

## Support for Children as Next of Kin and Systematic Follow up – Group Leaders’ and Managers’ Perspectives within Non-profit Organizations in Sweden

Pauline Johansson & Åsa Carlsund

Malmö 29-31 May 2017

Swedish Family Care Competence Centre

Linnaeus University, Sweden



## Children as Next of Kin



Children (<18 years) with parents who suffer from mental illness, severe physical disability, and any form of substance abuse as well as children who have unexpectedly lost a parent or another adult with whom the child permanently lives. (SFS 2017:30)

Includes children with caring responsibilities as well as those without.

## Children as Next of Kin in Sweden

- 17% substance abuse
- 11% violence
- 18% physical disability
- 3% parent's death
- 30 % (substance abuse/mental illness) left elementary school without being eligible to start high school



Hjern, Berg, Rostila & Vinnerljung (2013)

## Aim

To explore how non-profit organizations work with supportive group activities for children as next of kin, and how they follow up to obtain results



## Systematic follow up

Continuously document individual children's problems, needs, support and results

*What's the problem?*

*What support has been given?*

*Will the situation change afterward?*

*What does the children consider about the support given?*

*Is it appropriate?*





## Individual level

- See if the individual child receives satisfactory support, needs extended support, is there any need for other support and that the support does not harm?

## Organizational level

- Results from their support activities at group level - continuous organization development





## Methods

- A descriptive study
- 10 organizations participated
- Individual and group interviews
- Content analysis
- Support to find, develop, refine and evaluate items and/or questionnaires
- Support implementation of systematic follow up

## Results – group activities



- Groups with similar family difficulties and age
- Two group leaders
- Themes about guilt, shame, loneliness, the right to be a child, and children's rights in society.
- Education, safety and trust were important
- Structure, predictability, and flexibility

Carlsund, Johansson, Hammare & Hanson (Accepted)



## Results – systematic follow up



- Differences regarding how they followed up their support activities today
- To receive funding for their work
- Difficult to measure because of the children's age, development, situation

Carlsund, Johansson, Hammare & Hanson (Accepted)

## Results



*“The first time the children answer, they say they feel good because they think that is what is expected. However, as time goes by, the children express themselves as angry, shameful, and sad”*

*“We had this one guy here....his mother was really sick, really mentally ill... But he didn’t understand what he was doing here. ‘I have no sick mum,’ the boy said”*

Carlsund, Johansson, Hammare & Hanson (Accepted)

## Continued work



- contact with new organizations
- return to those we do not have contact with today
- Conferences and research articles



## Thanks!

[pauline.johansson@anhoriga.se](mailto:pauline.johansson@anhoriga.se)

Web page: [www.anhoriga.se](http://www.anhoriga.se)

Facebook: [Nka.anhoriga](https://www.facebook.com/Nka.anhoriga)

Twitter: [@Nka\\_anhoriga](https://twitter.com/Nka_anhoriga)