

International Alternative Care Conference

Geneva, 3 to October 2016

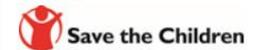


Young people's transitions
from care to adulthood
Mike Stein

Hosts



Partners



Presentation Outline

- Presentation based on data from 21 countries
 - 9 'western' European countries
 - 12 'post-communist' European and Central Asian societies
- Identifies recommendations - views of young people and those who work with them
- Context of *Support for After Care (SA)*

Leaving Care – law and policy

‘Agencies and facilities should have a clear policy and carry out agreed procedures’ (SA 131)

- Having a legal duty – not permissive power - to prepare and support young people aftercare up to 25 years of age
- In post-communist countries having a national strategy, clear standards, inter departmental co-ordination at a national and local level, involving NGO’s

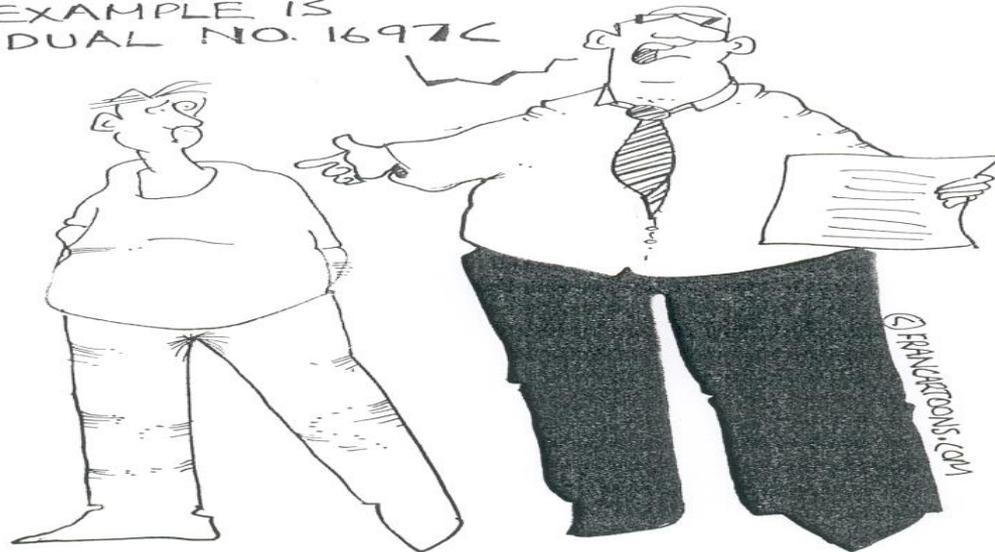
The quality of care - stability, attachment, education

'Preparing...integration...skills...community' (SA 135)

- For post-communist societies challenge of deinstitutionalization – individual care
- Violation of rights: stigma; abuses; meeting developmental needs; failure to prepare and support young people leaving care
- Foster care; small homes; kinship care; staff training

'Providing individual care'

WE LIKE TO TREAT ALL OUR
YOUNG PEOPLE AS INDIVIDUALS..THIS
FOR EXAMPLE IS
INDIVIDUAL NO. 1697C



The quality of care – stability, attachment, well-being

- For European countries challenges for better quality of care
- Stability and continuity; identity; educational deficits; mental health screening and services

‘In some Scandinavian and northern European countries foster care placements and small children’s homes provide psychological interventions and socio-pedagogy to enhance the well-being of young people and assist those with mental health problems’

Transitions from care – leaving care later and gradually

‘Transition...should take into consideration gender, age, maturity and particular circumstances.. (SA 132)

In European countries - gradual transitions from care, less accelerated and compressed

Recognising additional support needs – disability, gender, parenthood, ethnicity, refugee status, sexuality

Transitions from care – being prepared

‘Where young people are settled in foster care they become part of the family and ‘stay put’ until leaving care... arrangements for carers to be supported financially and young people to receive services’

In post-communist societies – lack of preparation, not being informed, ill-equipped

Need for de-institutionalization and preparation programmes

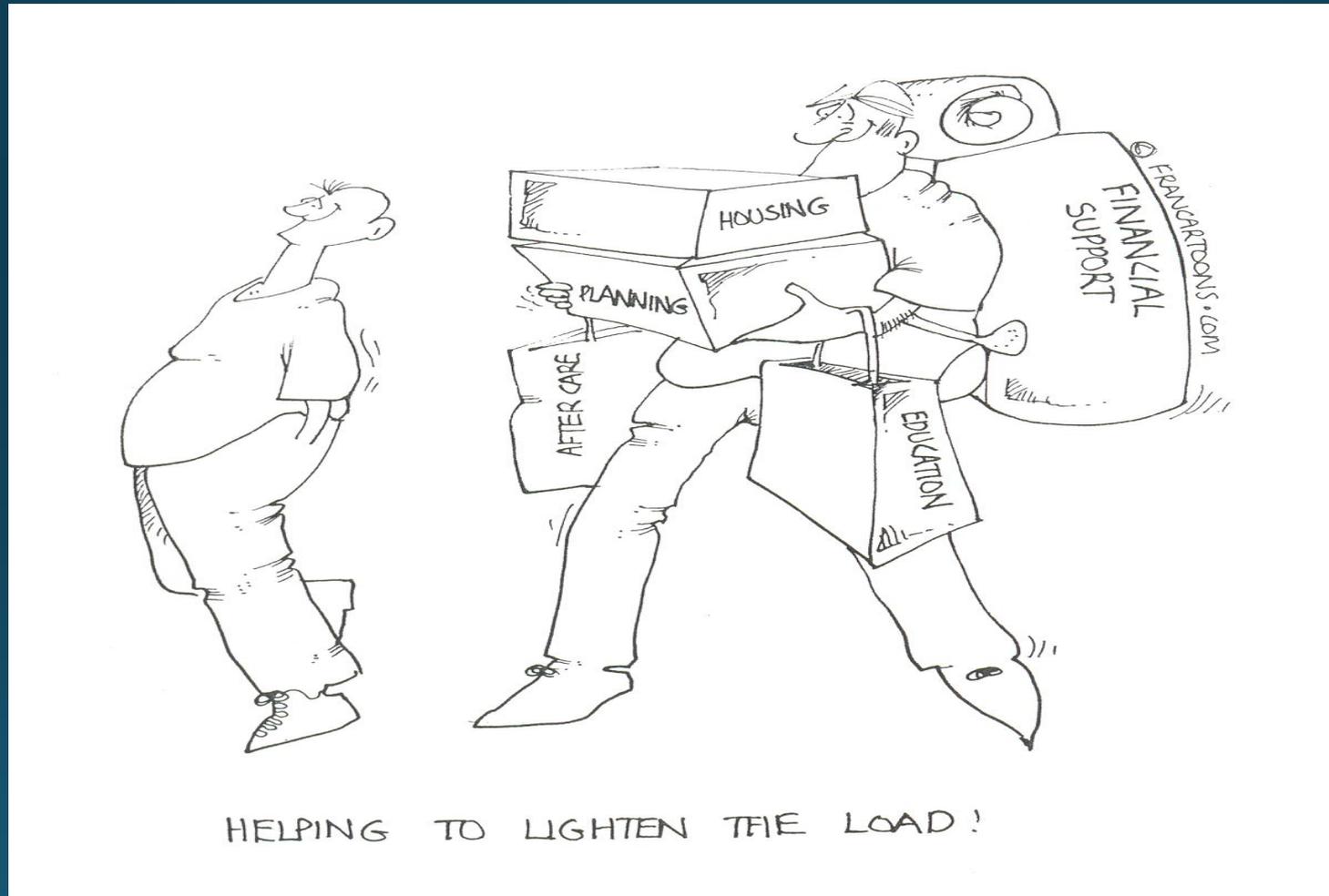
Leaving care – being supported

‘Allocate a specialised person (SA 131); educational and vocational opportunities (SA 135); access to social, legal and health services, financial support (SA 136); take part in planning for aftercare life (SA 131)

In post-communist societies – personal support, housing and employment; financial assistance and crisis services

Participation of young people; care leavers own support networks and a peer website; greater public awareness

Leaving care – being supported



Leaving care – involving young people

- In European countries – support into adulthood, beyond leaving care
 - Specialist leaving care services – careers, accommodation, health and well-being
 - Involving young people
- ‘ Children in Care councils give young people a voice on local policies and their impact... the local authority gives a Pledge to provide leaving care services ’*

Leaving care – the voices of young people

‘When we leave care why should they stop caring?’

‘I’ve learnt to live out of care – with a back-up team’

‘My main worry – not being able to settle’

‘Care, its given me great opportunities...now I know what direction I an going in’

This presentation is based on:

- Stein M (2014) Young People's Transitions from Care to Adulthood in European and Postcommunist Eastern European and Central Asian Societies, *Australian Social Work*, Vol 67, No1 24-38
- Stein M and Verweijen-Slamnescu R (2012) (eds) When Care Ends, Lessons from Peer Research, insights from young people on leaving care in Albania, the Czech Republic, Finland and Poland, Austria, SOS Children's Villages International
- Lerch V and Stein M (2010) (eds) Ageing Out of Care, from care to adulthood in European and Central Asian Societies, Austria, SOS Children's Villages
- Stein M and Munro E R (eds) 2008 Young People's Transitions from Care to Adulthood: International Research and Practice, London, Jessica Kingsley
- Stein M (2012) Young People Leaving Care, Supporting Pathways to Adulthood, London, Jessica Kingsley Publisher