

REES CENTRE

Research in Fostering and Education
University of Oxford Department of Education



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OXFORD

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We welcome your feedback and suggestions on our work.

RESEARCH UPDATES

New projects

Care leavers' transition into the labour market in England

This new study, led by the Rees Centre with the University of York and funded by the Nuffield Foundation, will be the first large scale, national statistical research to be undertaken in England looking at the relationship between care leavers being in education, employment, training or being NEET at age 21, and their earlier experiences of care and education. In addition, the perspectives of care leavers, young people and key adults in their lives on what influences the transition from education to employment will be explored through interviews and focus groups.

This research will be used to identify ways to better support care-experienced young people into employment and mitigate the risks of their becoming NEET. [More on this project](#)

Development of Investment Care for Sustainable Community-Based Foster Care in Jordan

Lisa Holmes is leading a new UNICEF funded project, in partnership with colleagues at the German Jordanian University, Amman to develop an investment case for foster care in Jordan. The project utilises the conceptual framework for the Cost Calculator for Children's Services and includes a time use study to explore the necessary support for foster carers and children in placements. Contact [Dr Lisa Holmes](#)

Outcomes for care experienced students in Higher Education

Neil Harrison is leading the quantitative data analysis for this new project, led by Sheffield Hallam University and funded by Unite Foundation. [The research](#) aims to find out which care experienced young people go to Higher Education, who persists and where they go after they graduate.

Contact [Dr Neil Harrison](#)

Separated child migrants and care

Ellie Ott is a co-investigator on this new ESRC funded project led by the Open University. Researchers will investigate how separated child migrants and those involved in their care, make sense of, value and take part in care relationships and caring practices. [More on this project](#)

Contact [Dr Ellie Ott](#)

Ongoing Research

The Alex Timpson Attachment and Trauma Programme In Schools – early findings

The Alex Timpson Trust is funding the Rees Centre to develop a national evidence base on the effects of attachment and trauma training in schools.



- Early findings were discussed at our recent webinar on 25 March. For resources related to this event, please visit the [programme web page](#).
- To subscribe to the programme's own termly newsletter, please email rees.centre@education.ox.ac.uk with the subject line 'Alex Timpson newsletter'.
- We are still recruiting schools to participate in this research. Please contact your local Virtual School Head for further information.

Reading Together: Improving Reading Outcomes for Children in Care - recruiting local authorities

The Rees Centre and the Centre for Evidence and Social Innovation, Queens University Belfast in collaboration with Hampshire County Council, are undertaking research based on previous findings to improve the reading outcomes of children in care by involving foster carers in paired reading with the children alongside book gifting. This randomised controlled trial will involve over 500 7-9-year-old foster children in foster or kinship care in local authorities in England. The research is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (grant reference: ES/P008240/1), January 2018 – June 2020. It has received ethical clearance from the University of Oxford and the ADCS: ref: RGE190301. [Programme website](#)

Children will be randomised into one of three groups: Group 1: book-gifting plus a handbook for foster carers; Group 2: book-gifting plus the handbook and training in paired reading for foster carers; Group 3: a control group that will be offered the books and handbook immediately following post-testing provided the findings do not suggest any detrimental effects. The children will receive three packs of books with some books being chosen by them. Foster carers receiving the handbook and/or training will be asked to read with the child a minimum of 3 x 15-minutes per week. The effectiveness of both formats will be measured using assessments of reading, vocabulary and attitudes to reading with all children. Thirty children and their foster carers drawn from two local authorities will be interviewed. The tests and interviews will be carried out in May-June 2019 by experienced fieldworkers and researchers, and

repeated in January 2020, in the home after school or at weekends.

Interested local authorities – please contact [Judy Sebba](#) for more information. Authorities using a regular book-gifting scheme with 7-9 year olds will not be eligible to participate.

Journal publications

Joao M.S. Carvalho, Paulo Delgado, Vania S. Pinto and Rami Benbenishty (2018) Reunification in foster care: influences on decision-making. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, Volume 86, December 2018

[Go to publication](#)

Tregaegle, S., Moggach, L., Trivedi, H., and Ward, H. (2019) Previous life experiences and the vulnerability of children adopted from out-of-home care: The impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences and child welfare decision making. *Children and Youth services Review*, Volume 96, January 2019

[Go to publication](#)

Neil Harrison (2019) Patterns of participation in higher education for care-experienced students in England: why has there not been more progress? *Studies in Higher Education*

[Go to publication](#)

These journal articles are not open access. If you are unable to access through a University library subscription, you may be interested to read about Neil's research in his recent article for the LSE blog: [care leavers in higher education: how many are there and why does it matter?](#)

REES CENTRE NEWS

Professor Julie Selwyn joins the Rees Centre



We are delighted to announce that Professor Julie Selwyn is joining us in April to lead the Hadley Research Programme at the Rees Centre. Julie joins us from the University of Bristol and brings with her a wealth of experience and expertise of research in children's social care, with a particular focus on adoption and children's subjective wellbeing. Her current projects include: 'An Evaluation of the Regionalisation of Adoption Agencies' in partnership with Ecorys, 'Bright Spots: understanding the subjective wellbeing of looked after children and care leavers' in partnership with Coram Voice, and 'Improving the matching of children with adoptive parents' with Adoption Central England.

Julie is also a member of the National Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board.

Other Staffing News

Congratulations to Dr Priya Tah who is joining the team as a Research Assistant on the Reading Together research programme.

Congratulations to our colleague Dr Aoife O'Higgins who has taken up a research post at the University of Oxford based in the Department of Psychology. Aoife can be contacted about her work at Aoife.ohiggins@magd.ox.ac.uk.

Keynotes

In April, Lisa will be attending the [Annual Association of Children's Residential Centers conference](#) in New Orleans. Lisa has been invited to provide a keynote address at the International Pre-conference event focused on advocacy for children in care.

REES CENTRE EVENTS

The Rees Centre organises a range of free [seminars, workshops and webinars](#). Most are open to the public and aim to cover both research findings and implications for policy and practice.

Past Events - Resources

[Termly webinar](#): early findings of the Alex Timpson Attachment and Trauma Programme In Schools (25 March 2019)

[Recording](#) & [slides](#): Neil Harrison's seminar on **care-experienced students in Higher Education** (18 March 2019)

Don't forget the [Rees Centre YouTube channel](#)

EXTRA – New journal

A new journal [Developmental Child Welfare](#) launched in January 2019. The journal arose out of a need for a dedicated platform for multi-disciplinary research applied to advance our understanding of the development, health (including mental health) and well-being of children and adolescents exposed to severe social adversity throughout the world.

EXTRA – Book Review

Attachment Handbook for Foster Care and Adoption, Schofield & Beek (2018) second edition

By Katie Wrench, October 2018

Social worker, foster carer and art psychotherapist

It's hard to know where to start when reviewing such a comprehensive text. At over 400 pages it isn't a 'quick read' but there were so many 'underlinable' moments for me, even though I'm almost 20 years post social work qualification with 10+ years in fostering. The book is incredibly well formatted so, despite its length, it is straightforward to signpost to what you need. Each chapter end with summary points and key messages for practice, grounded in child development. Brief case examples bring the theory alive and are peppered throughout the book.

[Read more of Katie's review](#)

It's a long book and a long review, but I wouldn't hesitate, with any of my professional hats on, to recommend it.