

Family Strengthening & Alternative Care

A GLOBAL MONTHLY
NEWS WRAP-UP & RESOURCES

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This comprehensive newsletter is designed to keep you informed about the latest developments in the areas of family strengthening and alternative care. In this issue, we have meticulously segmented the content to ensure easy navigation. We cover General Alternative Care News, categorized by India, Asia, and international regions. Additionally, we include New Resources in the Alternative Care Space, encompassing publications, studies, policy briefs, and toolkits. You'll also find inspiring narratives under Young Voices in the Media, as well as Opportunities and Events featuring calls for papers, conferences, and more. We hope you find this information useful in your day-to-day work on research, writing, and practice in child and youth care.

EXCITING CONTRIBUTIONS ALERT!



Got groundbreaking insights, resources, best practices, or recent developments in the latest industry news?

Reach out to us and share your knowledge with the world of practitioners. Your contributions could be featured in the next issue of our monthly news wrap-up on alternative care and family strengthening.



GENERAL ALTERNATIVE CARE NEWS

INDIA

- [Andhra government rolls out early childhood development project in Kuppam](#)
The Andhra Pradesh government launched a pilot project to enhance early childhood development by integrating modern technology with Anganwadi centres. Inaugurated by CM N Chandrababu Naidu in Kuppam on October 4, the initiative partners with Care N Grow to assess and improve children's growth before age five.
- [Bringing hope, dignity to Vijayawada slums: Om Shanti Charitable Trust's mission of empowerment](#)
Om Shanti Charitable Trust in Vijayawada uplifts slum communities through education, self-sustainability, and dignity-driven initiatives. Founded by CA Sri Lakshmi Pinnamaneni, the NGO supports street vendors with resources and provides education and hygiene training to underprivileged children.
- [Focus on aftercare of young adults who exit orphanages](#)
A recent conference in Mumbai emphasized the need for robust aftercare support for young adults exiting orphanages at 18, highlighting that only 2% of India's estimated 50,000 annual care leavers receive such services. The event showcased programs aiding these individuals in skill development and employment.
- [Rajya Sabha discusses POCSO amendment bill for stronger child protection measure](#)
The Rajya Sabha discussed a private member's bill proposing amendments to the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, to strengthen child protection laws. The bill, introduced by NCP-SCP's Fauzia Khan, focuses on victim-centric reforms, stricter reporting timelines, structured compensation, and mandatory training for stakeholders. With POCSO cases rising by 94% since 2017, the bill aims to ensure effective implementation and justice for victims. Congress leader Jairam Ramesh highlighted a 2020 report addressing online child abuse and urged broader measures beyond POCSO amendments to tackle the issue.

ASIA

- [UAE offers Dhs16 million in aid to help Ukraine foster families](#)
The UAE has pledged Dhs16.5 million (\$4.5 million) in aid to support Ukrainian foster families and orphanages through a cooperation agreement with the Olena Zelenska Foundation. This marks the second phase of a project aimed at providing stable housing for children who have lost their parents due to the war. Minister Reem Bint Al Hashimy highlighted the UAE's broader humanitarian efforts, including over 1,015 tonnes of aid, 50 ambulances, 4,500 generators, and educational support for 1.2 million people. The UAE has also facilitated 12 mediations in the conflict, securing the exchange of 2,883 captives between Russia and Ukraine.
- [Sister Marie Agnes' mission on the frontline against child trafficking](#)
Sister Marie Agnes Buasap, a member of the Hospital Sisters of St. Paul of Chartres, has been leading efforts against human trafficking in Thailand since 1984. As the coordinator of Talitha Kum Thailand, she integrates anti-trafficking education into school curricula, reaching over 52,466 students across 35 schools and training thousands of teachers. Her mission focuses on awareness, prevention, and victim support, addressing modern threats like social media exploitation and advocating for stronger enforcement of existing laws to protect vulnerable children and youth.
- [CapitaLand launches inaugural S\\$3 million Community Resilience Initiative](#)
CapitaLand Hope Foundation (CHF) has launched the inaugural S\$3 million CapitaLand Community Resilience Initiative to support social resilience projects benefiting vulnerable children and youth in Asia. This regional grant call, held in collaboration with AVPN, focuses on education, skills development, and health and well-being. Non-profits in China, India, Singapore, and Vietnam can apply until April 25, 2025, with projects assessed based on impact, scalability, and implementation feasibility.

INTERNATIONAL

- [Businesses urged to support care leavers](#)
Sunderland City Council and Together for Children (TfC) are urging businesses to create inclusive job opportunities for care-experienced youth while providing support like funding, free travel, and peer assistance amid low education and employment rates.
- [Three days of subsidised child care guaranteed for families](#)
Australia's parliament passed a law ensuring parents receive three days of subsidized childcare without work or study requirements, benefiting 66,700 families and saving eligible households an average of \$1,460 annually.
- [Foster carers get 16% pay rise and cash bonus](#)
Essex County Council increased foster carers' fees by 16% and introduced a £2,000 bonus for new foster households in 2025 while launching the Foster East initiative to address shortages and support programs like The Oasis Network.
- [Host families sought for teenage care leavers](#)
Cornwall Council is looking for volunteers to host young people who have recently left the care system. Hosts provide a room, an evening meal, and support for the young person's well-being. Volunteers receive rent and a contribution for utilities and support.
- [Pritzker signs law to prioritize placing foster children with family members](#)
Illinois Governor JB Pritzker signed the Kinship in Demand (KIND) Act, requiring DCFS to prioritize placing foster children with relatives while providing financial support, adjusted licensing, and enhanced transition services for foster youth.



NEW RESOURCES IN THE ALTERNATIVE CARE SPACE

PUBLICATIONS

- [Constructing family households with administrative data](#)
The report published by *Australian Institute of Family Studies* outlines the development of a family household classification using administrative data from DOMINO and ABS, comparing it with Census data to assess accuracy. It highlights data gaps, challenges in linking relationships, and the potential for future social policy research.
- [Connecting children and youth with their families during COVID-19: perspectives of child welfare workers and foster parents](#)
This study published in *Journal of Public Child Welfare Volume 19 Issue 1*, examines the experiences of child welfare workers in Canada during COVID-19, focusing on remote communication with children/youth and managing parent-child access. It highlights key challenges like privacy concerns, digital inequality, and visitation issues, along with solutions such as virtual check-ins, training, and tech support.
- [Protecting Young Lives](#)
The Global Status Report on Child and Adolescent Road Safety published by *UNICEF* highlights road traffic crashes as a leading cause of death and injury among young people, especially in low- and middle-income countries. It assesses global road safety risks, identifies policy gaps, and recommends a Safe System Approach to protect young road users.
- [Infant placements in foster care and labor market attachment: A national cohort study](#)
This new study published in *Children and Youth Services Review* examines the long-term labour market outcomes of individuals placed in foster care as infants. While they face higher employment instability than the general population, they fare better than those placed later, with men experiencing greater risks. The study calls for targeted policies to support care-experienced individuals.

STUDIES

- [Young People's Experiences of Transitioning Out of Care in India: Convergence of Two Frameworks](#)
A study on care leavers in India highlights challenges in housing, employment, and psychosocial support during the transition to independent living. Introducing the 'Sphere of Aftercare' framework, it emphasizes eight key domains for successful transition and calls for policy reforms, better planning, and increased funding.

- [What happens after care? Investigating the post-care housing pathways and experiences of adult care leavers in Ireland](#)
A qualitative study in Ireland examines the housing experiences of five care leavers (aged 24–35) after exiting out-of-home care. Findings reveal diverse housing pathways, with some experiencing stability while others face housing insecurity. Informal support networks play a crucial role in shaping housing outcomes, impacting education, employment, and relationships. The study underscores the need for targeted housing policies and support structures.
- [Children's Trauma-Related Needs Versus Caregivers' Preparedness: A Disconnect in the Trauma-Informed Care of Children in Child and Youth Care Centres](#)
A study in Gauteng, South Africa, highlights gaps in trauma-informed caregiving for children in child and youth care centers. Findings reveal that children feel unheard about their trauma-related needs, while caregivers lack proper training and support. The study emphasizes the need for trauma-informed care training to provide developmentally appropriate support.
- ['How Does Living in Institution Impact Young Lives?'—Insights From Young People in Ci'aiyuan](#)
A study of 14 young people aged 15–18 residing in Xiangxi's childcare institutions (ci'aiyuan) in China reveals that institutional care can offer supportive relationships, increase self-perceived social support, and facilitate positive life trajectory shifts for some individuals. These findings provide a more compassionate view of institutional care, challenging negative perceptions while acknowledging ongoing complexities. The study calls for continued efforts to improve alternative care settings.
- [Enablers and barriers to acquiring and maintaining employment among care leavers in South Africa](#)
This study explores the enablers and barriers care-leavers face in acquiring and maintaining employment, highlighting the role of networks, support systems, and personal determination. It emphasizes the impact of education, workplace conditions, and behavioral factors on sustained employment.

TOOLKITS

- [New information guides to help children, young people and families understand child protection processes](#)
These new guides provide clear information on child protection in Scotland for younger children, young people, parents, and carers. They serve as national resources to support understanding and complement professional practice.
- [I need you – A-Z poster](#)
This resource reflects important messages and highlights how babies perceive the world and what is significant to them in their relationships with parents and carers. The poster is written simply as an A-Z guide on how parents and carers can be attuned to their baby and understand their feelings and needs.



YOUNG VOICES THAT APPEAR IN THE MEDIA

- [My port in a storm – the relationship that helped to shape who I am today](#)
This blog for Care Day 2025 highlights the transformative power of long-lasting relationships in the lives of care-experienced individuals. Beth-Anne McDowall shares her personal journey of finding safety and support through her lifelong bond with her primary school headteacher, Edith Innes.
- [Reflecting on the first year as Chair of Out-of-Home Care Research](#)
The blog reflects on the inaugural year of the Out-of-Home Care Research Chair at SCU, highlighting key research on strengthening relationships in therapeutic care and improving disclosure support for child sexual abuse survivors, with a focus on policy impact and collaboration.
- [Lived Experience is Vital to Positively Impacting At-Risk Youth](#)
The blog emphasizes the importance of lived experience in mentoring at-risk youth, particularly those in foster care and juvenile detention. It highlights how mentors with similar life experiences can provide empathy, guidance, and inspiration, fostering meaningful connections that transform lives.
- [Beyond the Dream: Revolutionizing the Child Welfare System for a Brighter Future](#)
The blog highlights the urgent need to reform the child welfare system to truly support youth, ensuring they receive continuous care beyond 18. It calls for systemic changes, including automatic housing, food, and medical assistance, while prioritizing prevention and family preservation.



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

- [3rd Annual Round Table on Building Evidence-Based Narratives for Family Strengthening & Alternative Care | 20 March, 2025 Bihar](#)
- [Global Disability Summit | 2 – 3 April, 2025 Berlin](#)
- [Fifth Biennial International Childhood Trauma Conference | 17– 22 August 2025](#)

THANK YOU FOR READING!

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