

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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GENERAL ALTERNATIVE CARE NEWS

INTERNATIONAL

- [Kinship families need to be valued](#)
The news article emphasizes the need for formal recognition and support for Kinship Care families in Ireland, outlining the challenges faced by these caregivers and children highlighting the call for policy changes to provide essential financial, legal, and social services for both formal and informal Kinship Care arrangements.
- [Giving Tree Program gives foster youth chance to celebrate the holidays](#)
Arizona Department of Child Safety's *Giving Tree Program* spreads joy by gifting foster care children during holidays, offering vital support and love to often-forgotten kids, making a significant impact.
- [Kinship Care Initiative maintains family ties for children in foster care](#)
The news article focuses on the Kinship Care Initiative, a program supported by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services aiming to maintain family connections for foster children by providing financial support of \$400/m to family members who take on the role of caregivers.
- [More children in foster care than in other placements in the past two years – government](#)
The news article highlights that the number of children in foster care has surpassed the number of children living in other placements in Malta country. It also addresses concerns over a shortage of therapeutic facilities for abused children, aiming for family preservation interventions.
- [Rural orphans meet Good Samaritan](#)
The article features Child Integration Zimbabwe (CIZ), a non-profit aiding orphaned children by placing them in caring families. Recently expanding to rural areas, CIZ identified 15 orphans, focusing on providing essentials, education, and health support. Emphasizing fostering over institutionalization, CIZ aims to support stable families and help with food and education, collaborating with local communities for sustainable care.
- [Central Florida school opens for orphaned Ukrainian refugee children](#)
The news article highlights the efforts of Varyvoda Christian Academy in Orlando, assisting orphaned Ukrainian refugee children affected by the war. The academy provides education, support, and a new home for these children, showcasing the challenges they faced during the conflict and their hopes for a better future in the United States.

ASIA

- [3 Thai children rescued after being abused by their foster family](#)
This news article covers the rescue of three Thai children from severe abuse in their foster home and how *Pen Nueng NGO* intervened, providing specialized care by relocating them to a children's shelter after facing neglect, forced labour, physical abuse, and untreated injuries.
- [Supporting a brighter future for Bhutan's children and youth](#)
The article features an interview with *UNICEF Representative Andrea James*, discussing Bhutan's progress and challenges concerning children and young people and UNICEF's priorities and future role in Bhutan's development.
- [Businessmen donate Rs7.8m for orphan kids](#)
The news article reports on the commendable contribution from the KP business community, raising over Rs7.8 million for orphan children supported by SOS Children Village Pakistan in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
- [SOS Children's Village The art of playing mother to orphaned children](#)
The article highlights the 42-year journey of SOS Children's Village Sri Lanka, its family care model providing homes and support for children without parental care, and its efforts to secure funding amidst current economic challenges.
- [Zoomer Launches Non-profit to Build an Orphanage in the Philippines](#)
The news article highlights an USC alumna's journey from student to non-profit founder, inspired by a class project and her visits to the Philippines. Using her business degree, she launched the organization Cherish Co. providing homes, education, and support to children in need and improving the lives of orphans in the Philippines.

INDIA

- [Himachal government releases Rs 5.27 lakh as festival allowance for child care institution inmates](#)
Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu disbursed Rs. 5.27 lakh for festival allowances before for children in child care homes as part of the *Mukhya Mantri Sukh Ashraya Yojana* underscoring the government's commitment to supporting the vulnerable.
- [All about CARA, India's adoption regulation body | Explained](#)
The news article delves into India's Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA), spotlighting the Supreme Court's recent scrutiny of the organization due to significant delays in adoption processes. It addresses concerns about the challenges faced by prospective parents, CARA's role in regulating adoptions, and previous controversies regarding adoption eligibility criteria.
- [Destitute Children's Home celebrates 5th Foundation Day](#)
The news article covers the 5th foundation day celebration of the Destitute Children's Home in Kohima, highlighting its role in providing shelter and care for abandoned, abused, and orphaned children. The home's proprietor, Kevilenuo Chadi, expressed gratitude for the support received while emphasizing the positive transformations witnessed in the children's academic and spiritual growth, alongside the community's involvement in their well-being.
- [Bombay HC Directs Rehabilitation For Orphaned Minors After Father Gets Convicted For Murdering Mother](#)
The Bombay High Court directed Jalgaon's District Legal Services Authority to ensure rehabilitation or compensation for two minors orphaned after their father murdered their mother. The court emphasized its duty to compensate victims and instructed an inquiry into the children's situation for effective rehabilitation, while upholding the man's conviction based on witness accounts and the victim's dying declaration of the crime.
- [Adoption: SC directs states, UTs to carry out drive to identify children for adoption in childcare institutions](#)
The Supreme Court of India has directed states and union territories to conduct regular drives every two months to identify children in childcare institutions for adoption aiming to address the gap between the number of legally available children for adoption and the registered prospective adoptive parents.



NEW RESOURCES IN THE ALTERNATIVE CARE SPACE

PUBLICATIONS

- [Overcoming the odds: Demonstrating an aftercare model of providing targeted support to care experienced youth](#)
This new article published in the journal *Scottish Journal of Residential Child Care, Volume 22 No 2*, emphasizes the significance of aftercare for youths leaving institutional care, highlighting India's focus on family-based care over institutional care. It details Udayan Care's Aftercare Outreach Program (AOP), discussing targeted interventions aiding Care Leavers (CLs) in transitioning through support in skill development, education, vocational training, and networking.
- [A Social-Ecological View of the Factors Affecting the Effectiveness of Reintegration Interventions Targeting Children Out of Family-Based Care Situations: A Scoping Review](#)
Published in the *Cogent Social Sciences, Volume 9- Issue 2 journal*. This scoping review investigates factors influencing the success of reintegrating vulnerable children living outside family-based care, like those on the streets or in residential centres. It identifies critical elements impacting reintegration effectiveness, encompassing children's characteristics, experiences in care, street cultures, family dynamics, and community factors, offering insights for improving interventions and suggesting areas for future research within a social-ecological framework.
- [Australian-Childhood-Foundation-Annual-Report-FY23.](#)
The Australian Childhood Foundation has published its annual report for the financial year 2023 highlighting their major impacts, media visibility and researches undertaken over the year.

STUDIES

- [How does kinship and foster care differ on caregiver-child relationship quality and child and caregiver mental health?](#)
The study compares kinship, foster, and birth family caregivers of children in Australia, revealing similar challenges in child mental health, caregiver-child attachment, and caregiver strain between kinship and foster care families.
- [The prevalence of mental health disorders amongst care-experienced young people in the UK: A systematic review](#)
The study, conducted through a systematic review of UK literature, assesses the mental health prevalence among care-experienced youth aged 0-18. Findings revealed varying estimates of mental health disorders (1-82%), emphasizing the need for standardized assessment tools and improved characterization of support requirements for this demographic.
- [Outcomes of Youth with Foster Care Experiences Based on Permanency Outcome - Adoption, Aging Out, Long-Term Foster Care, and Reunification: A Systematic Review](#)
The study, conducted following PRISMA guidelines, compared outcomes of children and youth adopted from foster care to those in other permanency placements across various domains. Despite varied findings, the review emphasized differences in educational, economic, housing, health, criminality, and substance use outcomes for children and youth in foster care with and without adoption, derived from twelve studies from different countries.

POLICY BRIEF

- [An Emergency Appeal to Support Education for Children and Adolescents Affected by Climate Hazards](#)
Education Cannot Wait (ECW) issued an emergency appeal calls on donors to urgently mobilize US\$150 Million in new, additional funding to scale up ECW's response to climate change and reach an additional two million girls and boys most impacted by the climate crisis with holistic, quality education.

TOOLKITS

- [National Guidelines and Standards for Child Welfare Programmes](#)
The Republic of Kenya and the National Council for Children's Services have laid down guidelines to provide minimum standards to be adhered to in the provision of Child Welfare Programmes.

- [National Guidelines for Transitioning Child Care System in Kenya](#)
These national guidelines provide a roadmap of activities to guide the state and non-state actors in Kenya to streamline the transitioning of care systems, children and institutions in the country.
- [Practitioner Handbook for Alternative Family- and Community- Based Care](#)
This handbook is a summarized, user-friendly version of the operating procedures for alternative family- and community-based care options to provide an easy and quick reference to critical information and “how to” about alternative family- and community-based care placements.
- [Organizational stress resources](#)
This new pamphlet published by Australian Childhood Foundation highlights the characteristics of a calm and stable workforce.

 **YOUNG VOICES THAT APPEAR IN THE MEDIA**

- [Surviving the System](#)
The article shares the poignant journey of a former foster youth, emphasizing the flaws in the foster care system and advocating for reforms to safeguard and empower vulnerable children in care.
- [Getting my Ducks in a Row](#)
The article shares a former foster youth's struggles post-care, highlighting the need for foster parents and the system to listen and provide genuine care, not just minimal support, to foster youth navigating adulthood.
- [Lost and Found](#)
The article highlights a youth's journey from struggle to empowerment through community support from organizations like the YMCA and Foster Advocates, emphasizing the transformative impact of finding positive identity and community connections in overcoming systemic challenges faced by foster youth.
- [Leaving Foster Care Left Me Homeless. I'm Not Alone](#)
The article sheds light on the challenging plight of care leavers, who face disproportionate homelessness rates upon leaving foster care due to the abrupt cut off of support services. The "care cliff" phenomenon exposes their struggle to secure housing and highlights the urgent need for extended assistance beyond the age of 18 in the UK and Ireland.

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

- [9th Conference of the International Society for Child Indicators- 14th to 16th February, 2024](#)
- [3rd Global Forum for a World Without Orphans- 29th February to 3rd March, 2024](#)
- [ICAR-8: International Conference on Adoption Research- 8th to 12th July, 2024](#)

THANK YOU FOR READING!

Write to us at icbjournal@udayancare.org for suggestions, feedback or content to be included.