

Child and Youth Care Research and Training: Challenges and Opportunities

Workshop Summary (prepared by Anat Zeira)

Participants:

Canada - School of Child and Youth Care, University of Victoria: Jim Anglin, Sibylle Artz, Marie Hoskins

Israel - Hebrew University: Anat Zeira, Yifat Mor-Salho (PhD candidate), Shulamit Pinchover (PhD candidate) Carolin Jänisch (MA students, Tempus intern from Hildesheim University, Germany); Bar Ilan: Shlomo Romi; Lander Academic Institute: Emmanuel Grupper

Sunday, October 13th

Our workshop opened with a welcome dinner at Anat Zeira's home. This was an opportunity for an informal get together with the Canadian team from the School of Child and Youth Care, University of Victoria: Prof. Jim Anglin, Prof. Sibylle Artz, and Prof. Marie Hoskins (acknowledging the absence of Prof. Jennifer White due to a misfortunate last minute injury that prevented her travel) and with Prof. Mona Koury-Kassabri and Dr. Shalhevet Attar-Schwartz, both from the Paul Baerwald School of Social Work at the Hebrew University.

Monday, October 14th

The morning session started with a welcome note by Prof. Mimi Ajzenstadt, on behalf of the academic committee of the Halbert Centre for Canadian Studies at the Hebrew University, followed by a group photo.

The first session presented the Israeli context of care, namely the division between welfare and educational placements, background characteristics of the facilities and children - emphasizing cultural differences. The second session presented the Canadian context, highlighting the challenges stemming from the deinstitutionalization process that residential care in Canada experienced. Next, Shulamit Pinchover presented findings from her study on the contribution of personal characteristics, perceived victimization and social climate on adjustment difficulties of adolescents in residential care. Her findings suggest that adolescents who reported higher rates of peer victimization suffered more adjustment difficulties. These findings highlight the importance of attending to violence among peers in residential settings in order to improve adjustment. Interestingly, the Canadian team identified similarities in the trends of violence. We ended this exciting day with dinner at Ein-Karem, to which Prof. John Gal - the Dean of the School of Social work had joined.

Tuesday, October 15th

The Canadian team had a site visit - organized by Dr. Grupper - to the youth village of Ben-Shemen. There they could learn - first hand - on this unique type of residential care and meet some of the adolescents. From there they went to Bar-Ilan University (organized by Prof. Shlomo Romi) where they met with faculty and students from the school of Education.

Wednesday, October 16th

We started early in the morning with a short tour of the Mt. Scopus campus of the Hebrew University. In the first session Dr. Shalhevet Attar-Schwartz presented findings from her study on perceptions of adolescents in residential care facilities in Israel about physical and verbal maltreatment by staff. Her findings show that many children report such victimization. Higher rates of physical maltreatment were reported among boys and among Arabs. These findings sparked an interesting discussion on methodological issues that are involved in such studies. Her study is unique in its scope, and enables the identification of “successful” facilities in which there is little or even none staff violence. Learning about the characteristics of such facilities may contribute to developing effective practices to deal with staff victimization in residential care facilities.

The last session was dedicated to possible future collaboration between the teams. These included several short- and long-term activities:

1. Preparing a detailed summary of the workshop materials to be posted on the web sites of the Halbert Centre for Canadian Studies, Hebrew University and the School of Child and Youth Care, University of Victoria.
2. Jointly submitting a proposal for a symposium on the challenges of child and youth care for the upcoming meeting of EUSARF at Copenhagen, September 2014.
3. Proposal for a journal special issue on - Transnational perspectives of care for children and youth at risk: An Israel-Canada Dialogue
4. Searching for additional funding to support future activities as well as exchange of additional Canadian and Israeli staff and students.

We concluded the workshop with an afternoon guided tour of Jerusalem, followed by a farewell dinner in Mammilla. Finally, all participants wish to thank the Halbert Centre for supporting this initiative and special thanks are extended to Ms. Daphna Oren for her outstanding organization and support before and during the workshop.