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Children in care in Sweden

- Year 2004, 20 000 children and youth had been in fostercare or residential care
- One percent of the population in this age-group (0-20 years)
- Almost 2/3 were adolescents.
- One child in every schoolclass will have the experience of being in care before 18 years of age

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Children in care

- Since 1980, an increase in placements in residential care have occurred especially for young teenagers between 13-15 years
- There is a radical increase of private residential homes for children. 90 percent of them are private today
- Even gender composition of children in care. In residential care boys form a small majority (55%-60%). Among placements in homes for special supervision, boys dominate (68-75%)

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- How common is it that children who have been in care experience that their parents are dead before they are 18 or 25 years old?
- At the age of 18 every seventh child in care, five or more years, had lost their mother or both parents. At the age of 25 every fourth had lost one or both parents.

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- Children placed in care before their adolescent years have higher risks during their youth or adulthood concerning suicide, suicide attempt, serious psychiatric illness low level of education and teenage pregnancy
- To sum up: The long term compensation the residential care can give is very low

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Leaving care in Sweden

The aim of the study is to explore how youth in the age between 16-20 look upon their belonging to a family and how they experience the support they get during the process of leaving care.

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- Interviews with eight teenagers placed in residential care, and eight teenagers in foster care.
- Structured interviews by phone with the teenager's socialworker, biological parent and contact person in residential care or contact person in the fosterhome



Questions that needs to be answered

- Under what circumstances are young people in care moving out from their residential settings?
- What kind of support is available from their biological family, residential home, fosterhome, and social worker
- How does young people themselves look upon this period. Do they get "good enough" support, and if not what is lacking?



Isak 22 years

- He has been in institutions (3) since he was 14 years old
- 8-10 different socialworkers
- 20 different diagnosis " they are just coming up with new things"
- Very negativ experiences from residential care. " You are under oppression all the time, people get depressed and abused



Isak 22 year

- He comes to an in-between residential home. Staying there is a turningpoint.
"This is the best place I ever been to. They showed me respect and I gave it back to them 100 percent"
- He is now living in his own flat. He is unemployed, has a girlfriend and some contact with his mother and brother. The contact person from the in-between home is the most important support person but has no formal position.
"What I do for him now is voluntary work I feel like a big brother to him, the social services things this is very convenient" (contactperson)



Lena 18 years

- She has been in care since she was 4 years. In fostercare and in 3 residential homes.
- Comes from a small municipality, have had continuity with socialworker.
- No contact with mother, but with older sister and brother, little contact with father.
- She has a boyfriend since she was 16 years, is engaged
- Very well planed leaving home process between socialworker, residential home and Lena
- She has long-term plan for her future.
" My socialworker will help me to get a flat. Than I will go to school, in a social line since I know so much about this and that will take me to a prep-school for becoming a police officer, I am so happy that I found this prep-school. I want to become a superintendent or bodyguard, and that is possible after 5 years working as a police"