



National Resource Center for Family-Centered Practice and Permanency Planning *at the Hunter College School of Social Work*

Improving Residential Care for Children and Youth in Out-of-Home Care

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GUIDELINES

CWLA Standards of Excellence for Residential Services

<http://www.cwla.org/programs/standards/cwsstandardsgroupcare.htm>

These revised standards emphasize the importance of providing a range of supports and services for children and their families within a community context. They describe the unique features of the various types of residential care and suggest that residential providers play an important role in ensuring a continuum of services that meets the multiple needs of vulnerable children and families. The standards address critical policy and practice issues such as building family and community involvement; creating a safe and nurturing service environment; promoting positive child, youth, and family development; and ensuring culturally competent practices. Each chapter begins with a set of goals for achieving positive outcomes for children and youth, their families, and communities by providing quality residential services. Order from Child Welfare League of America.

Intensive Residential Treatment Program

http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/docswr/_assets/main/documents/oohc_model_residential_int.pdf

This service model for Intensive Residential Treatment Program was developed by the New South Wales Department of Community Services in consultation with the non-government sector. The paper describes the key elements of an Intensive Residential Treatment program which are considered to reflect best practice. As such, the service model is not designed to be prescriptive but should be read as a guide to current service development priorities.

Towards a Competent and Confident Residential Child Care Workforce

http://www.sircc.strath.ac.uk/publications/documents/Workforce_Development_Handbook.pdf

This handbook is designed to help Residential Child Care Managers support staff throughout the process of Registration with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). It offers advice on how to support staff in gaining the necessary qualifications for Registration. It also helps Managers to develop plans for Continuous Professional Development (CPD), or Post Registration Training and Learning (PRTL) whilst considering the needs of the individuals and of the team.

MODELS

Teleconference: Transforming Residential Care: Building an Array of Community Based Services

<http://muskie.usm.maine.edu/helpkids/telepast.htm#november13>

Across the country, child welfare agencies are working to transform their service delivery systems to ensure that children and families get individualized services that meet their needs, and that residential care is part of a comprehensive array of available services. In this 2007 teleconference from the National Resource Center on Organizational Improvement, the panel discusses this transformation from a national, state and provider perspective. Representatives from a federal agency provide a national picture of residential care, and describe a national initiative to build

bridges between residential and community based providers. A State child welfare representative describes efforts to build a comprehensive array of services, and a provider representative discusses how his agency transitioned from a residential bed campus to providing a comprehensive array of family centered and community based services. Audio files and handouts can be downloaded.

Positive Peer Culture

<http://www.cachildwelfareclearinghouse.org/program/98>

PPC is a peer-helping model designed to improve social competence and cultivate strengths in troubled and troubling youth. "Care and concern" for others (or "social interest") is the defining element of PPC. Rather than demanding obedience to authority or peers, PPC demands responsibility, empowering youth to discover their greatness. Caring is made fashionable and any hurting behavior totally unacceptable. PPC assumes that as group members learn to trust, respect, and take responsibility for the actions of others, norms can be established. These norms not only extinguish antisocial conduct, but more importantly reinforce pro-social attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. Positive values and behavioral change are achieved through the peer-helping process. Helping others increases self-worth. As one becomes more committed to caring for others, s/he abandons hurtful behaviors. Designated as "Supported by Research Evidence" by the California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare.

The Sanctuary Model

<http://www.sanctuaryweb.com/>

The Sanctuary Model represents a trauma-informed method for creating or changing an organizational culture in order to more effectively provide a cohesive context within which healing from psychological and social traumatic experience can be addressed. The Sanctuary Model is presently being applied to a number of settings including: adult inpatient and outpatient mental health settings; residential and acute care settings for children and adolescents; substance abuse programs for adults and for children; schools, shelters for those who are homeless and for victims of domestic violence; and community-based as well as school-based social service organizations. Rated as "Promising Research Evidence" by the California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare (<http://www.cachildwelfareclearinghouse.org/program/99>)

Stop-Gap

<http://www.cachildwelfareclearinghouse.org/program/103>

The Stop-Gap model incorporates evidence-based practices within a three-tiered approach (i.e., environment-based, intensive, and discharge related) to service delivery for residential treatment settings. The two-fold goal of the Stop-Gap model is to interrupt the youth's downward spiral imposed by increasingly disruptive behavior and prepare the post-discharge environment for the youth's timely re-integration. Youths enter the model at tier I, where they receive environment-based and discharge-related services. The focus at tier I is on the immediate reduction of "barrier" behaviors (i.e., problem behaviors that prevent re-integration) through intensive ecological and skill teaching interventions (e.g., token economy, social and academic skill teaching). Simultaneously, discharge-related interventions commence. To the extent that problem behaviors are not reduced at Tier I, intensive Tier II interventions that include function-based behavior support planning are implemented. The Stop-Gap model recognizes the importance of community-based service delivery while providing intensive and short-term support for youths with the most challenging behaviors. . . . Rated as "Promising Research Evidence" by the California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare.

RESEARCH

Residential Transitions Project, Phase One, Final Report

http://rbsreform.org/materials/Residential%20Transitions%20Project%20-%204%2030%2008%20_2_.pdf

The Child Welfare League of America prepared this report of work to inform the development of a model for residential group care that reflects current research findings and the appropriate place of residential group services in the child welfare service continuum. The following activities were conducted during this initial phase of the project:

- Review of data on the utilization of residential group placements in child welfare
- A review of the literature on residential group care
- A survey of state child welfare agencies
- A survey of state child and family services provider associations
- A survey of California DSS, Children, Youth, & Families county offices

Public Financing of Home and Community Services for Children and Youth with Serious Emotional Disturbances: Selected State Strategies

<http://aspe.hhs.gov/daltcp/reports/2006/youthSED.htm>

Specific policy questions examined in the study include:

- What are the benefits and disadvantages of HCBS waivers and other financing approaches for building home and community services as alternatives to residential care?
- Why do states feel they need waivers and what are the arguments for or against amending the current 1915(c) waiver program to include PRTFs under the rubric of an “institution?”
- How have different financing approaches been combined to support community alternatives to residential care or out-of-home placements?
- What financing strategies are likely to contribute to the sustainability of improvements in mental health services for youth with SED?

ARTICLES

CWLA's Position on Residential Care

<http://www.cwla.org/programs/groupcare/rgcqspring2007.pdf>

This article in Volume 7, Number 4 of CWLA's *Residential Group Care Quarterly* (Spring 2007) provides an overview of research supporting residential services as part of the continuum of care, as well as recommendations to achieve more effective, efficient systems of care for children, youth, and families.

Transforming Mainstream Residential Treatment Programs into Safe Environments for LGBTQ Youth

<http://www.cwla.org/programs/groupcare/rgcqwinter2007.pdf>

This article in Volume 7 Number 3 of CWLA's *Residential Group Care Quarterly* (Winter 2007) describes the steps taken to transform a mainstream residential campus at the Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services (JBFCS) into a safe place for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) youth. The purpose of this paper is to provide other residential programs with concrete steps and the nuts and bolts that will help them attain a safer campus for the betterment of all youth and staff.

American Association of Children's Residential Centers Position Papers

<http://www.aacrc-dc.org/templ/display.cfm?id=264&sub=287>

Four position papers from the AARC:

1. *Redefining the Role of Residential Treatment* discusses the background for rethinking residential and then present ideas and considerations for the field, policy makers, advocates, and other stake holders to incorporate into their ongoing work.
2. *Becoming Family Driven* describes the importance of family-driven care for youth placed in congregate facilities
3. *Ensuring the Pre-conditions for Transformation through Licensing, Regulation, Accreditation, and Standards* discusses the value of transformation from both the national and organizational perspectives and identifies the key foundational structures, already in place in most organizations, that are preconditions for a successful implementation of a transformation agenda.
4. *Performance Indicators and Outcomes* discusses the importance of performance measurement and benchmarking, organizational issues and systems related to data collection and analysis, and potential categories of indicators and outcomes for measurement.

Children's Rights: How to Implement a Rights-Based Approach in Residential Child care

<http://www.sircc.strath.ac.uk/publications/InResidence3.pdf>

Children's rights are often spoken about and discussed in residential units, but how do we use children's rights as a tool to do our work? This paper suggests some answers. It starts with basic information about the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and answers some common questions on children's rights. It introduces two models for implementing a rights-based approach, and provides illustrations of their use. Residential workers might wonder why we need another method of working with children and young people. Taking a rights-based approach is not meant to be just another method, but is an overarching framework, which complements existing ways of working in child care. Discussions and reflections on the models presented in this paper will hopefully provide a better way to make decisions about children and young people in residential care.

Designing with Care: Interior Design and Residential Child Care

http://www.sircc.strath.ac.uk/publications/Designing_with_Care.pdf

This exploratory study examined the attitudes to a range of design interventions in four residential care homes for children in South Lanarkshire. The project set out to identify the benefits and disadvantages to young people and staff of a change in approach to the design of interior spaces. It was undertaken by Farm7 (specialists in design research and consultancy) and the Scottish Institute for Residential Child Care (SIRCC). The main focus of the research was to evaluate design interventions aimed at removing 'institutional' approaches to design in the care environment and improving the experience of looked after children. This involved the commissioning of interior design consultants Graven Images in the development and design of South Lanarkshire's residential children's homes. Post-occupancy evaluation of the four residential homes was undertaken with the participation of both looked after children and staff.

STATE AND LOCAL EXAMPLES

California

The RBS Reform Coalition

<http://rbsreform.org/>

California's Residentially-based Services Reform initiative seeks to transform the state's group homes, currently providing long term congregate care and treatment, to programs combining short-term residential stabilization and treatment with follow along community-based services to reconnect youth to their families, schools and communities. In 2007, with the passage of AB 1453 (Soto), support of the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), financial support from Casey Family Programs, and the creation of the RBS Reform Coalition, reform of the state's system for care and treatment of youth with challenging needs came to fruition. The legislation authorizes selection of four counties or consortia of counties that, with private partners, will implement alternative program and funding models consistent with the framework document that defines and describes RBS. The lessons learned from these projects will inform planning for statewide implementation of RBS reform due to the Legislature in 2011.

Illinois

Provision of Mental Health Care for Children in the Child Welfare System

http://www.state.il.us/DCFS/docs/childplan2000_mentalh.shtml

This portion of the state's Child and Family Services Plan for FY 2000-2004 addressed the Department's vision of creating an organized system of care that is capable of meeting the mental health needs of children in the child welfare system.

Nevada

Transforming Children's Mental Health Treatment Services in Nevada

<http://dcfs.state.nv.us/Reports/TransformingChildrensMHWhitePaper040705.pdf>

This 2005 white paper from the Division of Child & Family Services was intended to help Nevada Legislators, system stakeholders, and national experts engaged to assist the state, understand system complexity and the need to address the full continuum of care provided to children, including the "higher levels of care".

New Jersey

Reforming VisionQuest: A Case Study in Improving Residential Treatment for Troubled Youth

<http://www.state.nj.us/childadvocate/publications/PDFs/VQReportFinal72308.pdf>

This 2008 report describes the efforts of the state to improve an unsafe environment. The methods used to effect these changes offer a model for positive intervention and avenues of improvement for other facilities. This report details this collaborative effort in reforming this particular program and discusses ways to improve the care and treatment of all children in need of residential treatment programs.

New York

Residential Care Plan: 2007-2009

http://www.nyc.gov/html/acs/downloads/pdf/residential_care_plan.pdf

This residential care plan sets forth Children's Services values and principles about residential care and lays out a number of activities to shape the residential care system – and its linkages with family foster care – into 2009.

West Virginia

Commission to Study Residential Placements of Children

http://www.wvdhhr.org/oos_comm/

The Commission to Study Residential Placement of Children was created by an act of the 2005 Legislature (HB 2334) to achieve systematic reform for youth at risk of out-of-home residential placement and to establish an integrated system of care for these youth and their families. This focus was broadened with several recommendations made by the Commission in its May 2006 report *Advancing New Outcomes* that include all children and their families in out-of-home placement and those at risk of out-of-home placement.

Wyoming

Court-Ordered Placements at Residential Treatment Centers

<http://legisweb.state.wy.us/progeval/REPORTS/2004/COPs/TOC.HTM>

This 2004 Wyoming Legislative Service Office Staff Report provides background information about RTC placements, and discusses why some juveniles come to be court-ordered into treatment while others go to detention or jail. With respect to DFS management of court-ordered placement in RTCs, the report considers how DFS controls the rates it pays providers, and how it coordinates payments with two other agencies that fund services. The report also considers how DFS monitors appropriateness of services and measures treatment outcomes. The report, titled *Advancing New Outcomes: Findings, Recommendations & Initial Actions of the West Virginia Commission to Study Residential Placements of Children*, is available at

http://www.wvdhhr.org/oos_comm/reports/Advancing%20New%20Outcomes%20final%20report%205-19-06.pdf

Nova Scotia

Improving Services for Children and Families: Report of the Child Welfare Steering Committee

http://www.gov.ns.ca/coms/department/documents/Child_Welfare_Committee_Report.pdf

This report provides a pathway for improvements to Nova Scotia's Child Welfare services. The recommendations range from process improvements and support functions, through to transformation of major components of the delivery system itself. The recommendations were tailored to enhance the delivery of foster, adoption, residential and emergency duty services

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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This 2001 bibliography is from the National Resource Center for Foster Care and Permanency Planning.