informative, capturing news and developments from various lenses" ~ Mr. Rajneesh Jain, Children's Villages
International Representative-Asia*

THANK YOU FOR READING!

Whether it's new policies, guidelines, schemes, toolkits, or the voices of care leavers, we want to hear from you. Your contributions will be acknowledged in our newsletter as we work together to share knowledge and grow together.