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CHANCES OF SOCIAL INTEGRATION FOR CHILDREN IN PUBLIC CARE



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Rubeus Association

CHANCES OF SOCIAL INTEGRATION FOR CHILDREN IN PUBLIC CARE

© Bernadett Csurgó, Róza Hodosán, Andrea Rácz, Szilvia Szombathelyi, 2012

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FOREWORD

By publishing our series '*Studies in Child and Youth Protection*', we have attempted to present the results of both quantitative and qualitative research carried out by our association. The main focus of the studies was to investigate the general life situation, experiences in the settings of family and education and chances for social integration of children in care.

This is the second book in the series published by the Rubeus Association. It is interesting to point out that this new volume contains five studies in English language. First of all, we have attempted to present what main changes have happened in interpreting, firstly, family as the primary setting of socialization, secondly, parental duties, thirdly, children's place in family, and finally, cooperation between different generations from the second half of the 20th century. We also wish to demonstrate how the above-mentioned changes are related to the system of childcare. The most important question here is whether it is possible to find an equally good 'substitution' of family. Towards this goal, we show results of both national and international studies that analyze the situation of children in care, or young people brought up in care from different perspectives.

The fourth and third study of this book are based on results of different studies carried out by the Rubeus Association in the last couple of years. These studies investigate the educational career and the main reasons of education dropout of children in care between the ages of 15 and 18. Next, we wish to present the childcare career of a highly disadvantageous social group. Here, we also aim to discuss the possible chances that disabled young people brought up in care have to become independent and integrate into society. Finally, the last sociological research of the book draws attention to the different groups of young people in and after care, and their views on the system of childcare.

Hopefully this study will contribute to childcare research, the amplification of the materials of childcare training, and finally to the enrichment of developing the profession of childcare.

Andrea Rác
editor

SZILVAI SZOMBATHELYI: IDEAS FOR MODERN INTERPRETATION OF THE FAMILY

The study focus on some special challenges for the children in foster care. The issues are related to the family, birth and foster, with the aim of enlighten their importance in the socialization and the construction of the personnel history.

Being a member of a society requires the adoption of the society's culture in the broadest sense: acceptance of the values and norms, participation in the social rituals, accomplishment of the social roles like being a citizen, parent or working man... It also requires communication skills like correct use of the language; decoding the styles; adequate behaving to situation, crisis; conflict-handling in the everyday life or the orientation between the different institutions.

In the modern society the family is the first community which starts to „teach” /integrate/ the individual from the beginning of his life. The complexity of the experiences within the family and their effects on the emotional, social and cognitive development makes it the most important agent of the socialization even if its teaching and integration tasks will be completed or modified by other collectivities (like schools, associations, working places, friends etc). The family like no other collectivity provides a very personalized education and development project to the individual, so its definition can't be reduce to the biological relationship.

From sociological perspective, the family is the basic organized form of the society, whom members differ by gender, age, political views, economic activity etc. and keep on socially, economically, emotionally complex relationships. From the anthropological aspect is it has an universal characteristic which makes it different from other communities: the parenthood. This special institution has a lot of variety but it's always more than only a biological or social attachment.

From the second part of the XX century the definition of family, the parental tasks, the place of the child in the family, the way of generational connection all radically changed. This evolution was embedded in an economically rising context and inspired by the western cultural movements. Two

scientific discoveries specially contributed in these process: the birth control pills and the infant formula. The most important changes are:

The first important evolution is the way that the society looks on children. However the children's social status emerge in the 16-17th century, there are radical changes in the last fifty years thanks to the children rights movements and the development of the psychological sciences. They resulted that the child stopped being „just” a daughter or a son, became individual person with a special character and personality, special needs and rights. Recognizing this modified perception, the parental practices adjusted to the new order. Parental authority came to be less accepted, we talk much more about responsibility. The hierarchy between the generations is much less rigid and the autonomy of the children is appreciated. The primary mission of the older generations moved from the transmission of their experiences to the supporting of their children's own voyage through life.

The expected parental attitudes are supportive, where the child has a right to ask, discover the world around him and the parent must encourage this voyage, protect the child's right, be next to him but always respect his own will and decisions. The parents mustn't intervene until there is no real danger for the child. And the child mustn't be obedient without reflection but be autonomic and „independent”. He should be capable of making decisions, expressing himself. This democratization could be realized in the communication as well, when the parents are expected more arguing and explaining than ordering or commanding.

During the last fifty years the family as a unity of more generation based of the marriage lost its unique place in the western European culture. Some changes happened naturally as a consequence of the post-war European economic and social circumstances. The growing life expectations, the generous welfare system, the general growing richness had serious effects on the individual life: even we tend to think to the nuclear family as the most typical social formation, but in the reality the number of single persons are growing just like the number of those persons who have a second or even a third family, so the family connections are multiplied.¹

¹Théry, Irène. Couple, filiation et parenté aujourd'hui, PP. 16.

The spread of the birth control pills caused the general (not only in the human sciences but in the every days) revision of the idea about motherhood. It is not seen any more as a natural and universal instinct and par consequence, the female role model (their place in the family and in the relations) changed radically. However, this consciousness concerns more to the decisions related to the time of the birth or the refuse of having children and it's less about the expectation about the parenthood.

There is also a demographic phenomenon which provokes to rethink our family concept. The European countries are facing with the drastical fall of the fertility numbers. The reasons are mixture of biological aspects (contraception, later first pregnancy, environmental causes or physically inactive lifestyle) and cultural aspects (changed gender roles, carrier, economical reasons).The fact that the number of the infertile couple is growing (in 2010 30% of the all the fertile-aged couple in Europe) results economical and social difficulties, we would mention here only three of them. First, the absence of the parent/ grandparent experience becomes more common which were one of the most basic and important part of our identity and connected strongly to the gender and generational roles. Secondly, the even bigger planning and medicalization of the pregnancy. Thirdly, the importance of the blood relation is getting also rethink by the spread of the sperm and ovaire donation and the adoption.

Family history: birth family, foster family

The importance of the biological or blood relation was judged differently in the ages, but it plays a central role in the formulation of the identity: where, in which family we were born. The family history is the narrative which bonds the generations of family members together. One of the biggest challenge for the children removed from their birth family is that they have to deal with two family stories. The first one is the story of their birth family where they couldn't grow up, which couldn't ensure a safe environment for them, or which abandon them. The adopted children usually don't have a clear memory about their biological parents, they have mostly fragments (if they have any), the „psychical“ evidence of their birth like the echographies, the pictures about their mothers pregnancy or about their birth are also missed. They won't be able to construct the story of their birth family which creates a hole in their own history and they have to learn to accept that ignorance. The other story is the foster/ adopting parents' life story which will effect their life much more, but it won't replace the first one.

The coping process with the birth family's story is even more difficult if the separation/ removal happens later. One typical problem is if the removal of children from their parents happens as a consequence of an economic/ financial crises in the family. The modern child protection systems are based on the idea, that the economic situation by itself can't cause this radical intervention. But reaching a certain point the poverty becomes unbearable for the family members resulting emotional instability and it makes impossible the normal functioning, endangers the children's physical, emotional, intellectual development. By the time the child protection system acts the originally economic difficulties evolve into complex problems and usually the parents can't fulfill their role and the children become less certain in their parents' abilities. The French social care system, for example, demands a wide co-operation from their clients, but the professionals find very difficult to motivate and keep together these families for a longer period. The details of the situation can be different, the possible outcomes as well, but often the parents suffer by culpability and have self-esteem crises because they failed as a parent, as a husband/wife. They find humiliating the social intervention because for them it suggests certain judgment about their parental abilities which could lead to lose the rights for taking care of their children.

If the removal is inevitable, it is a very difficult professional challenge to make understand the reasons, the parents' situations, the background of this decision with the children, to help them deal with their emotions and sometimes to maintain their relation with their birth parents. The objective of the foster care is to provide an emotional stability and ensure a favorable environment supporting their psychical and intellectual development. From the life-story approach, the mission is very complex: the foster parents have to give help for coping the separation process, which also means leaving behind the parents problems. These children are involved in the crises even if the parents try to keep them out of the problems, they share their fears, depression, so they arrived to the foster family with a culpability. That's also why the explanations can't be simplified: the parents behaviors in crises situations are extremely important for the children, the experienced attitudes, solutions imprint, and the interpretation of these acts will influence deeply the birth and the foster family relations. Creating an emotional connection to the foster parents and maintaining the relation with the birth family is challenging to the children , specially for the older children, because they feel betraying their parents.

Keeping contact with the birth family is a very important aim, but usually the foster family present a well-functioning, structured environment relative to the earlier life. The birth family feel that it detaches their children and it approves in the field where they failed.

Another example for the importance of the life story is those case when the removal happens because the parents voluntarily don't provide a healthy environment, like abusing their children. The explanation can't be avoided even if it is painful, there still can be bonding with the parents and they're still role models. Catherine Vanier (psychoanalyst) tells the following story: an 18 month-old baby girl witnessed when her parents killed her sister². The parents were sentenced and the baby went to foster parents. Despite the tragic events the baby asked continuously for her mother « I love my mummy, I want my mummy », she refused the foster parents 'You're bad, I hate you', she was frequently ill, didn't develop, and she was difficult to handle. The child has a right to bond to his parents, but it is the carers' task not to stop at the removal but help in understanding the reasons, even with a small child.

The complication in the relation between the child, the foster parents and the birth parents is even bigger in the case of immigrant families or refugees. Here, the birth parents see in danger not only the family unity but also the identity of the children and their cultural heritage. In practice, the foster care is a good way to help out the parents in the first few months until they can stabilize their situation, find a work, handle the papers. But the integration doesn't pass the same way for the adults as for the younger generations. The adult need much longer time to understand the new circumstances, able to handle the everyday's difficulties, to integrate at a minimum level. Psychologically they are much vulnerable so their own cultural customs, habits, language, their community have a very important stabilizing role. The children adapt faster, and specially by the foster family, they experience directly the „majority culture”. For them the return to their birth family means also the return to the minority position, so it can be the source of the frustration.

The use of the modern educator model for the children in the foster care can be a very efficient tool for strengthen their competences. They need a carer who can listen to them, support them during their way to being adult by correcting, completing, or replacing the examples of the birth parents, so they will be able to choose between the different solutions. The carers should accept their bonds to the parents, make them enable to deal with their feelings towards the birth family, and the same time help them in opening to other people. Finding the birth parent's place in this journey is one of the biggest (and sometimes neglected) challenge for the carers.

²www.defenseurdesenfants.fr/pdf/RappThem2010.pdf

Does it exist a really working alternative of a functioning family? The children learn the norms, collect the models, the solutions naturally, without any efforts, by living in a family. He or she watch how to function a household, how to use the money, how to care for the younger/older relatives or a pet. But also the family provides natural communication fields: s/he can hear the discussions, argumentations, complains, how to handle a problem, a fight, to make a decision. S/he experiences emotional relations, positive and negative feelings, love, fear, anger, compassion, forgiveness etc... The wide scale of emotions is one of the most important difference to the sterile institutions where the decisions must be strictly follow the children's' interests. In the real life most of our decision derives by emotions, subjective evaluations and not by academic rationality or the systematic application of children rights. These solutions are not always the best ones, but even the negative outcome helps this socializing learning process.

The family's transmission role during learning norms and beliefs is also essential whether the children follow them or revolt. It is present in way of direct and indirect: what and how they celebrate, at what kind of jokes they laugh, what are they political views, for what they praise or punish...

In an institutional frame, the transmission of this knowledge is restricted. The out-of-home care can't provide this spontaneous, emotionally rich environment – even there is no perfectly functioning family. It can't provide that wide range of role model and solutions either what can be experienced in an extended family: the carer guides the children after specific principles, but s/he can't share her / his own life, feelings, happiness or sorrow, dilemmas and decisions by any direct or indirect way. However our adult life is influenced extremely by these experiences, success or failures.

The child-focused attitude expected from the modern parent, like guiding and supporting the child during his life journey, helping to discover his identity and develop the competences, is also problematic in a residential home or an out-off-home care. The reason is very simple: it's rare the carer can follow closely a child life during 10-15 years, be present actively and be able to invest as much as energy in their emotional relationship as a parent normally does.

The socialization in a normally functioning family can't be fully reconstructed in an institutional care. However there are situations when the out-off-home care is more effective, safe and supporting than

the birth family. It isn't true that all the children growing up in a family become a healthy adult, neither the contrary that all the institutional care results mentally, psychically, psychologically problems.

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ANDREA RÁCZ: CHILDREN'S POSITION IN THE MIRROR OF RESEARCH WHO WERE BROUGHT UP IN PUBLIC CHILD CARE

Few research projects have been carried out in Hungary in connection with the school career and preparation for independent life of children raised in public child care, and the range of statistical data available is also limited. Many international research draw attention to the failures to cope with the childhood drawback and social exclusion of those who were brought up in the child protection system. In this study we overview main domestic research which are made regarding the situation of those young people who were brought up in child protection system and we presenting some relevant results of international research. ³

I. Domestic research related to the young adults who were brought up in the child protection system.

There are only a few research made about the school career and the preparation for independent living of the young adults who live/lived in the child protection system. Based on the available studies we deal with questions relating behavior and psychological problems, educational participation, juvenile deviances and preparation for independent life.

There are only a few research made about the school career and the preparation for independent living of the young adults who live/lived in the child protection system. Based on the available studies we deal with questions relating behavior and psychological problems, educational participation, juvenile deviances and preparation for independent life. 21216 children and young adults lived in the child protection system according to the statistics of child protection which was made in 2006. Papházi and Szikulai's evaluation study (2008), based on statistics of child protection system, reveal the trends of long term care between the two base years (1998 and 2006): The authorized number of places in children's homes decreased almost 15% by 2006. However the decrease wasn't equal, it followed the objectives set by child protection laws (eliminations of institutions with large headcount, to build a system which focuses more on needs). The numbers of places of traditional child's home (43,3%),

³ This study based on Andrea Racz's Ph.D dissertation: *"Do-It-Yourself biographies, sequential (system)requirements"*- Study of the educational career, labour-market participation, and future perspectives of young adults who were brought up in the public child care (Budapest, ELTE, 2009.)

elementary school, student's home and children's home (56,2%) decreased, on the other side the number of places in apartment homes (74,4 %), special children's home (56,4%) and after-care homes increased. Despite the fact, the rate of the young adults who were placed in after-care homes increased to 35%, the ratio of the placed young adults is small, and in 2006 it was only 5, 4 %. 22 percentages of young adults went to children's home. The number of children and young adults who were placed in foster families kept rising by 2006, 54.8% of the children lived in foster families, while 45.2% of them lived in children's home (Papházi and Szakulai 2008). In 2006, the number of young people who live in after-care is 4064, 48 percentage of them live with foster parents, 52% of them use the after-care provision in institutional care. The reason of using the services is their studies, 67% of them is a full time student. 30% of them can't produce enough income to become self-supporting. 87 participants (3%) waited for inclusion to social institutions. 829 people received after-care service (Child Protection Statistical Guide 2006). The proportion of young people who used housing support increased from 3.6% to 24% during the two base years. In 2006, the average amount of aid was nearly 1 million HUF per capita. The amount indicates that it is not enough to manage long-time housing.

Even the research which were made in the 1980s drew attention to the fact that the social integration and living of those who lived in public child protection system were harder and more difficult than for other group. (Novák 1991, B. Aczél 1986, 1991). In her research, Maria Novak addressed the question - which is still adequate, after ten years of reforming the structures of the child protection system- that who prepared them? Did they even get preparation for what we expect from the young adults? Adolescence is a prominent period regarding the solidification of deviant behavior and risky forms of behaviour, although many deviances have no future in adulthood. Elekes and Paksi's research (2005) focuses on alcohol and drug consumption of adolescents between the ages of 10-14 and 15-18 years, who live in the child protection system. According to the results of the research, the most common addictions are alcohol and smoking in the children's environment. The rate of deviant behavior is higher in the environment of children, who live in children's home than among those who live in foster care. It can be explained by only few children, who live in foster families keep in touch with their biological families, so they can't provide accurate information. The results of research showed that 9,5 percentage of the adolescents who live in foster families and 28,5 percentage of those who live in children's home ever wondered to harm themselves. The researchers found that the number of those who smoke or use drugs/alcohol is higher among the adolescents who live in children's home than who live in foster families.

A previous research, made in 2003 focused on alcohol and drug use of average children (attending elementary- and high school) and disadvantage children (living in children's home and custody centre). The number of regularly alcohol users is significantly higher among who live in institution, irrespectively of the type of the alcohol. Three quarters of children who live in institution was drunk twice or more times. The trails' rate of illegal drugs is very high: two thirds of children (64,9%) who live in children's home or custody centre has already tried marijuana (the ratio among the average children who go normal school is 22,1%), 41,7% of them tried amphetamine (3,5 of average children), the ratio is similar regarding the ecstasy.

The first drunkenness and trial of cigarette and marijuana happen to them sooner (1,5 years sooner), their sexual activity begin sooner, two years too. Their sexual life is riskier as well. Every third adolescent (32,1%), who live in children's home or custody centre told they were protected last time (the rate of average children is 79%), only one-third of them (32,8%) used condom (the rate of average children is 81,1%). (Kököneyi et al. 2003). In her research, Maria Novak addressed the question - which is still adequate, after ten years of reforming the structures of the child protection system- that who prepared them? Did they even get preparation for what we expect from the young adults? Were they prepared to gain wrong culture, to consider knowledge and learning as values, to have origin, home and stable relationship. Hanák made interviews⁴ with 48 people who had been brought up in the system, in her research the participants confirmed that the children's home didn't prepare them to live independently neither taught the necessary skills to cope with every days. The vast majority of the asked finished the elementary school late or attended special school. According to Hanák the most common reason of having problem with pliancy to workplaces is that the motivation and willingness to work often meet the other people's prejudices. And also that the people typical had unrealistic concepts about their future. According to the research the people want to hide their child protection background because off self defense.

The success of child protection system could be measured by the integration of young adults who left the system, however there is no accurate data neither comprehensive research about it, what is more there is only a little information about the lives of the people, living in the system because the research, which were produced since the child protection system has been reformed, only focused on small areas or operated on small numbers of elements and those examinations, which were based on qualitative methods can't let us to conclude generally.

⁴ The research covered the 19-28 years people whowere brought up in public child care

Adolescence is a prominent period regarding the solidification of deviant behavior and risky forms of behaviour, although many deviances have no future in adulthood. Elekes and Paksi's research (2005) focuses on alcohol and drug consumption of adolescents between the ages of 10-14 and 15-18 years, who live in the child protection system. According to the results of the research, the most common addictions are alcohol and smoking in the children's environment. The rate of deviant behavior is higher in the environment of children, who live in children's home than among those who live in foster care. It can be explained by only few children, who live in foster families keep in touch with their biological families, so they can't provide accurate information. The results of research showed that 9,5 percentage of the adolescents who live in foster families and 28,5 percentage of those who live in children's home ever wondered to harm themselves. The researchers found that the number of those who smoke or use drugs/alcohol is higher among the adolescents who live in children's home than who live in foster families. A previous research, made in 2003 focused on alcohol and drug use of average children (attending elementary- and high school) and disadvantage children (living in children's home and custody centre). The number of regularly alcohol users is significantly higher among who live in institution. Irrespectively of the type of the alcohol. Three quarters of children who live in institution was drunk twice or more times. The trails' rate of illegal drugs is very high: two thirds of children (64,9%) who live in children's home or custody centre has already tried marijuana (the ratio among the average children who go normal school is 22,1%), 41,7% of them tried amphetamine (3,5 of average children), the ratio is similar regarding the ecstasy. The first drunkenness and trial of cigarette and marijuana happen to them sooner (1,5 years sooner), their sexual activity begin sooner, two years too. Their sexual life is riskier as well. Every third adolescent (32,1%), who live in children's home or custody center told they were protected last time (the rate of average children is 79%), only one-third of them (32,8%) used condom (the rate of average children is 81,1%). (Kököneyi et al. 2003).

Szötsné et al. (2007) studied the emotional intelligence and anxieties of adolescents' who were raised in the child protection system or in biological family. The research drew attention to the fact that the emotional control of young adult's is less, compared to those children who brought up in families, they often respond incorrectly to the threatening situations and the uncontrollment of negative emotions are common, too. The people who grew up without a family have poor problem-solving ability. In the study we found that the vast majority of parents of the children (age of 16-20) in care were brought up in children's home as well. The authorities highlighted that the children got panic after getting into the system, their self-concept determined by the belief they belong to nowhere. The low emotional intelligence of children who live in child protection system, can be traced back to the absence of primary caregiver in their lives, they are unable to identify their emotions on their own. These children

can less monitor the information given by their environment; they also find it difficult to take responsibility with others and to identify themselves as a constructive and cooperative member of a group.

In Hungary, there are no specific data on the ethnicity of people in child protection system because of the Privacy Act prohibits to collect any information about the ethnicity of respondents. , However, according to the researchers, Roma children are overrepresented in the child protection system. In Neményi and Messing's (2007) national survey in which the sample consisted of 1,866 children, 32% of them were Roma. One of the conclusions of the European Roma Rights Centre's⁵ (2007) research is Roma children more likely get into the child protection system than non-Roma children. They claim that once they get in, they will almost certainly stay there until becoming of age, and the contact with their biological parents would get minimized. According to the results of a qualitative research, the experts claim that the over-representation of Roma children doesn't relate to the operation of the child protection system. They argue that a child get into the system not because his origin but the level of danger. The over-representation of Roma children was frequently justified by their deviant behavior. They found that the reason of the difficulties in reintegration with their families is the financial security and the comfort. The financial security and the comfort that the system provides are sharply contrast to what their family give. One of the important statements of the research is that, unfortunately, the child protection professionals are not free of stereotypical judgment of gypsies either.

Neményi and Messing pointed out the main reason of getting into the system are behavior problems and truancy among the adolescents. Only 14% of the teenagers got into foster care, it is slightly easier to place girls in family-like care It is important to emphasize that the place where the children were brought up is determine regarding how they can reach their full potential. It cannot be ignored because reaching full potential is closely related their decision about their further education or career. The research found that although 88% of the adolescents fully developed physically, only 49% of them are mentally developed, and even less (41%) of them emotionally. Barely half of the adolescents attended to a class appropriated their age. Examining it regarding ethnicity: 43 % of Roma and 57% of non-Roma attended to age appropriated class. Fülöpné (2003) studied the behavior and learning problems of those who live in foster families. 580 adolescents and children between the ages 0-24 years were in the sample. She found that 38% of those who live in foster family have lag which made difficulties in learning or integration. 10% of them have multiplied disabilities. 7% of the children were hyperactive,

⁵ European Roma Rights Centre.

3.3% showed neurotic symptoms (eating disorders, indigestion). 6% of the teenagers and young adults suffered from anxiety disorders.

According to statistical data a significant proportion (65%) of those children in public care that have finished elementary school continue their studies in vocational school. There is a significant difference to be observed between the further studies of children being brought up in residential homes (in the Hungarian system: children's homes and apartment homes) and those raised by foster parents. Of those living in residential homes that had finished elementary school, 76% studied at a vocational school, 7% at a grammar school, 14% at a vocational secondary school, and 3% attended an educational program accredited within the National Record of Qualifications and provided outside the school system. Of children living with foster parents, 55% attend vocational schools, 13% a grammar school, 31% in vocational secondary school and only 1% receive education outside the school system. (Child Protection Statistical Guide, 2006) According to the data, children being brought up by foster parents are higher achievers than children brought up in residential homes; however, it is important to note that the mental abilities of children are very likely to determine the care location to which they are sent. Children with adequate mental development, of a low age and free of problems have a higher chance of receiving foster parents (Neményi and Messing, 2007). One can note, regarding the orientation of children living in child-protection system and attending vocational schools, that in the 2005/2006 school year 37% studied an industrial trade, 13% an agricultural trade, 24% catering and 27% of them continued their studies in other areas (Child Protection Statistical Guide, 2006). Regarding the occupations of young adults, while ten years ago 49% of the young adults who studied in vocational school chose industrial profession, in 2006 only 37% of them did. Slight decrease in the proportion of students who chose agricultural occupations is shown on the other hand the proportion of young adults who chose trade and catering, healthcare and other vocational occupations increased (Papházi and Szikulai 2008). Children (between ages of 15-18) living in care and attending to vocational school produce unfavorable picture regarding their school performance. The proportion of young people who have failed one or more subjects in elementary school is high (38%), one third of them repeated a class in elementary school. The most (56.9%) of the class repeats are due to poor academic results, but the reason of repeat for 22.3% is family problems that interfered young people to achieve better school performance. In the vocational school 20% of them failed some subject in the school year 2007/2008, despite the fact that almost the same proportion attend to remedial sessions. They do not have good opinion teachers either, 60% feel that there is no single teacher whom they could talk to honestly. They

let them know their dissatisfaction by truancy. Nearly 20% of them missed more than the maximum 30 hours. (Hodosán and Rácz 2009)⁶

Szikulai (2006) in the after-care system of his study let him to conclude that the most common reason of taking after-care provision among the young adults is the full-time education, 69% of them took the service and they probably have better chances to get 'better' job, and by getting a better job they would be able to more capable to start living independently. 44% of the young adults spent more than 10 years in the child protection system, and only 30% of them are in contact with their parents. The rate is more favorable among the young adults in after-care services, half of them have connection with their families. There is significant difference was observed between the groups in terms of educational attainment: There is a big difference between the two group regarding the educational qualification as well: The young adults in after-care service only finished elementary while the young adults in after care provision are typically continue their studies in profession schools or vocational schools. There are a lot of unemployed young adults in after care service (40%). 32% of them have permanent job, 8% of them work occasionally, and the others get subsidy for child care or fee for child care. The majority of those who work is blue-collar workers. While only 15% of young adults in care provision are unemployed. Most of them study in full-time, only a small proportion of them work. Regarding the young adults' school career it is important to know what proportion left school suspended. 70% of young adults in after care didn't interrupt their studies; still 60% of the young adults in after care provision finished every school they started. An earlier study (1998) examined the situation of the capital city's after-care. One of the reasons of getting into the system is homelessness. 40% of them have experienced homelessness, they returned to the child protection system from temporary accommodation or overnight shelters. A significant number of them stayed at acquaintances as a courtesy of owner or spent their time at friends'. The data about leaving the system (1998) showed 10-15% of them became homeless caring system and a significant part of the young adults go unknown place, disappears (20-25%) (Frühvirt 1998) according to Donáth et al. (1999), the after-care participants have to face multiple disadvantages in the labor market which is caused by a lack of appropriate qualification, low motivation of utilization of the existing qualifications, temporary work in hope of an immediate higher income and preference of illegal employment. The researchers also pointed out that in the majority of cases the recipients choices regarding career are influenced by the after-care place's expectations.

⁶ 210 people in two counties and in the capital were involved in the research. (Pest county and Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county).

Szikulai states (2004, 2006) that the essential problem is that the children in child protection system and young adults in after-care provision or requiring after-care service do not have enough information about what, why it is happening to them.

. Additional complicating circumstance is that the relationship with their family is too poor, not typical and in many cases it does not exist at all. In 2004, the Hungarian Association of FICE made a research sponsored by the World Bank and they focus on to map out the situation of after-cared participants. In the questionnaire-based survey collected data from 693 young adults with their after-care professional's help. It is interesting that after-care workers consider as success if the young adult is cooperating, accept and fulfill the advice of the worker. This is contrary to the purpose of after-care, which is to create a basis of independence, the independent decision making: obedience is rather outdated pedagogical image of a child's and not a feature of a full-fledged adult (Cseres 2005: 54). The after-care professionals say that the biggest problems with young adults and especially with Roma young adults are: they are immature to make decision autonomously, there is no stable background, they are lack of family relationships and they can hardly find jobs with their unmarketable profession. *Overall their personalities are mature or prefer infantile solving methods regressively. Their frustration tolerance is low, their attitude is based on emotions and passion. They have interpersonal relationships mostly between each other. They only use supporting network through the institute which they have connection with. Consideration of values and norms of theirs are unshaped. Major of them has typical "external control" attitude. Their concepts of future are unrealistic and uncompleted.* (Donáth et al. 1999: 7). Cseres (2005) drew the attention to the social workers' negative attitude manifested against the young adults, in many times the after-care worker also think the situation of young adults to be desperate.

Regarding the young adults we also mention the Capital Regional Child Protection Service's research (2008) which in the last 10 years tried to map out the situations of those young adults who are in after-care or live in foster families and also those young adults who left the families or after care because of their age. Relatively high proportion of the young adults who were brought up in foster families have completed secondary education (44%), 34% of them have profession, while only 17% of them finished only elementary school. However, 5% of them have a degree in higher education. Two-thirds of employees works on that field what they learned. 95% of the ex after-cared young adult have regular contact with the foster parents who brought them up. A quarter of them have connection with their biological parents. The research included the usage of housing support as well. Of those who required the housing support, 70% purchased detached house, 17% of them bought a flat and 10% already had a real estate, so just spend housing support on renovation, while 3% of them placed the money in savings

and use it in the future with taking a loan. From the housing support 79% of them bought a real estate in the countryside, although one third doesn't live in that house they purchased. 90% the interviewed young people have positive experience about the years which had been spent in foster families, and the same proportion said that child protection background doesn't mean disadvantage for them (Zsoldos 2008).

Szikulai (2006) found significant difference between young adults in after-care provision and young adults in after-care service regarding the development and marriage relationship. Regarding the young adults in after-care provision number of young adults had a spouse or consorts than the number of singles. According Spitzer (1994), relationship of the adults couple can be dangers if the partner finds out that what kind of family the after-cared came, and even if the partner can accept, in many cases the partner's family impedes the relationship (Spitzer, 1994). Women have a greater willingness to have children, and also don't refuse having a relationship. Interestingly willingness to have children is greater among after-cared women, probably the consort and spouse relationship mean possibility for them to build up an independent life (Szikulai 2006). In 2006 a qualitative study was made focused on the relationships of adolescents (between the ages 16-18) who live in children's home or apartment home, according the results of the study, majority of the adolescents have long-term relationship and also plan their future out of the system with their partners. The partners typically live in biological family, which can indicate the efforts of social integration of people living in care. The young people are aware of the importance of birth control, but they do not always use in practices their decisions about are typically controlled by convenience or financial reasons. In several interviewees' relationship occurred abortions. In the young children's opinion the children's home not able to deal with relationships at home policies complicates the operation of partnerships, the policy of children's home make the operation of relationship hard. The young adults' concepts for the future (creating material wealth, form a family, having children) are usually reflections on their own past. Those young adults who are close to come of age consider the terms of getting out the system to be difficult, they want to stay in the system as long as possible (Rácz, 2006).

II. International research related to the people who were brought up in the child protection system

Numerous international studies draw attention to the social exclusion of people raised within public child care and their failure to overcome their childhood disadvantages. It seems that the young people leaving child protection system, do not receive the necessary professional help, majority of them do not obtain the necessary skills and abilities lead a life, to fulfil the roles of adulthood. Young adults, who leave the system have low self-esteem, self confidence, they have insecure position in labour market due to their unsuccessful school career.

In **Sweden**, not much attention is paid to the educational outcomes of children and young adults raised in child protection system, so the awareness of defense policy can be questioned regarding the importance of children and young adults' education - just like we have experienced in Hungary - there is no uniform expectation system which would have those requirements that could force the professionals to earn the people in car to perform better at school (Höjer et al. 2008). Vinnerljung et al. compared the Swedish students who receive some kind of welfare support to those who do not receive any support. The research found that those young people whose mothers have only elementary education, and those young people who have received some kind of welfare support before puberty, or those who have spent a long time in foster care have two or three times more likely achieve only elementary education. Receiving public child care is unclear: those entering the system as adolescents have the same bad outcomes in the educational field as those taken into care at a younger age. Poor school performance is closely related to the operation of the system, with its uncertainty in placement due to frequent changes in the care locations. The expectations of caregivers are also low, and they generally neglect the issue of study and further education. In addition, the responses. In the cases of those young adults who got support at the age of adolescence, the risk of acquiring only elementary qualifications is four times bigger. In contrast, those children who were brought up in a family without requiring any welfare support, even if the mother is less educated still 2-6 times more likely have the children higher qualification than secondary education (cited by Hill et al. 2008: 5).

In **Denmark**, a professional development plan has been established, aiming to raise the quality of work done by professionals active in the child protection system. This professional concept considers school as a development platform where children might be enabled to overcome their traumatic childhood

experiences. It is typical in Denmark that internal schools operate within boarding institutions where teachers primarily seek to develop social rather than scholarly competences. However, the integration into regular schools is difficult from these schools. Danish professionals consider that children leaving from public child care are in need of further support, mainly in the fields of studying and work (Bryderup, 2008).

According to the 2003 estimates of the Social Exclusion Unit, children brought up in care in the **United Kingdom** face a ten times higher risk of dropping out of school than their school mates who are raised in families (Höjer et al., 2008: 39). In the framework of research carried out by the Rainer Foundation in 2008 entitled “*What Makes the difference?*”, 250 young people living in public child care were interviewed on how much the care given by the state was perceived as *parental* care. According to these interviews, the experiences of those in care are quite far from the aims of the state. Young people raised in institutions mostly wish to be loved and those living with foster parents wish to be able to feel like family members. Of those who had felt personal support, 67% continued their studies after the age of 16 (Höjer et al., 2008: 41). According to Jackson (2007) the effects of receiving public child care are unclear: those entering the system as adolescents have the same bad outcomes in the educational field as those taken into care at a younger age. Poor school performance is closely related to the operation of the system, with its uncertainty in placement due to frequent changes in the care locations. The expectations of caregivers are also low, and they generally neglect the issue of study and further education. In addition, the responses given by school staff to questions over child protection are incomplete. According to Baginsky (2000), although most schools have child protection programs, teachers consider that the majority would not notice if a child is abused, and they are uncertain over the issues on which they should consult professionals, despite the fact that most teachers have participated in some kind of child protection training.

According to Sallnäs (apud. Höjer et al., 2008: 40), in Sweden it is problematic that workers in institutions offering nursing and care consider the application of therapeutic methods to be highly important and place less emphasis on school careers. An analysis of the professional reports of institutions showed only 19% identified pursuing school career and obtaining the appropriate qualification as being most important. Children raised in the foster parent system are in a better situation in Sweden too; the importance of education is more emphasized in foster families. Höjer (apud. Höjer et al., 2008: 44) conducted group interviews with Swedish parents whose children live in foster care. According to these parents, they would like to know about the school performance of their

children and they wish to participate in various school activities; they would like to be part of their child's school life.

In the United Kingdom, the proportion of those young adults in care who get degree in higher education is small. The ration is in accordance with the domestic estimates, circa 3-5%. Experience has shown that among those young adults who get diploma the change of caring place was way fewer, there were also a professional who motivated and helped them to study and their biological family were in their lives as well (Jackson 2007).

Del Valle et al. examined Spanish young adults who exited the child protection system, he found that 9,4% of them suffered from some kind of drug addiction, 7,8 percentage use drug occasionally. Nearly 10 percentage had offending behavior. They classified the people who left the system to five types according social integration. The people in the first type struggle with serious deviances like crime, drug use, prostitution (*group of marginalized people*). Although in the second type the usage of drug is still presents, the dependence on welfare provision is more typical (welfare benefits receivers). They also made difference between their ability to make medium, appropriate and significant changes. Those who can make medium changes, don't depend on the benefits from the welfare entirely, but are not capable of living totally independently. The people in the second type are *able to make appropriate changes*, these people are capable of financial independence, but when smaller problems turn up (such as healthcare or family relations), need of help still occurs. *Significant ability to change covers* that the person can build up a totally independent life and stability describes in the areas of their lives like working and housing and so on. (quotes Casas and Montserrat 2008: 47–48)

According to Stein's theory (2005) care leavers could be divided into three groups. The first one includes those who are able to overcome their disadvantages and *become successful* in life. They are mostly workers with managerial or top managerial qualifications having good social skills. In Stein's opinion, these young people make strong efforts in order to get rid of negative experiences of the past; overcoming them they are able to meet successfully the requirements of their adult roles, like becoming a parent, maintaining independent living. Their life is stable and consistent, they can successfully adapt to challenges of independent living, and they are in possession of extended network of relationships. Their school career was consistent, and they are successful at work. When they must face financial problem, they make use of welfare benefits, but according to Stein they are the easiest to support

because they are settled in other aspects of life. The second group includes the so-called *survivors*, whose main characteristic in life is uncertainty, instability during the public care period, at leaving and later as well. There is a high rate of them receiving different welfare assistance and support. They became care leavers relatively soon mostly with no qualifications. Lots of them even experience the reality of homelessness for a short time. They represent a high rate of unemployment, and those who work are underpaid, or only employed temporarily. The third group is of the so-called *victims* whose lives are marked by the feeling of being torn-away from family. They distrust everybody. It may be assumed that they experienced serious traumas in the original families, which determined their life during public care and their after-life as adults as well. Most of them changed places several times in the care system; consequently they left early with no proper support at the actual time or after. They are adrift in life, they avail of homeless provision, many of them become wrong-doers or victims of criminal acts, are forced into prostitution, struggle with deviancies like drugs, alcohol.⁷ The majority of victims are desolate and friendless, mental diseases are a frequent occurrence. Leaving child protection system, it is crucial for them to be provided with complex support. (Stein 2005: 19-22)

Figure 1. presents Stein' theory (2005) about those needed support which the different types need after leaving the child protection system.

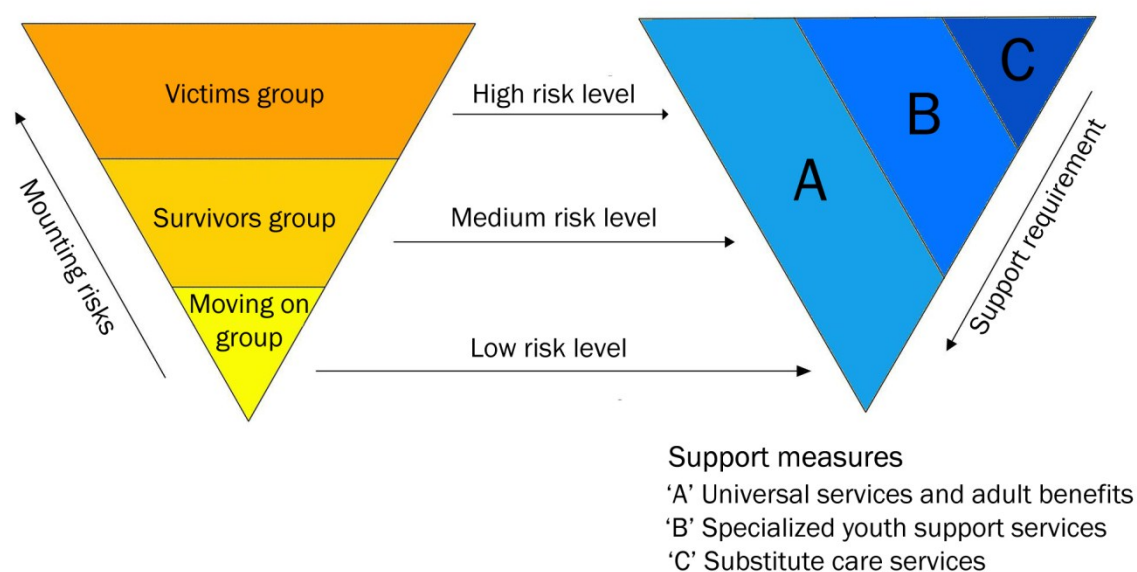
People in the successful type, basically require financial support in case of temporary financial problems and also the preventive services could mean support for them.

The type of survivors require usually require special support, particularly in the areas of employment, housing, but they may need emotional support, lifestyle consultancy, and help to build relationships.

The type of victim requires complex subsidies that include housing, employment, help to obtain appropriate qualification, emotional and mental support, life leading consultancy, psychological, psychiatric and addiction treatment services, and help to build up relationships.

⁷In Great-Britain quarter of young homeless, and 38% per cent of prisoners were raised in child protection care (Furlong 2003: 45)

Figure 1: Types of the child protection system leaving based on the needs of supports⁸



(Source: Based on the logics of Mike Stein: *Resilience and Young People Leaving Care*, 2005: 20 and UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre: *Children at risk in Central and Eastern Europe: perils and promises*. Regional Monitoring Report No.7. 1997)

International researches point out that young people still need further support after the termination of care, in addition the preparation of independent life must begin much before leaving the system. The supports which are available after getting out of the systems can help the young adults to find suitable accommodation and job. More and more people who take advantage of these opportunities after leaving the system. Although the professionals are totally convinced about that the planning of the young adults' life path is carried out properly, according to research from Barn et al. (2005) from the angle of young the exactly the planning is missing. Young adults are often not aware of their rights, they do not even know what legal status they have in terms of the system. No one ever showed me the law of one leaving the care. No one ever what my obligations are (Brown et al. 2005: 71-73).

⁸ In Western Europe, according new approach of the children's needs, the provided support and needs of children should be considered together. The level of needs is determined by the treating conditions which are in the child's direct environment, how the child's family needs-satisfying function work and in addition what kinds of support are provided for the child and parents.

Summary

Many international and domestic researches draw attention to many problems. According the results, their concerns about whether the young adult can to cope with the adulthood role without help, can't overcome their traumatic past, a large proportion of them are in the need of the child protection system's support permanently.

. In case of care leavers, the preparation of independent life must begin much before leaving the system besides using proper pedagogical method suited to the child's age. The system' dysfunctions (sequential changes caring place along with school and contemporary group changes; considering the learning and gaining profession to be unimportant; lack of the of personal care and the willingness to motivate the child; the exclusion of biological family from the process of caring and school life) leads to a situation, where the young adults are not able to cope with neither minor or major problems in their lives.

Before leaving the system it is necessary for young adults to participate in the planning of future actively, to get appropriate information about their rights and possibilities of additional available services. Support also should be provided to find a good quality and safe housing for themselves. The experts' attitude is also need to be changed urgently, because the children in care or those who left the system will became passive subjects of the supports which are provided after coming to the age or leaving the system. The motivation for learning is essential in order to increase opportunities for employment, many researches draw attention to the treatment of unemployment, to the appearance in poor quality and underpaid employment.

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RÓZA HODOSÁN- ANDREA RÁCZ: EDUCATION DROP OUT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF PUBLIC CARE

Since the changeover, in spite of the improvement in the level of education, a considerable number of uneducated people have been reproduced. There are about 5000 students every year who do not finish primary school until the age of 16, and approximately 20 thousand young people who do not go into higher education, or drop out of secondary education.

It is probable that both economic and social factors have an influence on the reproduction of those young people who are driven out of the labor market because of their low level of education. It is also presumable that the responsibility of the public education cannot be questioned for not being able to prevent the above-mentioned phenomenon.

In the last decades, as a consequence of the educational expansion, the educational data of parents gradually improved. It was proved by the fact that vocational schools were attended only by the members of the lowest social classes. A data from 2001 shows that three-quarters of the vocational school students' fathers had primary (17%) or similarly to their sons, vocational education (57%).

As a result of both the changes in the system of education and the expansion of higher education, not only socially disadvantaged students were forced to reach only vocational education, but also those who did not attend secondary education, who had serious learning difficulties, who were disadvantageous of some kind, or who were not motivated to continue their studies.

Dropping out of vocational education is considered as a serious problem for these disadvantaged groups. By 1999 the number of drop outs was approximately one quarter of the number of those who entered vocational education (31.6%).

On the basis of research it can be supposed that the situation has not been improved, moreover, has got worse than before.

The reasons why dropout happens are very complicated, however, factors such as feeling unwell at school or being insecure in institutes of education that could not solve the educational problems of students can be considered as possible explanations.

The number of children and young adults taking part in the childcare system is about 20 thousand. According to the data of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office (KSH), in 2005 there were 17 thousand underage and about 4 thousand people over the age of 18 who lived in care.

In 2005, 9% of those who entered childcare system were between the ages of 0-3, 26% aged 4 -10, 46% aged 11-17 and 19% over the age of 18. As far as the educational career of these young people are

concerned, during the school year of 2004/2005 9% of those who finished primary education continued their studies in secondary grammar schools, 20% in technical schools, 70% in vocational schools and 1% in private courses. It is a well-known fact, though, that the percentage of dropout in these institutes is about 32%, so probably this number is even higher among those who grow up in the childcare system.

In the school year of 2004/2005 about 1400 children growing up in the childcare system started their secondary school studies, out of which 1000 in a vocational school.

First of all, unfortunately, there is no exact national data about the rate of dropout among these students, but it's probable that this rate is very high, especially among those young people who frequent secondary technical schools.

Secondly, research on childcare does not deal with questions such as the importance of educational career in terms of social integration, or the role of childcare system in generating successful educational career for its cared for.

And finally, we have no exact data about the way how the dropout rate is distributed between students who live with foster parents and those who live in children's home.

For this reason we have attempted to carry out a study on some important issues of childcare. The examination was carried out in two regions of Hungary (one county in each region). More specifically, we examined Pest county and Budapest from the central region of Hungary, and Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county from North Hungary.

As far as the method of the research is concerned, we used both qualitative and quantitative tools.

Finally, and most importantly, in this study we have attempted to shed light, first, on the relationship between students, their studies and the educational system. Secondly, the study examines the ways how the institutes of education and those of childcare help children to overcome their difficulties at school. And finally, it investigates how effectively the above-mentioned institutes prepare students for real life.

In this study we would like to present the main results of our research, which, as mentioned before, was carried out in 2 counties of 2 regions in Hungary, and is based on qualitative as well as quantitative methods.

To take each issue separately, we have attempted to share, firstly, the experience of children in primary and secondary education, secondly, their opinion on their teachers and their childcare professionals, thirdly, their general feelings at school and finally, their plans for the future.

In our investigation we have used two important tools to examine young people bringing up in the childcare system. First, we asked 208 young people between the ages of 15 and 18 to fill in a questionnaire, and then we carried out 20 interviews with some of the participants.

In the selection of the interviewees we considered those young children as the most valid who managed to provide us with the longest list of reasons why they dropped out. Consequently, in our study we have interviewed 6 young people from Budapest, 8 from Pest county, and 8 from BAZ county. As far as their homes are concerned, 12 of the selected teenagers live in a children's home, and 8 in a foster family.

The main results of the questionnaire survey

34.8% of the 208 young people live in the capital city, 31.4% in Pest county, and 33.8% in BAZ county. 51% of them are female. Most of them (47,1 %) were born in 1991 (96 people). The majority of these young people (41%) have a weekly contact with their parents of origin. 26 see their family of origin every 1-3 months, 29 (14.2%) every 6 months or even less frequently. Unfortunately 32.2% (66 people) have no contact with their families of origin at all.

45.1% of these young people live with foster parents, 36.9% in children's home and 18% in council home. Most of them feel quite good in these institutes of childcare, but 26% of them are not happy at all.

As far as the number of siblings are concerned, the majority of these young people (54.2%) have 1-3, or more than 3 siblings (40.4%).

Focusing on the age of getting to the childcare system we can say that the vast majority of these children (40.5%) get there between the ages of 4-10, and 27% at the ages of 11-14.

1/5 of the respondents got to the childcare system in infancy, while 11.5% of them got there at the age of 15 or even later. Based on the above-mentioned statistics we can say that the average age when the participants got to the childcare system is 8.3 years. More precisely, 13.7% of the examined young people got to their current childcare home in infancy, 35.3 % between the ages of 4-10, 32.4% at the ages of 11-14, and 18.6% at the age of 15 or later.

It is an undoubtedly positive result that 46.6% of the above-mentioned children were brought up in one home. It is also true, though, that 34.2% of them were brought up in two different places, and 19.2% of them in three or more places.

Primary Education

The vast majority of the respondents (72.8%) attended a normal class in the primary school. Only 24 of them studied in a class with a special curriculum, and 32 frequented a special class (15.5%).

There is a high percentage of those students who had to participate in remedial teaching courses. More specifically, 42% of them took part in the above-mentioned lessons, mostly in mathematics and Hungarian literature and grammar, but also in physics, chemistry or history.

26.4% of the participants believed that these courses helped them to understand the class material, and 11.5% thought that it was helpful for them in finishing primary education. A smaller percentage (8.2%) believed that these courses helped them to enter secondary education and only 8 students did not find them useful at all.

There is a very high percentage of those students who failed in one or more of the subjects in the elementary school. In 38% of the cases they failed during the years of the primary education. In other words, among the questioned individuals every 2.7 student failed. Most of them failed to pass the exams of mathematics or Hungarian grammar – subjects in which they took part in remedial teaching courses. Similarly, they had difficulties in some science subjects as well such as geography, chemistry and biology.

Not only the percentage of failure in some subjects is high among students bringing up in childcare, but also the percentage of repetition of a year. More specifically, 32.7% of the examined students repeated a school year, which means that every 3.1 child repeated a school year in the primary school. Most of them (56.9%) did so because of their poor achievements in education, and 22.3% of them couldn't be successful at school because of family problems. Uncertified absence from school led to repetition of the year in 13.8 % of the cases. Due to health problems only two students had to repeat the school year.

59.1% of young people repeated a year in the junior section of the elementary school. The majority of the students (54.4%) finished primary school with satisfactory results, while 16.7% managed to get only pass mark. 23.9% of them had good, and only 9 students managed to reach excellent results. It means that the average result of the students was 3.3.

The average age when the students finished primary education was 14.7. It is important to point out, however, that 17.2% of these students got primary school certificate only at the age of 16 or even later.

As far as the choice of educational goals is concerned, young people reported that most of their teachers in the primary school informed them about the possibilities (45%), and many of them also helped them in making decisions (41.6%). A small percentage (13.4%), however, reported that their teachers had a negative or neutral attitude, moreover, some of them refused to help them because they were not really interested in the issues of choosing educational goals. Among the members of the

childcare professionals negative attitude wasn't common, what's more, as 72% of the young people have reported, they helped the students to decide what to choose.

Regarding the educational goals of young people, most of them (48%) wanted to continue their studies in specialized secondary schools, and 40.7% preferred to choose a technical school. 20 people wished to study in secondary schools where they can obtain a baccalaureate certificate, and 3 students did not want to go on to secondary education.

Secondary education

The vast majority of students (47.5%) are currently in the 9th year. 29.2% of them are in the 10th year, 20.8 % in the 11th year, and only 5 young people are in the 12th year.

Most of the young people (78.1%) are currently studying in secondary schools that they applied for first, and 44 in institutes that they did not really want to attend. There are many reasons why they applied for schools in which they did not really want to study. Firstly and most importantly, they were sure that they had no choice to get in. Secondly, in case of six students, the child care professionals talked them out of applying for the schools they preferred, one person was influenced by their parents and one by the primary school teacher.

Many of them believed that the preferred school was way too far from their home, and 2 people took into consideration the fact that their friends applied for other schools. There were also other reasons, such as the closure of the school, the lack of the specialization they wanted to take, or simply administrative errors or economic problems.

We also asked students about the reason why they were satisfied with their choice. They mostly pointed out one main reason: the possibilities the school can give them in the future education and the labour-market. There are, however, several other reasons why they like their schools. First of all, 40.4% of those students who were satisfied with their secondary school regarded the possible educational or job opportunities the school could give them in the future as the most important thing. Secondly, it is also important for the students to feel good in their class, most precisely, 39.4 % of them likes school for the above-mentioned reason. Thirdly, some students (61 people) tend to like school because of their teachers. 22.1% of them enjoy school because they consider its level as high. There are some other, less important reasons as well, such as the fact that they do not have to study too much, the school is near their home, or that their friends attend the same institute.

The list of the most popular trades (that they originally wanted to learn) is rather varied. More specifically, the students wanted to learn trades such as car mechanic, shop assistant, fancy -leather goods maker, pastry cook, baker, security guard, butcher, masseur, police officer, hairdresser or secretary. The vast majority of the informants (71.2%) applied first for the kind of trade they wanted to learn. There were only 57 young people who did not apply for schools they really wanted to attend. As far as the reasons are concerned, 24 students were sure that they had no chance to get in, four were talked out of choosing their preferences by childcare professionals, and one by the parents. Nine students thought that the school was too far from the home, and 3 were influenced by the fact that the friends applied for other schools. Eight young people admitted that “it would have been impossible to find a job with that trade”, so they changed their decision.

Most young people are satisfied with their career. There are several reasons why it is like this. First of all, 38% of them consider their trade interesting, and a smaller percentage, 14.9% of the students prefer the fact that it is easy to learn their trade. 44% of the young people consider rational aspects as important, more precisely, they believe that with their trade, which is much in demand in the labour market, it will be easy to find a good job. Moreover, 30% of them are inclined to think that with the trade they study they can get a well-paid job.

The students have rather mixed feelings about their teachers. 64.9% of them think that when they have personal problems their teachers do not support them at all. The positive thing, though, is that the teachers show an opposite attitude in case of learning problems. Surprisingly, 10% claims that the majority of the teachers do not like students, and are not interested in them at all. In other words, every 20th student is of the same opinion. A smaller percentage, 5% are inclined to think that most teachers do not care whether the students study or not, or whether they have learning difficulties or not. Sadly, 60.1% of the students believe that there is no teacher with whom they could speak sincerely.

Future Plans

As far as students' opinion about school is concerned, they are pretty different, often full of contradictions. On the one hand, 85.1% of them believe that school prepares them for employment, on the other hand, 75% of the students think that school gives them only general knowledge, which may not be enough to be competitive in the labor market. According to the students, high level of education is given only by 32.4% of the schools. In spite of the poor or not adequate preparation that the institute gives, surprisingly, 86% of the students like the school they attend.

35.5% of them have already thought about changing schools, and 12.4% were considering quitting studies. Although 30% of the students haven't thought about leaving school, but they have already considered changing specialization within the same institute. 30.2% of the students, exactly one quarter of the sample, were considering to change schools or specializations. These students are considered to be dissatisfied with their educational choice.

Surprisingly, however, we can consider students' opinion on their trades as positive. It is supported by the fact that 71.9% of the students were sure to be able to find a good job after the studies. It is, however, important to stress that the general belief is that *nowadays you can never be sure whether you can get a job after your studies*. Consequently, 77.6% of the students believe that this statement is true. As far as the financial benefits of their jobs are concerned, 60.2% hope that they will be able to *earn much money with their profession*.

It is worth analyzing what students were planning to do after finishing school. 41.8% of the interviewees wanted to start working, and 12 young people wished to set up their own business. 35.1% of them were planning to learn another trade, and 34.1% wanted to take school-leaving exams. Here, of course, we can usefully point out that the two latter groups have the intention to continue their studies after finishing their current school.

Presentation of educational experiences gained at school

Following the quantitative part of the research, we carried out a qualitative study based on interviews. In order to investigate the educational experiences of the students, we interviewed 20 students. In an attempt to present the results of this research, we wish to take into consideration the following three categories: 1) *learning patterns during the years of the primary education*, 2) *characteristics of current education, chances for the future*, 3) *supportive background and family of origin*. In our study, we have attempted to investigate the most important factors that influence the educational career, the possible future perspectives, pitfalls and failures of children who grow up in the childcare system. Moreover, we also wish to demonstrate how the above mentioned factors influenced the fact that these students tend to interrupt their studies before finishing them.

1. Learning patterns during the years of the primary education

In our study, we also wished to examine the main reasons of educational dropout among students in childcare. Toward this goal, we analyzed the course of life and educational career of young people. More precisely, we investigated possible life situations, learning and behavioral difficulties and

problems of choosing educational goals that could lead to education dropout. As far as our interviewees are concerned, all of them have faced with problems during their studies and in choosing educational goals. Consequently, their educational career was frequently characterized by failures, unjustified absence and behavioral difficulties.

The results of primary education determined the choice of educational goals. As already suggested, the interviewees all struggled with learning, behavioral or socializing difficulties, which impacted greatly on their results. We can put the matter somewhat more generally by presenting the national data which shows that 5.3% of the total number of students struggled with learning difficulties in the primary education in 2007. This research is not representative, we can yet say that out of the 208 informants, 38% failed in one or more subjects and 33% repeated the year in the primary school, usually due to the bad grades they got.

The results of the interviews clearly indicate that there is a strong correlation between the learning difficulties and the personal problems of the students such as changes in family, problematic family background, and consequently, regular conflicts in the family and moving from one childcare institute to the other. As far as the family background, the social and cultural possibilities of these children are concerned, they mostly show the characteristics of the least disadvantaged social groups. It is true that there are no comparative studies at our disposal, yet we suppose that there is a similarity between the educational career of children in care and those coming from families where social disadvantages and deviancy are constantly present. According to the data of a national study, 70% of young people who attend technical schools have disadvantageous social background.

Another determining factor of educational failure can be the intellectual capacity of the student. Not only family problems, but also mental trauma can be responsible for the educational failure of young people. These traumas usually come from negative experiences that young people went through in the family of origin or the institutes of childcare. In case children grow up in a good foster family or in a children's home that gives them proper education, they will probably be able to overcome difficulties and have a fair educational career based on their capacities.

We can observe some typical educational paths among our interviewees that lead to failure at school. Based on this, we have found four main, typical reasons why these students fail to success in education. Therefore, in order to understand it better, we wish to illustrate some cases related to each characteristic reason.

***The first typical reason:* Worsening learning and behavioral problems as a result of changing childcare institutes and changes in family**

The results of the data clearly indicate that factors such as problematic family background, drastic changes and conflicts in family automatically lead, first, to learning, and then, behavioral difficulties. These problems first appear in studying certain subjects, such as Hungarian grammar or mathematics, in which students have the highest failure rate. The interviewees believed that schools wanted to get rid of those students who struggled with some kind of difficulties. In primary education learning difficulties hardly ever got solved and turned in the opposite direction. It can be noted that students tend to perform badly or fail in the moment of change. This experience can influence their career in both negative or positive ways.

The next example comes from one of the participants, who is 18 years old and lives in a child care institute. He is in the 10th year of school, and he already failed in 6 subjects in the 9th year. This year, however, he has failed in only one subject, and hopes to be able to make his results better. He failed for the first time in the year when he got into the child care institute. “(…) *I did not fail because of my results, but because of the fact that I had no pencils and so on*”. Before getting in the child care institute, for long years, he had to live under chaotic circumstances in his family of origin, and had to face with difficulties coming from his background. His aunt took him out of the children’s home, but unfortunately they did not manage to establish good rapports, so after 5 years she put him into a council home because of his learning difficulties.

Contrary to what the previous participant experienced, the next interviewee gives us an example for positive change. This person is 16 years old, frequents the 9th year in a technical school, and he is the best student of the class. It is interesting to point out that he gets a very good mark in mathematics, in which he failed twice in the previous years. His parents are divorced, his mother is an alcohol addict, and alcoholism in general is characteristic of the whole family. When he lived with his family of origin, he had to repeat twice the 5th year of the primary school, and he failed in 4 subjects. When he got into the child care institute he was in the 7th year, which he had to repeat. He was often ill, and it was difficult for him to get over the trauma, and he struggled with behavioral and learning difficulties.

He explains the change with the following words: “(…) *in August there was a meeting or something like that at home and there I told my foster parents that I wasn’t a rebel anymore and I completely changed and I was a good guy from that moment on, and I wouldn’t do stupid things anymore. They told me OK, but they should see it. And from August on there is no problem with me. I study properly, I don’t answer back, run away or skip classes. I think that my teenager years are over*”.

The third example comes from a student who is in the 10th year, and before getting in the childcare system she lived together with his father and grandparents. When she was 9 months old, her mother left him and her father. Her father worked abroad, then got ill and had to be cared. The grandmother died and her father blamed himself for the death. Then, at the age of 14, when the grandfather died too, she was put into a child care institute where she still lives. The girl is talented, and she did well at school before the drastic changes in her life. Then she started to have behavioral and learning problems as well. Currently she is frequenting a secondary school specialized in business, but she is not performing well. So far she has repeated a year twice because of being absent all the time.

***The second typical reason:* the intellectual capacity of the student does not make it possible to perform well at school**

The following student, who is 17 years old, is attending for the second time the 9th year of a technical school . She got to the childcare system in infancy, more precisely, she started to live with foster parents at the age of 3. She started her studies when she was 8, and she has always had both learning and behavioral difficulties. Consequently, she has been in need of psychological treatment. In the secondary school she failed in a subject once, but she did not have to repeat the school year. She describes her problems in the following way: *“(...) much homework...you have to write one or two pages. Writing down things is quite OK, although sometimes I get fed up with it. But when it comes to studying, I cannot manage. It’s too long.”*

***The third typical reason:* Application of inadequate pedagogical methods**

One of the interviewees, who is currently in the 9th year of technical school, continues his studies just because he is of school age. Once he comes of age, he wants to leave school as well as the childcare system. Few years before getting in childcare, he lived together with his grandparents because both of his parents were alcoholic and homeless. First, his grandmother died, and then his grandfather got ill, so he could not take care of the child anymore. In this weak moment he started to have problems such as behavioral difficulties, vagrancy, truancy, physical aggression and blackmailing. He had to do the 7th year twice. He got into the childcare system due to abandonment. Sadly enough, the school played an important part in putting him into childcare, moreover, it wanted to get rid of him. One of his foster parents believes that the child was absolutely manageable when he got into the childcare system. He was good at sports, he especially did very well in national races in combat sports. Because of his bad behavior, he is not allowed to practice his favorite sport anymore, the only activity in which he could have been successful.

Another interviewee is a young man who is in the 11th year of a technical school specialized in training builders. He does not like the trade he learns at all, and he is thinking about leaving school. He got into the childcare system at the age of 11 because of his mother's illness. There he had terrible experiences, as he was physically abused by his foster parents. As a result of this, he got back to his mother of origin, but not for a long time as her conditions of health worsened. Then, he was sent to live with another foster parents. He had to repeat the 5th year at school. His failure is strongly related to the above mentioned crisis in family and the wrong choice of foster family. *"Well... as I have mentioned before, I stayed also with foster parents, and it happened for that... and also for the many fails, and it happened like that. It was...like... when I first went there, I hadn't known how that place was. In the beginning they treated me well, but then they started to beat me, and that's why I started to fail at school because I couldn't stand staying there anymore. There was another kid, called R..., who was also here but he was also beaten."*

***The fourth typical reason:* Wrong choice of school in terms of children's intellectual capacity**

The next interviewee is a girl who is currently attending an art school and loves the place where she studies. It is the second time that she is in the 9th year. In the beginning she could not keep up, she was always tired and late for school, she had repeated and unjustified absences from school. Consequently, she failed in five subjects. She got into the childcare system at the age of five, and she lives in a council home. In the junior section of elementary school she did very well, but then, she was forced to change schools. She wanted to attend the new school, chosen by the childcare professionals, under no circumstances. She believed it was too difficult for her even if she was recommended that school because of her results. From the 5th year of school her learning difficulties started to get stronger, which finally resulted in failing in the 7th year and finishing her elementary studies. As she describes: *"(...) I did not want to go to that school because it was a school of eager beavers, so it was a very difficult school so only the best students get in there. So I told them that I did not want to study there, I wanted to go back to my old school, I wanted to stay there and did not want to go away from there. I thought it was a good idea to put only my name on the school-leaving exam sheet, because this way I was hoping to go back to my old school. Well it wasn't the case. They checked my school report in which they could see that I had an average of 4.7 which is pretty good. So because I did well at school, and I was not able to make decisions that time my foster parents decided for me. Well, or I repeat the 4th, or I go on to the 5th year, but I know it will be too difficult for me and I had no courage to tell them that I handed in the entrance exam sheet blank and that I did not want to go to that school."*

Interestingly, although she has always experienced failures during her studies, now she is attending a relatively good school (probably partly as a result of her elementary studies). She wants to finish her studies in any case.

2. Characteristics of current school years and future perspectives

The vast majority of our interviewees attended a vocational school. Only six young people go to specialized secondary schools that give certificate of baccalaureate as well. One person started to attend a secondary grammar school, but changed to a technical school after a year due to insufficient results. Two other students, who attended a specialized secondary school before, had to switch to a vocational school because of educational failure.

The patterns of primary education characteristically lead to careers characterized by dropouts and quitting school. The current situation and future perspectives of our interviewees are in close connection with their circumstances. The research suggests that these young people are forced to make a compromise because the above mentioned reasons. First of all, their choices regarding education and professional career are strongly determined by pressure of circumstances. Such circumstances are the place of the school, the results of primary education, and the possible security their chosen profession can give them in the future.

On the other hand it is a national tendency that technical schools are attended only by those students who have no chance to get into other, more prestigious institutes. Interestingly, there is a 5.9 % increase in the number of students who fail in vocational schools, where the educational standards are the lowest. This percentage is almost three times as many as the average of secondary grammar schools (2.1%) and two times as many as those of specialized secondary schools (3.6%).

There is a long list of failures that led to education dropout in secondary education. We have already presented these figures previously in the introduction. Consequently, also the participants of this study have a good chance to quit school without finishing it.

In the next part of the research we wish to present the possibilities of choosing educational goals, student satisfaction, motivating factors in education, results and future plans. We also attempt to show how satisfied students are with school, its educational system and pedagogical principles. In order to illustrate the above-mentioned factors, we wish to present some examples about the possibilities of learning assistance.

The next example comes from a 17-year old young woman who has been in care for 4 years and a half. In primary education she experienced a series of failures, and in the secondary school she failed in 6 subjects in the first semester of the 9th year. Although she has been studying with a teacher specialized in learning difficulties, her intellectual capacity does not make it possible for her to have better results. She attends a secondary school specialized in health care, but she needs to look for another school later

as this one is too difficult for her. Her foster parents believe that trades such as caregiver or any other kind of social professions could be suitable for her. She would like to become an child nurse, though. She managed to choose educational goals on the basis of her plans, but her poor results in primary education force her to go to another school that she can possibly finish. Her dream, however, is to finish the school that she is currently attending, even if she is afraid of the school-leaving exam. Her foster parents want her to quit this school and choose another one which is more adequate for her capacities.

Another example comes from the story of a young woman who is 16 years old and has lived in a children's home for 3 years. Similarly to the previous interviewee, her basic skills are pretty imperfect, consequently, she needs extra tutorial help twice a week. She is in the 9th year of a technical school, and she wants to be a waitress. Unfortunately she was left out of the 'waiter specialization' because of her repeat exams. She wishes to follow her sister's example who works in the catering trade abroad. Lately her results have improved considerably, she became the best student of her class. Both her will-power and the supportive attitude of her foster parents helped her to overcome her behavioral difficulties. She wants to become a waitress by all means, even if her foster parents wants her to work as a social worker. Her doctor agrees with her parents, he believes that being a waitress is not a good idea because her knees are weak.

The conflict between the child and the foster parents haven't been solved yet.

The following example illustrates the situation of a young person who got in childcare in infancy. He has experienced a series of failures at school, and what is more, he has poor intellectual capacities. Because of his insufficient results in the entrance exam, he could not continue his studies in a secondary school. Instead, a compulsory school was assigned to him. He is not interested at school at all, he has both learning and behavioral difficulties, all coming from the many hours of unjustified absence. He has no plans, and no idea what he wants to do in the future. As he explains: *" (...) I have never known what I wanted to become. When the moment arrived to choose a school I just wrote the first idea. I wanted to do sport, handball, but I should have started it earlier."*

Only some of our interviewees have experienced discrimination because of their background. One of them, though, told us that he was bullied because of the fact that he does not live in a family. *"It has already happened once or twice. They bullied me because I am a child in care, they called me bastard and so on. Somehow they got to know that I lived in care, so they did not miss a single opportunity to make cracks about me. At school they shout these things to each other and they give nasty nicknames to everyone and things like that."*

The results of the interviews suggest that mostly educational failure leads to the phenomenon of education dropout. Also failure and absence are in strong connection. Both failing in primary education and choosing educational goals under pressure will probably result in dropout.

The analysis of the interviews also shows that in the 9th and 10th years of the technical school, failures resulted from the disinterest in general subjects occur again, and all these lead to demotivation, and finally neglecting studies.

The results of the national research show that failing happens more frequently among students in the 9th year. This percentage is half as much again in case of students in the 10th and 11th years. The most problematic subject is definitely mathematics, three quarter of students fail in it.

In the research it is also shown that behavioral difficulties, resulted from absences, can also lead to failing in subjects, repeating years, and finally, educational dropout.

The study suggests that in the school year of 2007/2008 in secondary education 6500 students dropped out of school. Out of the total number of students who dropped out, 4500 attended vocational school. It means that one quarter of technical school students dropped out of education in 2007. As it has already been mentioned, most of them dropped out in the 9th year of secondary education.

3. Supportive background, family ties

Focusing on the future outcomes of young people, it is important to analyze the cultural background of the foster family and friends, and the characteristics of family ties with the family of origin.

As it was already pointed out, educational failures make the deepest and most direct impact on the phenomenon on education dropout. There are different, both external and internal factors (such as relationship with fellow students and foster parents) that lead to this situation.

As far as the rapport with the foster families is concerned, most young people have a good opinion. Those children who get in care in infancy regard those parents as their own family. Only some students reported on bad relationship between them and their foster parents. Thus, we can conclude that most foster families are supportive.

Young people who live in children's home have a high opinion on their foster parents. They mainly experience supportive and helping attitude from the part of the parents. Interestingly, many of them they find the institute itself negative. *"(...) All in all, it's quite OK, we get enough food, they buy us clothes and they are kind to us. The good thing is that most of the foster parents consider us as their kids, so they are nice and try to*

help us in everything. The bad thing, though, is that we are not at home. I get on well with almost everyone, I can talk to them, and they can talk to me, and if I have problems they do their best to help me. For example when they can see that I am under the weather they come to me and ask what's wrong, and I tell them everything and they give me advice."

We can find not only positive, but also negative attitude towards the foster parents, which the following excerpt demonstrates clearly. *"(...) I'm kind of a bastard with her. I tell her lies every day...about where I am and what I am doing. Well she knows it but I think she does not care. She must know that I don't live the life of a saint."* - says the 17 year-old young woman who regularly escapes from school and the institute to see her elder friend.

Another interviewee thinks that foster parents watch football matches all the time instead of working. Those who don't watch matches are all on sick leave. There are only a few foster parents with whom children have good rapports. As the following example illustrates: *" (...) I loathe one of my foster-mothers because she is always shouting at everyone. Well I'm not the only one, even other guys told me that they hated her. But fortunately there are some foster-mothers who I kind of like. Because they never shout at anyone, they can tell me things quietly and so on. And when I do something well they let me go out and things like that."*

Sadly enough, the family of origin is present (both in an implicit and explicit way) in children's life as some kind of problem, something chaotic, something to be ashamed of. In most of the cases deviant family models are present in children's life, in which alcoholism, homelessness, unemployment are typical. For young people these problems are very difficult to accept, that's why they try to hide them. Some of them expressed a strong desire to belong to the family of origin. The reason why they refuse their families of origin is that they feel ashamed of the way of life of the parents. *"Sometimes I see my dad, but by chance in the street. They could not get over the problems. My dad was ill, got operated and things like this. Now he lives with one of his friends. And my mum... well I don't know anything about her. I visited her 2 month ago. She lives in a flat, receives some benefits but she drinks everything away."*

One of the interviewees, a 17 year-old young woman, who got in care in infancy, refuses her family of origin completely. The excerpt above illustrates her opinion on the last visit of her mother. *"(...) She had the courage to come here after 9 years, and then after 3 more years. What a hell of a mother one like this! She told me that her mum took the house away from us, and so on, and she would not have had the place to bring us up. And my dad is in prison...I have only seen him on photos."*

In sum, as far as the cultural background of the foster family, and the characteristics of family ties are concerned, we can conclude that these factors are rather subjective in influencing the educational

outcome of children. Depending on the nature of these relationships, the educational career of young people can be positive or negative.

It can be pointed out, however that the relationship of children with the family of origin, or the lack of rapport between them are very important to consider. Among our interviewees we could find only a few people who have managed to find a positive model to follow. The value judgment of the peers is also important, but, because of being similar, it's not strong enough to give positive examples to follow.

The role of the foster parents is of vital importance, but mostly not free of conflicts. As far as the teachers are concerned, apart from one example, they did not give major contributes to children.

Conclusion

In sum, regarding the educational career of children in care, there are many factors that lead to failure and education dropout. The most important ones are listed above.

- Radical changes in the family of origin and the foster family create problems and result, first, in behavioral, and then, learning difficulties
- The results of the study suggest that primary schools were not supportive at all, they did not help students to solve their problems. Moreover, they attempted to get rid of problematic students.
- Most students are disinterested, and have negative attitude to learning
- Learning general subjects in the 9th and 10th years strengthen negative attitudes, gives the feeling of “wasting time”. Students mostly fail in general subjects such as mathematics, Hungarian literature and grammar and history.
- Absence from school, as a characteristic behavioral problem, can be regarded as a sign of negative attitude
- Usually foster parents help children to solve educational difficulties but they are not efficient enough to change their negative attitude. In some cases, however, foster parents managed to encourage children to perform better at school.
- Special courses aimed to help students with learning difficulties did not seem to be efficient. Almost all students took part in such courses, but without significant results.
- An important index of educational failure is the fact that many students want to change schools because they are dissatisfied with their current school.

- Students in vocational schools do not make much effort in order to avoid failure. They admitted that they did not study enough.
- Schools do not give special support to children in care. The bigger the number of students is, the less probable it is for students to get personalized attention.
- Interviewees usually feel unwell at school, because the institutes are not able to help them to solve learning problems.
- Only a few student want to continue their studies, the others want to enter the labour market as soon as possible. Some of them want to take their baccalaureate, or study another trade. Among the participants in the study no one wanted to go on to higher education.
- The vast majority of young people have no realistic plans for the future. Moreover, they are not even able to (or don't want to) understand their current situation.
- As far as their future plans are concerned, they have unrealistic ideas.
- They are mostly disappointed, they have no positive goals that could help them improve their personality. They do not choose positive models, or desires that could be worth fighting for.
- The most characteristic features of their way of thinking are helplessness, instability, and actions made just to survive. Most probably the majority of them have a good chance to educational dropout in the future.

BERNADETT CSURGÓ –ANDREA RÁCZ: LIFE PATHWAY OF DISABLED YOUNG ADULTS IN THE SHADOW OF THE CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEM

Our researches' ⁹aim is to present lives of those disabled children who were brought up in the child protection system, including their chances in the labor market, their abilities for housing and also the way they start to get on their own feet. Our interest is aimed at how the child protection system can support the deficient young adults to integrate to the society and also what those supporting tools are. We also wanted to find out what are those missing parts in the professional methods, services and in the helping system which interfere the complex rehabilitation and the social integration of the deficient young adults who have the child protection system past.

In the first part we used questionnaire in two areas of Hungary: Middle-Hungary and North of Great Plan. In these two areas we identified 506 people between age of 18 and 25 who were brought up in the child protection system. From the 506 people 120 were chosen randomly and got questioned. 84 people from the deficient young adults who took part in the examination needed aftercare.

We completed the questionnaire survey with interviews. We made interview with 10 disabled young adults between 18 and 24 with child protection background.

In addition we interviewed 10 experts and 3 decision makers. The research includes 5 case studies which are about young adults who have different walks of life. The case studies focus on the young adults' situations from the specialists and decision makers' angle. In the followings we present the main achievements of the research, putting the emphasis on the details of the result of the qualitative research part and touch upon the young adults' opinion and the specialists' and decision makers' view too.

⁹ This research was made by the Rubeus Association, financed by Kézenfogva Association in 2009. More information about the research in Hungarian: www.rubeus.hu

I. The situation of disabled young adults between 18-25 years with child protection system background

In the questionnaire research we asked 120 people from two examined area. The complete model is produced by three targeted audience's model. These are: young adults between 18-25 with child protection care background who participate in after-care provision, young adults who get after care service and young adults who live in social institute.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents gender

Gender	N	%
Male	67	55,8
Female	53	44,2
All	120	100

We inquired about the young people's nationality and ethnicity by the voluntary survey and the anonymous query. The majority of the respondents were Hungarian (76,7%), 21,7 percent of them identified themselves as Roma, one of them told himself to be Romanian and one person did not know his origin.

40% percentage of the respondents were between 21-22 years old. The proportion of 19-20 years old was similar to the percentage of young people between 23 and 24 years. The percentage of the 25 years old ones is only 6,7%.

We managed to collect detailed information of the disabled young people who have child protection background, so we know the types of disabilities for each of the three test targets. The majority of young people who were studied, have mental disability. In the sample from those one who are mentally disabled 64% of them have slight retardation, the percentage of the moderately retarded is 27% while the rate of the serious retardation is 7%. Besides the disabled children, there were other children with different kinds of disabilities, like speech disabilities (17,5%), handicapped (10,8%), visually impaired

(9,2%), hearing impaired (5,8%). In the sample the rate of autism were only 1,7%, in addition 3 people were ranked to other types of disabilities.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents gender

Types of disability	N	%
Mentally retarded	100	83,3
in details:		
slightly	<i>64</i>	<i>64</i>
moderately	<i>29</i>	<i>29</i>
seriously	<i>7</i>	<i>7</i>
Handicapped	13	10,8
Visually impaired	11	9,2
Deaf	7	5,8
Impediment in speech	21	17,5
Autistic	2	1,7
other (retarded dwarf, spinal injuries, learning disabilities)	3	2,5
All	120	100

The data we obtained, shows that nearly half of those young people who have disabilities is able to take care of themselves, while 38,3% of them are partly self-sufficient. In addition 12,5 percentage cannot be left alone. The rest 1,7 percentage need full care.

Table 3: Level of self-care ability

Self-care ability	N	%
Fully self-cared	54	45
Partly self-cared	46	38,3
Cannot be left alone	15	12,5

Needs full care	2	1,7
No data	3	2,5
All	120	100

The detailed analysis of self-sufficing ability shows that majority of those who have disabilities can independently carry out basic activities of daily living like: eating (96,7%), using toilet (93,3%), dressing up (94,2%), changing location in their home (91,7%), grooming (89,2%). Slightly fewer, but the majority of young people are also able to independently navigate themselves in the streets (74.2%). However, only 55 percent are able to autonomously do the shopping and an even smaller proportion, less than half (45.8%) is capable of learning and individually dealing with money (41.7). Our data suggest, despite the studied young adults with disabilities are able to make a successful life management, more than half of them cannot carry out the basic activities which necessary for independent living

Table 4: Range of activities to be performed independently

Are you able to do the following activities?	Yes (%)
Eating	96,7
Using toilet	93,3
Dressing	94,2
Grooming	89,2
Changing location in home	91,7
Navigating in streets	74,2
Shopping	55
Learning	45,8
Dealing with money	41,7

In our survey, we also examined what help, the young people with child protection system background are gotten to achieve services. The majority of the studied disabled young adults said that they get help to reach services through the child protection system or even from them.

Most of them get various services for example: to reach general medical care (86,7%) to reach special medical care (79,2%) and to manage official affairs (86,7%). It is important to mention that most of them get help to manage the essential everyday activities like: leisure activities (85,8%), self-care (84,2%) and financial management (80%). In addition most of them said that they get emotional support from the child protection system (85,8%), they are helped to care about their personal relationships and also get advice on lifestyle (78,3%).

Our data indicates that most of the studied people get every sort of services to manage their every days. On the other hand our data suggest that this assistance cover less their dominant future activities. Against the dominant activities in the present only fewer told that they would get support to solve the long-term solution for housing (69.2%), development, education (68.3%) or their studies (66.7%). We should also mention that few of them get help to get position in the labor market, employment (64.2%), to find a job (59.2%). The least help is given to take care of their relationships with their biological families.

Table 5: Available services

Service	Yes (%)
General medical care	86,7
Leisure activities	85,8
Emotional support	85,8
to learn how to care of themselves (washing, cooking, shopping)	84,2
Helping to manage their official affairs	84,2
Financial advices	80
To care of personal relationships	80
Special medical care	79,2
Life management consulting	78,3
To help to find solution for the long-term housing	69,2
development, education	68,3
Supporting their studies to get the proper education	66,7
Employment	64,2
Helping to find a job	59,2

To care of their relationships with their biological families	53,3
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We studied the young people's child protection background features by standard questions for each of the three target groups.

25,8 percent of young people in the study were entered into the child care system before 1 year of age. 23,3 percent of the children were between the ages of 1-5 years. The rest 17,5 percent were older or over 10 years old.

Table 6: Types of the longest placement in care

Where did you spend most of your time?	N	%
Foster parents	30	25
Institute	81	67,5
Same time spent in institutional care and foster parents	1	0,8
No data	8	6,7
All	120	100

The majority of young people was raised more time in child protection institution (67,5%) than at foster parent. The proportion of those who have been brought up mostly at foster parents is 25 percent. Only one person spent same time in institution and in foster family.

The number of places where the studied young people lives since they got into the system indicates their stability of their living condition. Only 30% of them has stable upbringing background, they are who lived in one place only since they have been in the system. From the studied young people 30,8 percentage who lived at two places. Those ones, who were raised in 3 places have very unstable background 6,7 % of them were brought up at 4 or more places.

Table 7: Types of places where they were raised and the age of getting into the system

How old were you when you got special care? ¹⁰	Before the age of 1 year	Between the age 1-5	Between the age 5-10	Over the age of 10 years	All
Foster parents	18	5	2	5	30
	60,0%	16,7%	6,7%	16,7%	100%
In institutional care	13	21	26	12	72
	18,1%	29,2%	36,1%	16,7%	100%
Same time spent in institutional care and foster	0	1	0	0	1
	,0%	100%	,0%	,0%	100%

Regarding the data we obtained we came to the conclusion that the type of the place where the disabled young people were raised up was greatly influenced by their actual age of getting into the system. Majority of who were grown up at foster parents got into the system before the age of 1 year, while the most of the children who lived in an institution were between 5-10 years of age when they got into the child protection system.

Table 8: Are you under guardianship?

Are you under guardianship?	N	%
Yes	71	59,2
No	43	35,8
No data	6	5
All	120	100

It is also important that a significant proportion of young people in the study (59.2%) are under guardianship.

Schooling is crucial for young people. Therefore we examined the young people's schooling and educational experience for each of the three target group.

¹⁰ Where they were raised more (institutional care or foster care).

Table 9: Type of elementary school, where the young adult was educated

Where did you begin your studies?	N	%
In normal school (integrated)	30	25
In normal school (segregated)	7	5,8
In school with different syllabus	29	24,2
Special school with daily work	10	8,3
Internal school in children's home	10	8,3
Complex child protection institute with internal school	24	20
In other school	5	4,2
No data	5	4,2
All	120	100

Low rate of the studied children studied in internal school of child' home (8,3%), in special school with daily work (8,3%), and 5,8% of them studied in normal school but segregated. We found a similar portion of students who attended to normal school but with different syllabus.(24,2%), some of them studied internal school of complex institution (20,0%). A significant proportion of young people in the sample (25%) began their school career in normal, integrated schools.

Table 10: High school where the young people attend/ed

What kind of high school did/do you go?	N	%
Internal school of child's home	15	12,5
Normal high school	15	12,5
Special vocational school of complex institution	15	12,5
Special vocational school of the settlement	18	15
Oppidant student of special vocational school	15	12,5
Living in dorm of special vocational school	4	3,3
Skills developing vocational schools	16	13,3

Did not attend to high school	22	18,3
All	120	100

Vast majority of the disabled young people in the sample attended or still attend to high school. Regarding these schools we can state that the schools are mostly heterogeneous. The largest portion goes to special vocational school of their settlements(12,5%), similarly the of those who go to special school of complex institution (12,5%), the same number of them is oppident student of a special vocational school while 3,3% of them live in dorm of a special vocational school. In summary 43,3 percent of young people in the study go to specialized school. Both percent of those who go to normal high school and who go to internal school of child's home are 12,5.

Table 11: Rating of school experience

School experience	N	%
bad pieces of experience	13	10,9
neutral experience	34	28,3
good piece of experience	66	55,2
No data	7	5,8
All	120	100

We asked the young adults to rate their school experiences. The majority (55%) of the respondents assessed their experiences basically assessed to be good, 28,3 percentage had neutral experiences. While the rate of those one who had bad experiences is substantially low (10,9%).

Finally we analyzed the nature of the personal relationships and patterns of interpersonal relationships of disabled young adults. Regarding personal relationships, we examined the perceptions of young adults, including who they have relationship with and in their view who is the person that cares about their life, and some of the question related to their partnership.

Table 12: Development of interpersonal relationship

Personal relationships	There is connection (%)	There is no connection (%)	No data (%)
With parents	30,8	62,5	6,7
With siblings	50	41,7	8,3
With other relatives	27,5	58,3	14,2
With friends	66,7	20,8	12,5
With acquaintances	66,7	20,8	12,5

Regarding personal relationships first of all we examined if there is a person who the young adults keep in contact with. Majority of them has connection with friends or acquaintances (66,7%), half of them keep in touch with their siblings(50,0). Significantly fewer maintain connection with their parents (30,8%) and even fewer with relatives (27,5%).

Table 13: Who is that person who is interested in the development of your life?

Who is that person who is interested in the development of your life?	Yes (%)
Child protection specialist (educators, care worker, after-care worker)	70
Foster family	26,7
Teacher from school	23,3
Friend, who doesn't live in child protection system	20
Family member (parent, great parent, sibling)	15,8
Friend, who live in child protection system	13,3
Partner, spouse, wife/husband	10,8

Regarding the quality of the relationships we examined that who is that person who mostly helped them and showed interest about their development of their lives, mainly in the hard times, and also

who is that person who they keep contact with. The vast proportion of the studied young adults has close connection with the child protection professionals, 70 % of them feels that the child protection specialist is the person who care about them and who they can rely on. Only 26,7% of them has close relationship with their foster families, similar the rate of young adults whose teachers are important in their lives (23,3%).

It's pointed out that although many of them have connection with friends, for the majority of them the friends don't mean real support, only 20 percent can rely on a friend who is not in the system and 13,3 percent said that they got support from a friend, who is in the system when they went through hard times. Very few of them can tell that their family members mean the personal support (15,8) and even less can rely on their partners (10,8%). All things considered we can state the biggest support for the disabled young adults who were brought up in child protection system are the child protection system's professionals.

Finally, regarding personal relationships, we examined the partnerships.

More than half of the studied young adults have no partner (58,3%), 38,3 percent of them said that they have partner and 3,3 percentage gave no data.

Those who have partners almost equally said that they are in permanent (48,8%) and non-permanent (51,2%) partnerships. According the study, 29,2% of the young adults (aged 18-25) who have partnership live sexual life with their partner; the proportion of those who don't have sexual life is similar.

The majority of young people in a relationship have the opportunity to be alone with their partner (70.8%). In addition, 40.3 percent of those who are in care can be alone with their partner, 30.6 percent of them can be with their partner in the place of care. However, 29.2 percent of young people have no possibility to be alone with their partner.

II. Life pathway of disabled young adults with child protection background.

In course of the study we made interviews. In this part we interviewed ten disabled young adults who have child protection background. Four of the respondent young adults live in social institute, two get after-care provision and live in foster families, two of them get after-care provision and live in an

institute of child protection system, while one of them is out of the system, currently works and live in a rented house with a partner. In addition, one of them became homeless after getting out of the system.

In the qualitative part of the study we made interviews with young adults who have slight mental retardation and who have neurological damages.

Because of the specific test group we used pre-structured questionnaires in order to recall the main stages of their life path. Since these young adults have bad communication skills and their memories are missing, we found out their life path by the answers they gave to the questionnaire. We couldn't make a long coherent narratives. We took into account this specificity of the results in the whole analyzing, so we focused on presenting unfolded elements of their life paths instead of analyzing their narratives in whole.

Therefore we quoted parts of the interviews, these parts were stylized in sake of clarity however we tried to keep most of the elements of the heard speech.

Features of childhood: lack of stability

A common feature of their childhood period of life path is that they lived in many places and were brought up in different parenting form through the child protecting system.

After getting out of the dangerous family they lived in many foster families before getting back to the children's home.

One of them was only six months old when got into children's home. Until starting elementary school, he was in children's home with some interruptions. Meanwhile he was in foster family and got home to his biological family for a short time. By now he doesn't keep in touch with them anymore.

Another young adult's life is also fractured, her situation is got worse by her disability and physical condition

"My mother and father lived in the subway then. They begged. At that time I was in kindergarten. My mother used to be a seller on the market of Bosnyák square, but now she is disabled, just as I, one-half has got degenerated. "His father said: "(...) in alcohol problems, if he does not drink a few glasses of beer, his heart stops, but of course they are joking."

Due to frequent changes in their life, the necessary development services for young people with disabilities couldn't be given properly and only with more or less breaks, it means significant inequalities compared to similar disabled young adults, who were raised in a family. As a result, they had disadvantages in their school career and in the labor market.

School career: failures and uncertainties

The examined disabled young adult's school career is described as fragmented by the frequent school changes. Because of the absence of a stable background they can hardly take the obstacles. The majority of them are unmotivated, did not see the point in learning. So the frequent school changes and the class repetition are typical.

One of them told about his school career in the following:

"When I started the first class, I went to the Bárczi Gustav in Debrecen. Because of I couldn't keep up in math and I got there. One ... two ... untill in the second class I went to Bárczi Gustav. After, from 3rd-8th class I went to school in Álmosd. Then back to Debrecen, and now again. How old were you when you finished the eighth? 16, 9th class I failed, and then there was a re-take exam, and then I repeated the 9th."

Apart from choosing school with special syllabus, the child protecting system has no big variety of tools to motivate the children with special needs.

These children were more often insulted by schoolmates, because of the frequent school switching and the child protecting system's presence in their lives which is because of their special needs.

*„Typically, the studied young adults had difficulties to recall their past, it was often hard to put the events chronological order. Recalling school experiences was really hard for them, so most of the times we just concluded from dropped words that expressed their negative experiences of their school career with failures and school mates behavior
"What I like to remember is the love of dedicated teachers. What I would like to change is the manners of the other children. They should treat me, like I treat them. If I am nice, they should be, too.. "'*

The situation of Roma young adults is even worse, not only because of disability, but their Roma origin often were reason to be treated prejudiced. The disabled Roma young adults' narration suggests that because of their disability they are much more vulnerable, less able to deal with prejudice.

*"My aim is to work enough to get pension later, but I'd rather like to live in social institution, because there they don't wait if I'm Hungarian, where they don't care if I'm gypsy or not. So I want to live in social institution because they don't say: „Look, this is a gypsy.”;
But finding a job and keeping it is very hard.”*

The majority of young people in the study was educated in special schools outside the child protection system. When the child protection professionals were informed about problems, in the absence of tools they could not prevent the failures and even less the personal conflicts. The only tool they had is the school change which is rather generated more many disadvantages. The child protecting system has no tools to deal with this vicious circle.

What the child protecting system can't defend from

From the studied young adult's stories we concluded that because of their disability they can be easily effected and the insecurity of their situation and judgment makes them vulnerable and unprotected.

One interviewee's story of life demonstrated in a shocking way how the impressibility from disability makes them more vulnerable and how these traumas can't be prevented and dealed well because of the limited tools of the system.

This interviewee is 24 years old, currently lives in a special home financed by a foundation she is unsuitable to live independently without assistance. She has two children: her son is two and her daughter is four years old. They have been living in a foster family since they were born. In the following she tells the story of the birth of her children:

„Maybe it was a very strange thing. How could I tell... well we went to the same school, then once we slept together and B (her daughter) was conceived from it. Meanwhile i had another boyfriend, I was in love with him. The teacher knew it and they were cool. But there was this affair with R(biological dad of her daughter). R had wife and two children. R said he couldn't undertake it because he would lose his wife and his children. He didn't undertake it so she got my last name. But I was like I only need one happiness in my life, a child from the person I love. It is weird thing, once I say something suddenly it comes true. Once I told I will have a baby from R. and it was so.”

The young woman wanted to keep the baby, but without effective help she became the victim of circumstances.

„I got to the home in the Rege street. I was there for a half of a year. They tried to find me residential home for mothers , but finally they couldn't. I didn't have enough milk from the nerve.”

Two years later the young mother gave birth again, but the circumstances didn't make it possible to keep the children again.

„I went to Adorjánháza, I bought a house there - I sold by now - I bought from the family allowance I used to get. My aunt and uncle helped me and even V., the after-care provisor, but I couldn't take it. It's because my spiritual soul, there wasn't any job too. Before it, I lived in the Templom street, I used to visit B. and from there I got Adorjánháza...His father is a man from Pest, the brother of a girl from here. He didn't undertake the child too. He had girlfriend and lived with her mother. We were together for like a year here in Adorjánháza. Then I gave birth in Ajka. I was in Adorjánháza with E (her second children) for two weeks, I let the father of my son go, he went wherever he wanted. I turned to my mother to help me to save E. from getting into institution. I don't know why I asked her, she couldn't help me before, so why could she help now? V. helped me to get back to here and to place E. in that foster family where B. was.”

The young mother's story shows that how much the disabled young people with child protection backgrounds can be influenced because of their vulnerable position. The child protection system failed to defend her to give birth twice in a row without a stable relationship. She didn't get sexual education and even wasn't told about prevention. The child protection system couldn't help her to keep the babies, the system could only manage to place the two siblings in the same foster family, preventing a broken connection between them. Despite the circumstances, it can be evaluated positively, but the effort to keep the family together proved to be powerless.

The young mother is unsuitable to live independently, she is currently living in a social institution. However, this was not taken into account when the child protection system allowed her to begin an independent life. Although she bought a house for herself, she didn't work, and she was alone while her

pregnancy again. The child protection system only interfered after she was in this situation. Professionals helped her to get back into the child protection system, then to get into a social institution. The child protection system protected the woman from becoming lost and she didn't become a victim of deviance. This case indicates that the child protection system does not have proper tools to prevent similar situations.

The child protection system does not have the tools to meet the special needs of the disabled young people. There is no institutional mechanisms that would provide proper information and would be suited to the needs for disabled young people.

Prospects for the future

The prospects of the disabled young people who has child protection background are mostly very uncertain. Their main aim is secure for themselves, they except secure from institutions or existing/planned relationship.

Those one who got into institution after leaving system find their safety of their future in these institutions. One of them who is going to live in social institution after quoting the after-care of child's home told about his future.

„- We talked about it in there. I'm going to a boarding-school in Dunakeszi .I have already friends there. I would have a paid job, I would get money for my work. I would gardening there too. I should pay 3000 HUF for the accommodation. what are your further plans? Family, children?

First of all, a peaceful life. I am not capable of living independently. "

Those who are capable of living independently find the safety in the security of their own family. In absence of their family they imagine this security based on their existing relationship.

The majority of them are uncertain about the future. The child protection system does not prepare these young people for the future.

It means a serious problem that the learned professions don't mean proper qualifications in the labor market. Typically, the majority of them think that their professions cannot be the basis of their livelihood. Most of them are not aware of the possibilities either, they do not know what the housing support could be enough or not, and they also not aware of what possibilities they have getting out of the system. The child protection system is basically focused on the present, adapting to the daily needs of young people, but they have the proper tools to prepare them to future.

It is a serious problem that the disabled young adults with child protection background mostly get really little help to start their own life. The child protection system of the after-care does not satisfy the needs of these young people. They have periodical and mostly formal connection with the after-care worker.

Since there no effective, institutional method to prepare them for the future, the young adults mainly rely on their personal relationships. The care of a teacher or a foster parent means a lot about shaping the young adult's future prospects.

After leaving the system

Thus there are two strongly distinct categories of these young people: (1) those who start an independent life, and (2) those who need care and therefore they get into social institutions. The young adults in the second group (who aren't able to live independently) go right into a social institution after getting out of the child protecting system.

It's a problem if the system declares somebody to be capable who in fact can't cope alone. As a rule they quickly become victims of their deviances because of their condition. In these cases the solution is placing them in a social institution. The question is, in how many cases can the system correct its mistakes and how many young adult left alone without help. Those young adults who are

capable of independent life, hopefully they can successfully organize their own lives and they are able to find job in the labor market mainly relying on their personal relationships (like permanent relationship with social worker or foster parent).

Social institutions means the best way out for the disabled young adults who are leaving the system. Those young adults who start independent life usually became vulnerable because of their poor network. Only a few of them can take the obstacles and usually they are supported by a partner. After the after-care provision the young adults are left alone by the child protection system. There isn't further institutional forms of dealing with arising problems and necessary assistance. The young adults in need can trust in their personal relationships only. The love of an educator, foster parent or other relative can be essential. Unfortunately it depends on the people who are around the disabled young adults, not on the system so it is not available to everyone. In lack of this, the young adults must struggle with obstacles and difficulties on their own. This makes them vulnerable and they became unprotected from deviances.

The child protection system does not pay special attention to prepare disabled young adults how to live independently, they deserve the same support like those healthy youth who are raised in the system. Depending on their condition they can go to social institution or they can start independent life. In lack of preparation, the young adults are disadvantaged in the labour-market and in the social integration as well.

III. The views of the support and care that the disabled people get

In the research, we made interviews with 10 experts, two foster parents, three workers of social home (one is a head of an institution, two of them are residential home managers), an after-care professional, a professional caretaker and two social workers who take care of homeless people.

According to the child protection experts, the situation of the families which raises a disabled child is very difficult because the services which let them raise their child are basically missing. Getting out from the family is very common because of financial problems, which are in fact against the law of

child protection. In the same time, another problem turns out. The families don't get psychological help to deal with the fact that their child is deficient. The prejudice of the society against these families and disabled people makes it worse.

Unfortunately, maintaining the contact with families is ponderous for both the child protection system and social system. The connections with biological families are not common. The experts also pointed out that the adoption of the disabled children are rare, although the adoptions would mean good chance for the children to live in family.

The professionals are not properly prepared to support the disabled children and young adults. The experts say that the institutions don't have enough members of workers who could prepare these children and young adults to live independently.

Both the child protection's and social institutions' workers can participate in professional training courses, but there is no possibility to visit institutions with similar function profile and professionals to share their experiences.

Further education means special problem for the disabled children. They need to choose a profession in a special vocational school and they need to find out if that profession meets the labor market's need.

Therefore it is necessary to increase the state's role in creating and sustaining protected jobs.

Greater emphasis should be placed on obtaining the tools which can improve the quality of life assets and those tools which can ensure the conformity to live fine in the institutions. In many cases, the problem is that caretakers expect the institution's staff to deal with the affairs of the children or young adults, meanwhile the relationship between the care taker, and the people who are in care is only formal and irregular.

The assistance is not typically comes from the operation of the system, rather from humanity of a professional. This is confirmed by the fact that the majority of young adults keep in touch with the professional who paid attention to them after leaving the system and getting into a social institution.

These relationships are ranked small, according the professional criteria, although their supporting power is valuable. On the other hand the operation of the system cannot be based on sympathies.

When a person get into a social institution, there is no case transfer, so the social worker get information only from the professional who followed the person's life path. This results, that many events of their life story keeps being hidden, it makes hard to plan the further care which need to be suited to their personal needs.

The nature of the homeless care, there's just as much information as the homeless people shared during the registration. According the he professionals of homeless the people who become homeless usually have child protection system background but not disability. This let us conclude that disabled people are more protected by the system. The fact that the disabled young adults go to social institution after starting their independent life unsuccessfully confirms that the best solution is placing them in a social institution while they get support.

In the opinion of experts, protected housing would be needed where the young adults would live independent life and would get professional support.

IV. The views of the decision makers about the situation of the disabled people who lived in the child protecting system and the possibilities of the professional support

In the study three decision makers were interviewed, two of them work on the field of child protection, and one of them represents the social area. The followings we summarize the decision makers' opinion about the possibilities of the support the test target could get and how the system should be improved and finally their opinion about what kind of problems they notice in the effective support and the successful social integration.

According to the opinions of the decision makers, we suggest there are problems in the child protection system and in the social care, these problems makes the successful social integration harder.

Families which raise a disabled children are in very difficult situation, because they are in lack of basic services that are essential to fulfill special needs. For the families which raises disabled child, the home child care would be the best solution of support, especially in single parent families. The home child care is a part of the child protection system.

The child protection system created a special children's home to take care of disabled children. There is also an elementary school, a student's home, children's home which are maintained by the child protection system and we call complex institution. Unfortunately there are many institutions in the country which take place in old castles in old forms and they can hardly comply with the laws of child protection. So the real reason why the children get into the system is not the cumulative disadvantages, it is rather because of endangerment, as the child protection system says.

The system and its professionals are not prepared to support and give additional support to these children due to the lack of special qualification. This special knowledge isn't emphasized either in the basic or further training.

Professional awareness would be needed in the fields of support and additional support for disabled children. The professional's activity should be adjusted to personal needs. For the disabled young adults would be important to get additional support in the after-care, but the system doesn't provide it equally neither when they are under or over the age.

From the child protection system's perspective the problem is the situation of those disabled young adults who don't need to be placed in a social institution, but their condition requires to be supervised permanently by a permanent mentor and to get professional help after age of 24 years. Basic problem that, when the disabled children turns to be 18 years old they no longer count as disabled from the system's perspective because there is no special caring need in after-care.

There is no information regarding what kind of experiences the social institutions have about the disabled people with child protection system background. In the same time, the conditions are better in the child protection system, especially in the apartment home care than in the social institutions, and this may cause fractures in the life of clients who have child protection background. The area of social

services can't reach back to the child protection system, there is no case transfer so they don't know the young adult's life path in details. Knowing the accurate past of the young adults is essential in order to provide the required services through social services.

Summary

Our results show that disabled young adults during their childhood they were in many institutions and got meet many forms education within the child protection. Due to frequent changes in their life, the necessary development services for young people with disabilities couldn't be given properly and only with more or less breaks, it means significant inequalities compared to similar disabled young adults, who were raised in a family. Because of the absence of a stable background they can hardly take the obstacles. The majority of them are unmotivated. Apart from choosing school with special syllabus, the child protecting system has no big variety of tools to motivate the children with special needs.

Majority of the disabled young adults have faced prejudices and discrimination in their life. The situation of Roma young adults is even worse, not only disability but also because of their Roma origin are often treated prejudiced.

The child protection system does not have the tools to meet the special needs of the disabled young people. There is no institutional mechanisms that would provide proper information and would be suited to the needs for disabled young people. Young people are more vulnerable and they don't have ability to enforce well, though the system does not pay special attention to this.

The child protection system does not prepare these young people for the future. It means a serious problem that the learned professions don't mean proper qualifications in the labor market.

Without effective institutional tools, many of the young adults left alone and became victims of deviance after leaving the system.

Based on this, the following recommendations can be made:

1. Additional support should be provided in after-care for those disabled young adults who have child protection background, because of their disabilities they need this support and it should not be stopped after they come of age.
2. It should be forced to keep the children in their own home and decrease the number of the children who get into the child protection system. If they are in the system it should be urged to return them to their families.
3. It is necessary to create a good cross-sector cooperation involving the social welfare system, and the educational- and employment systems, to improve the situation of disabled children and young adults by mutual projects.
4. It would be necessary to increase the number of technical support professionals (especially special education teachers, psychologists) whose services would be provided after reaching the age of majority.
5. It need to be granted that the after care workers get the best preparation and ensure all the conditions what they need to do their job properly. These conditions must be provided by law.
6. Emphasis should be placed on obtaining those tools which improve the quality of life of children and young adults and also provide the proper tools which contribute to their personal conformity to live in institutions.
7. Those forms and tools of preparation should be formalized which prepare the young adults to live independently.
8. The statistical data collection and diagnostic researches which focused on the disabled young adult's situation need to be supported.

ANDREA RÁCZ: YOUNG ADULTS IN CHILD ROLE

In this study¹¹, after introducing the possible types of young adults having grown up in the state child protection system and currently gaining aftercare, I am demonstrating opinions of those of after-care provision and its operating system, moreover the quality of support provided in child protection on the grounds. *What does “Tree-T mentality” means in the Hungarian child protection system?* Following this, I am describing the self-reflection of the child protection system in connection with types of support. By this I mean how the child protection thinks about the ways of supporting young adults.

The research based on qualitative methodology makes examination of 40 half-structured interviews, 30 of which were done with young adults who are in after-care provision at present, and 20 of them are in their studies¹², the remaining 10 feel entitled to avail of after-care provision as they cannot make ends meet alone (having job or seeking for one). Furthermore, 10 interviews were done with adolescents who became care-leavers reaching adulthood, are currently studying or their school career might be said to be finished as they are working or looking for jobs. 20 interviews were made with child protection experts; like educators, after-care workers, fosterers and head of institutions.

I. The successful and the survivor

According to the 40 interviews analyzed, there are two types among young adults currently under aftercare provision which could be differentiated –alongside with their life, educational carrier and future perspectives-, those are *the successful* and *the survivor*.

I am defining these two types with the basis of Stein’s (2005)¹³ approach:

¹¹ This study based on Andrea RÁCZ’s Ph.D dissertation: *“Do-It-Yourself biographies, sequential (system)requirements”*- Study of the educational career, labour-market participation, and future perspectives of young adults who were brought up in the public child care (Budapest, ELTE, 2009)

¹² Interviews with the young in their studies under after-care were made within the research frame of YIPPEE: Young people from a public care background: pathways to further and higher education in five European countries EU 7. (2008-2010).

¹³ Stein examined young adults who got excluded from the child protection system. However, I believe that *the successful* and *the survivor* types, as he called, could be used for young adults under aftercare as well. Among Stein’s excluded young adults, his third type, *the victim* could also be noticed; whose majority mobilized several times within the system during their care, leaving child protection provision at an early stage. They are getting flushed away in life, could be seen in the unemployed

The successful are those young adults in my view who do their best so that they could defeat disadvantages deriving from their past, their school run might be stated as a relatively smooth, they are in possession of a relatively marketable profession or their studies are on that way.

Among them it is characteristic that they are in higher education or planning to get admitted. They are surrounded with a supporting atmosphere, there were professionals in the child protection system as well who supported and motivated them.

I consider young adults as *the survivor*, whose life is rather uncertain and unstable. Hardly could they overcome their disadvantages from the past, skipped school years many times, even re-attended some, or got rejected. Those having profession acquired unmarketable trade, and those currently studying one face the reality that they are provided with an education of which they themselves believe not to be able to enter the labor market successfully with. They are in lack of a supportive atmosphere and there were no professionals in the child protection system for them to be helpful and motivating enough. Indeed they are in need of supports in decision making, but because of their limited relationship network hardly can they find a person to turn to with trust. Due to their background in child protection system they must face lots of stereotypical approaches. To lead their adult roles not only do they need emotional support and advisory help, but also financial backing as well.

There are distinguishable sub-types under the two as for arranging young adults: *three types under the successful, and four under the survivor types*¹⁴. The sub-types are represented under in Table 1.

Table 1: Sub-types of the successful and the survivor

<i>The successful</i>	<i>The survivor</i>
Sub-type 1: Down-to-Earth – successful professions, professional success	Sub-type 1: afraid of future, living in extended present – focusing on vocational training

care, many of them become victim of crime or even become committers, get forced to prostitution, and fight deviances. I had no intention to seek and examine these young adults.

¹⁴ To create the sub-types I have defined ten aspects as characteristics for child protection background, blood relationship, child protection identity, educational carrier, interpersonal relationships, gained child protection support as young adult, focus of life field (Du Bois-Reymond, 1998/2006), characteristic of way of life (Wyn and Dwyner, 1999/2006), type of individualism (Gábor, 2005), future perspective/time orientation (Brannen and Nilsen, 2002).

Sub-type 2: Star-gazers – those following dreams of childhood	Sub-type 2: afraid of future, living in extended present – focusing on jobs
Sub-type 3: Make-doers	Sub-type 3: „ Waiting for Godot ” - passives
	Sub-type 4: Life-does-it believers

The successful in the Hungarian child protection system

Down-to-Earth young adults (sub-type 1) have steady educational life course. Although among those currently studying not all of them were sure after secondary school graduation which way they should go on, the necessity of further studies was not a question in which their foster parents and educators also supported them. Despite the initial precariousness they made decisions on their own where and how to continue their studies. Decisions were indeed made on the basis of rationality. However, they believed the marketable profession they choose to be crucial, which besides ensuring a reasonable standard of life would suit their interest, and fit their personality as well. Young adults focus mainly on development in their profession; they find it important to obtain appropriate qualification, but besides that providing financial welfare is also of high importance. During school year all of them have permanent or temporary jobs (mainly in summer time).

Star-gazers (sub-type 2) are young adults who hold specific interests which they live their lives around. Their desire is to attain their childhood dreams, or they lead their lives according to a hobby which has been determining it since childhood. For evolving their talent, realizing their childhood dreams they were and are backed, and they can use support up very efficiently.

In the case of *Make-doers* (sub-type 3) a sort of variety can be noticed as significant in the aspect of focusing on present, where balanced emphasis is put on each field equally, like job, school, friendship and hobby. There is no need of child protection professionals for them to deal with adult roles. During the child protection care they found people who were determining in their development. However, they are indeed self-sufficient, and they do believe that they can lead and handle their lives in every circumstance. They become distinguished from other young adults mainly due to their slant of life: they consider their child protection background as a given factor, they reflect to their past, present and they do plan.

The survivor in the Hungarian child protection

Those *afraid of future living in the present, focusing on vocational training* (sub-type 1) do well in the present without professional help and are up to their learning, although, as for future their plans are blurring, possess little self-confidence consequently are not obsessed with their future meanwhile focusing on extended present with all their effort. They would love to establish themselves in job according to their profession in the near future but they dare to compass no plans as for further intentions. In connection with the field (education) determining their current life they make decisions on their own, however they remain uncertain about them. They could hardly choose out of the opening possibilities, they do need surrounding help assisting them in decision-making.

Those *afraid of future, living in the present, focusing on jobs* (sub-type 2) are already employed or seeking jobs, consequently emphasis is put on jobs. Common characteristics of these young adults are that their labor-market position is not strong; they have underpaid illegal work. It derives from the fact that they have no marketable profession and their educational carrier was interrupted many times. The primary aim of them is to keep their workplace first. Contrasting the previous sub-types, significant differences might be observed in point of the characteristic individualization: while in the case of those focusing on vocational training might be considered progressive, the individualization of those focusing on jobs is indeed regressive because as a result of their irregular educational carrier they could only earn weak positions on labor-market, many of them are threatened with unemployment, and the profession of their choice does not snug.

Those *“Waiting for Godot” passives* (sub-type 3) are all unemployed, the educational carrier of the young ones is interrupted, they find learning unimportant moreover constraint, knowledge is not a value for them. Many of them drop out, fail to turn up in school, or are rejected. Their life course features a so-called ‘changed pattern’, young adults are continuously forced to reconsider their conceptions and as a result of this they redirect, or search for new ones. They are seeking their place; they would go for everything to be subordinated under one specific and clear job. Prior to this, making decision on their direction of orientation is a must.

“Life-does-it believers” (sub-type 4) have a characteristic in common that is becoming parents at an early age. Bearing a child caused a delay in finishing their education and so did it in committing themselves for a profession. They focus on the present. Their child is not a result of planned parenthood. Their aim is to secure circumstances for their child which might be a solution for preventing their child from facing the same challenges in childhood that they could not avoid.

II. Criticizing the system from the young adults’ perspectives

Young adults have expressed their criticism about the child protection system as well as the supporting possibilities they could go for with the intention to reflect the lacks of the system.

They pointed out as a faulty functioning of the system that it does not prepare them appropriately for adult life; the way the system gives support does not help them acquire adult roles. The system serves those in need but no real image is given of the out-of-system life, aftercare is only delaying length of time in care. Aftercare is maintaining the situation which young adults previously experienced and got used to during their temporary or permanent care: they do not need to fend for themselves as it is done by others. Respondents stated that the system is not willing to take its own malfunctioning into consideration, keeping an unrealistic picture of itself as believing that those already out-of-care are capable of socializing and even fending for themselves in life.

Socializing of the young adults is in inverse ratio to the time spent under professional care: the longer time is spent in the system the less chance is obtainable for a successful integration into the society (Szikulai, 2004). The system does not have intention to face its negative outcome indicators.

“I would look into their eyes (talking about decision-makers, the State), I would introduce some people to them, like, look at this boy, he is disabled, no vacancy for him, starving for days, under aftercare by the state, his life hangs heavy on his hands receiving no support from the state. I would indeed tell them to go straight there, look into his eyes and tell him straight that, hey, look guy you are in this situation, because I won’t help you.” (24-year-old man, out of the child protection system)

As young adults see it, those raised in child protection system suffer from disadvantages which they are incapable of overcoming alone. They have to face these drawbacks when coming of age with no help from parents or a supportive background. Especially the adolescents in after-care who have no proper school qualification see no chance to escape from their current situation. The problem is even more intensified as they are in a rather a weak position on the labour market.

Interviewees call attention to the system of support connected with after-care provision, as professional help does not meet personal needs. Child protection does not operate well as a system; successful but accidental child protection outputs are determined by the works and competences of experts.

“You have an educator, who perfectly knows what to do and he behaves humanly you know. But, is this why the State is good? No, of course, not. That man is OK. State does not give anything, I do not know, to poor R, or to M, or to Cs, or to anybody in this house (after-care home), so nobody is given a flat, you know, like social housing. (...) so, they do not examine the individual, or cases and situations, you know.” (20-year-old man, under aftercare provision)

The majority of the respondents express their critical views about professional competence of experts; in their opinion, many of them are not in possession of professional characteristics required, irrespective of their competence.

“(...) you know, such square-headed men told me what is good for me, moreover they, you know, just practiced on you the things they learned at school, and they were so fucking emphatic. It is really a specific feature of this profession. And they had no clue about it at all.” (24-year-old man, under aftercare service)

III. The “three-T mentality”

Basically, there are two distinguishable forms of support: *episodic* and *existential*. It is an episodic way of support when the person gets into an emergency and the only way to get out is to have others’ help. ,

In contrast with this, the repeated and continuous one is the existential support. (Csepeli 2001) All forms of support can only be really efficient if the situation is clearly defined and there is an agreement between the supported and the supporter. There is an essential requirement in professional care that the one who is in need of help must be involved actively in defining emergency. Both forms of support are provided as claimed by the child protection system's provision which supports adults. At the same time, on the basis of respondents' opinions there are three types of support distinguishable in connection with the child protection system, quantity and content of professional support. These might include episodic or existential contents. I call the schemes of support in respect to those raised in professional care the so-called "*three-T mentality*". That is to say the system: "supra-help" (többlettámogat), "supports (támogat)", and "suffers (tűr)".

By *supra-help* I mean when the young adults, who gain distinction among peers with their talent, motivation, clear and continuous school career, are not only provided with full provision, but their tuition fees, costly hobbies, and the occupational expenses of their personal interests are also covered. Beyond existential support, they receive emotional security as well.

"The school I attend now also has tuition fees. It is 350,000 HUF for a year, and they pay it for me. Well, I have always received the full support. (...) When I wanted to do sport, they paid for it. The only thing they wanted to see was that I wanted to do it, and I was doing it, and I did not give up. And, you know, there is the hobby of taking photos; you know I like it very much: recently they bought me a camera. That was not cheap either." (20-year-old woman, under aftercare provision)

Support might cover professional activities of after-care provision by law: that is they help in solving problems of further studies, getting employment, life; moreover they give advice on making ends meet, they even support the young adult to overcome social problems, and to solve independent housing.

"Well, we receive our pocket money, money for monthly bus pass and of course food from the children's home. And there is always someone who cooks in the morning. It is written down what the meals are." (20-year-old man, under aftercare provision)

Specifically, those in after-care who have had an interrupted school career, are currently attending secondary school vocational training, or may already be in work, come in for standard forms of

support. In many cases these are realized in an unequal power framework, in an asymmetrical relation of dependence. Consequently, the young adult follows the plans and targets which have been set up with the backing of child protection professionals, seemingly a compromise situation. This means actually that the professionals consider the young adults as children; guided care is based on authority, following norms, and obedience. The system still operates with the accustomed awards and punishment methods.

The system *suffers*, when it does not provide motivation for young adults, does not help them in obtaining proper school qualifications, in finding jobs; does not give information about the optional forms of support they have recourse to, and it does not prepare them for the self-reliance. Lack of support (being tolerated within the system) is specific to those having no qualifications and being threatened with unemployment, whereas they would be rather in need of getting professional help in establishing their independent life.

“(...) they made you wash, cook, clean, anything, they got crazy periodically. (...) Well, there (after-care home) there was a person, you know, our after-care worker, whom we could have talks with periodically, you know. There I did what I wanted really, the only requirement was to learn, or work. (...) I did neither of them for a time.” (24-year-old woman, out of the child protection system)

III. Expert's views on supporting young adults having grown up in the child protection system

Professionals' methods of supporting those coming of age are helping in social integration, reuniting families, and establishing self-reliant life of those in supportive after-care.

The interviewed child protection experts believe that they have few tools at their disposal with which to prepare young adults for self-reliance. There are no forums, trainings and retraining which might be helpful for them to decide what professional trends they should follow in co-operation with the young adults. The reason for not having enough tools is professionally irrelevant. Experts recognize the importance of motivating and backing the supported emotionally; being in lack of tools needed for supporting those having come of age experts agree that the level of self-requirements is rather low.

“The level of our demands is humble – there should be more I guess; moreover we should be encouraging but sometimes we have no ideas about the methods. We are also looking for solutions.” (Educator in children’s home)

There is a significant difference between workers of institutional care and fosterers in the respect of how they treat young adults. In general, institutional care workers think that the co-operation is good when the young adult is manageable; that is, the supported act upon the professionals’ advice. The philosophical principle of institutions is self-justification; that is to preserve the “status quo”. Donáth et al. (1999) made interviews with workers of after-care provision. Results show that professionals are convinced that the young have legally come of age, but not mature mentally.

Professionals are sure that important factors in preparing young adults for self-reliance are to gain skills gradually in housekeeping, to become able to fend for themselves and make ends meet, and to spend their income independently. At the same time, support of the young adult is exaggerated by experts with reference to the fact that the supported are not adroit, so they need help.

It is also specific to after-care provision that no proper tool is chosen successfully for planned and outlined targets; it occurs accidentally that experts use different inconsistent methods.

Generally, professionals regard those in foster care as more independent, more motivated and emotionally more balanced. During their upbringing they are capable of learning budgeting and practicing economy. The majority of foster parents pay great attention to treating the supported as a real adult.

Professionals believe that after-care provision is the last chance for young adults to get prepared for an independent life, and to establish their future. However, it seems that this is a possibility for only those well-behaved young adults who deserve it and are able to deal with their own situation. It is a professionally unacceptable attitude of mind -when it is believed that the only way of successful integration into society is the after-care provision-, which contrasts those left in after-care provision with the ones whom the system finds unneeded; of whom the system despaired before coming of age.

Child protection does not provide after-care provision typically for those who would really need complex professional support.

Due to the child protection background, the available after-care provision is permissive in practice: legally, after-care provision can be claimed after coming of age; although, not everybody is an abandonee from the child protection system's perspective. Professional support provided within the framework of after-care provision is discretionary. The type of support (supra-supported, supported, or suffered in the system) given to the young adults depends absolutely on discretion of the child protection experts. The practice for claimers, which is built upon discretion, can hardly be estimated, it creates an exposed situation. Beyond codified conditions of provision claims; the law ordains behavioural rules for young adults; they are expected to be obedient, manageable, and be up to accepting decisions based on apparent consensus.

In the words of Mária Riegler (2000), the child protection provision “*sees*” instead of the young adult until the age of 24. The majority of the child protection professionals I interviewed would postpone the upper age limit of after-care provision to 26. According to their experiences, those in the child protection system are not mature enough emotionally and mentally for their peers who have been raised in families. As one of the respondents says, the supported should be released gradually, when the after-care service discontinues, they should have further support (follow-up) meeting personal demands until the age of 30, provided by child welfare services or family support centers (failing youth services). The majority of young adults would prefer to have a system of intensive support lasting for some years set up, instead of after coming of age.

Concluding comments

According to Domszky (2006a), all types of interventions, institutional solutions have life-cycles specified by the social environment, like *problem recognition; search for method; application trials; institutionalized practice; period of outrunning solutions; and finally closing institutions*. As I see it, after-care provision is basically at the second life-cycle: professionals are still searching for methods. There are some places of course where some application trials have been made, but no institutionalized practice occurs. This means that young adults' preparation for self-reliance is emphasized in only a few committed experts' work; professional foundations of the support is accidental; its consensual feature is imperfect. The

right of the young adult for quality provision and service is consequently fundamentally infringed. Child protection features inadequate functioning, and it is shown by the fact that in the care and educational process preparation for self-reliance is not really emphasized after getting into child protection provision. Furthermore, it is not changed either in after-care period as there is no proper preparation for self-reliance. With no assistance in acquiring the skills needed for independence, obtaining proper qualifications, getting employment, solving long-term housing, successful integration into society is made even more difficult for the young adult.

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