

**Cunningham Children's Home: Literature Review**

Toni Andres, Davis Coffey, Jayda Davis, Brayden Percival

Lakeview College of Nursing

N442: Population and Global Health

Professor Katie King

March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024

**Cunningham Children's Home: Literature Review**

Cunningham Children's Home was founded in 1895 and was brought to serve as an orphanage for the local children in Champaign and Urbana, Illinois. Over the many years, Cunningham Children's Home has served thousands of members throughout the community. Cunningham Children's Home is in Urbana, Illinois, and sits on many acres of land with multiple buildings and buildings throughout the community. Volunteering for two Thursdays for four hours in February, the group helped bag up Epsom salt for children in one of Cunningham's many programs to help with the spread of athletes' feet in one of their residential buildings. The group got a tour of the many buildings and a history lesson. The group also spoke with the supervisor nurse, who explained their job and how they help in the many programs Cunningham Children's Home offers.

Cunningham Children's Home has four primary service programs. This includes a residential treatment center for kids in the Department of Children and Family Services. The program includes schooling and housing and teaches the kids life skills as they await placements upon exiting their program. Cunningham also serves a program called CAMINOS, which houses immigrant kids who have crossed the border and are awaiting placements in the community. Cunningham offers special education schools where they partner with Champaign and Vermillion County school districts to help educate kids with behavioral problems. Cunningham also offers community services, serving people experiencing homelessness, counseling services, helping pregnant and parenting teenagers, and working with runaway homeless youth programs. This agency was chosen because Cunningham Children's Home serves much of the population in Champaign and surrounding counties. Cunningham Children's Home relates to nursing as the group learned about the many resources Cunningham offers to help serve and take care of the community.

Student 1: Toni Andres

## **Leveraging Leadership in Child Welfare Systems: Large-Scale Trauma-and Resilience Informed Training Initiative**

Cunningham Children's Home is an example of a facility in the public health system that is critical to assisting the needs of traumatized children in the Child Welfare System (CWS). It provides trauma-informed principles presented by skilled professionals trained in trauma-based care. The CWS represents many levels: individuals, families, providers, and community organizations, among other entities (Rodriguez et al., 2022). When the CWS places a child, they often have trauma due to repeated separations and numerous placements.

Training most appropriate for providers in fundamentals directly related to prevention, treatment, and assessment often fails (Rodriguez et al., 2022). The focus of policy, however, has been directed on mental health service providers rather than system leaders, who are often the first level for policymaking and are significant to the successful implementation of policies regarding training and treatment. Organizations based on trauma-based care can create relationships and prove to be a key to implementation.

The first system-wide workforce development outcomes evaluate the feasibility and effectiveness of specialized trauma training, specifically by assessing the knowledge gained, practice changes, and developing action plans (Rodriguez et al., 2022). Most participants reported an intention to focus more on trauma-based care. Likewise, participants mentioned that focusing on trauma topics during workforce development was fundamental to creating an environment of support and understanding. Several themes emerged from this development: openness, active listening, self-care, and trauma-informed culture (Rodriguez et al., 2022).

The establishment of public health systems focusing on trauma-based care is essential to addressing the needs of traumatized children involved in the CWS (Rodriguez et al., 2022). A recent evaluation of statewide and local trauma and dedication to inform-care initiatives show improvements in staff trauma knowledge. Cunningham Children's Home can provide that level and type of care.

### **“Psychological Boarding” and Community-Based Behavioral Health Crisis Stabilization**

Cunningham Children's Home is a safe environment that serves a vulnerable population of youth who are severely emotionally disordered, as well as youth who present with self-harming and violent behavior. Due to a lack of community mental health care organizations, emergency rooms have become a holding area for people who are suffering from psychiatric emergencies. A psychiatric emergency is noted as an individual having issues with a behavior or mental health emergency (Mukherjee & Saxon, 2019). There has been a rise in the number of patients hospitalized with psychiatric emergencies. These organizations can provide a safe and secure home-type environment serviced by specialized staff trained in trauma-based care. The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) is also called upon for certain circumstances.

There has been a 45% increase in hospitals over the last ten years for patients with psychiatric emergencies (Mukherjee & Saxon, 2019). This increase has caused hospital emergency departments to subcontract their psychiatric emergency cases to other hospital-based or community-based crisis facilities (Mukherjee & Saxon, 2019). These entities can provide a home-like environment serviced by staff trained in trauma-based care. Historically, community

and mental health organizations have contracted with the area hospitals to offer on-call counselors to the emergency department to address non-medical patient needs.

Some barriers and challenges can present themselves when trying to place a child in a mental health care facility. One challenge is transportation logistics, getting the patient to the facility from a rural-based emergency department. However, according to information presented by Mukherjee and Saxon in the article “Psychological Boarding” and Community-Based Behavioral Health Crisis Stabilization, financial support is one of the most significant barriers. There is a lack of psychiatric providers in rural areas because of the stigmatization of the profession of psychiatry, lack of competitive salary, and a general lack of a trained workforce (Mukherjee & Saxon, 2019).

This article demonstrates why programs and facilities such as Cunningham Children’s Home are a precious resource to the communities it serves. The Department of Child and Family Services works closely with Cunningham Children’s Home. So many individuals and circumstances demonstrate the necessity for this type of facility. Organizations such as Cunningham Children’s Home intend to bring change to surrounding communities by creating awareness of this vulnerable population.

Student 2: Davis Coffey

### **Unaccompanied Immigrant Children in Long-Term Foster Care: Identifying and Operationalizing Child Welfare Outcomes**

In this study, it focuses on finding out how child welfare outcomes are defined for unaccompanied children living in long-term foster care (Crea et al., 2022). The article lists that

many unaccompanied immigrant children migrate to the United States to avoid gang violence, economic concerns, trafficking risks, abuse, and a variety of other factors. When arriving in the United States, Customs and Border Protection transfer them to refugee camps or shelters where the unaccompanied children will find foster placement. While federal policies lack specific guidelines that define maintaining the safety of unaccompanied children in the foster care system, the study emphasized the importance of the need for more definitive guidelines.

For unaccompanied immigrant children who are placed in long-term foster care rather than domestic foster care, the goal is for eventual independence and self-sustainability. The study methods consist of twenty-two focus groups through two contracted social services agencies. Through qualitative analysis, they gathered data on the aspects of care and challenges faced by unaccompanied children and caregivers. The study found that the most common themes that can be improved on with unaccompanied minors in long-term foster care are increased protection against traffickers, emotional support, placement stability, legal status, and holistic well-being. Another significant issue is with placement. Due to the complex needs of the placement process, finding a long-term placement is challenging for social workers representing unaccompanied minors. The article goes on to say how the entire long-term foster care system can be improved from what it currently is.

### **Tinea Pedis in Underrepresented Groups: All of Us Database Analysis.**

Tinea pedis, also known as athlete's foot, is a common dermatophyte infection that primarily affects the soles, clefts, nails, and skin of the feet (Moseley et al., 2023). Recent reports have shown a prevalence of tinea pedis from 1.9% to 4.1% in the United States (Moseley et al., 2023). This study focused on finding more demographic data in underrepresented groups since

previous data was not well established. Researchers of this study used electronic health records from 329,038 individuals to collect data on individuals who have had or currently have a tinea pedis infection.

Results from this study verified results from previous studies. It showed that men have a higher risk of obtaining tinea pedis compared to women due to increased participation in manual labor for work and sports. The primary results showed that Black and Hispanic participants with lower education and lower income had higher odds of having a tinea pedis infection compared to those of white participants. Elderly participants above the age of seventy-five, along with participants with physical disabilities, also had an increased risk of obtaining a tinea pedis infection. The study then focuses on how individuals from underrepresented groups are overall more likely to obtain the infection due to potential genetic and cultural risk factors along with limited healthcare access.

Student 3: Brayden Percival

### **Health Care Utilization of Individuals Affected by Homelessness: Illinois, 2011-2018**

Cunningham Children's Home offers various community services, including assisting the homeless populations in Champaign and Vermilion Counties in finding adequate housing. A program that is offered at the organization is the Runaway Homeless Program. An example of the use of this program is to help teen mothers find housing to help them become independent and guided. Young children and adolescents face struggles with healthcare and comorbidities because they often lack access to regular medical care, leading to undiagnosed and untreated health issues (Madigan & Friedman, 2021). Additionally, living in unstable conditions can make it challenging to manage chronic illnesses and mental health conditions effectively.

Cunningham Children's Home provides the guidance and resources needed for homeless populations to thrive, including hospital visits, primary care needs, guidance, housing, education, and support. The article supports the organization by reviewing individuals who experience homelessness in high-income countries. Surveillance of the homeless population is needed to make public health strategies ideal and beneficial to the patient (Madigan & Friedman, 2021). Cunningham Children's Home is an excellent example of surveillance in the community, which benefits both the patients' and public health records in the region (Madigan & Friedman, 2021). Homeless children have more significant needs than a child with housing due to the lack of stable housing, access to regular and nutritional meals, healthcare, and educational resources. These challenges can significantly impact their physical, emotional, and cognitive development (Madigan & Friedman, 2021).

### **Young Adults and their Families Living with Mental Illness: Evaluation of the Usefulness of Family-Centered Support Conversations in Community Mental Health Care Settings**

Cunningham Children's Home offers services to the youth, adults, and families who experience challenging life situations in the community. HopeSprings is a program the organization offers that provides individual, family, and group therapy sessions, school-based services, and case management services. The HopeSprings program can assist individuals and families with counseling and group therapy sessions among those who have faced similar life situations. School-based services help the organization work among the schools in the community to learn coping strategies at home, school, and in the community. The service may also help individuals with mental health and behavioral issues to help the client understand their own needs and relationships. The client gains from case management's client-centered approach to comprehensive care and rehabilitation within the program.



The purpose of this study was to assess the value of Family-Centered Support Conversations (FCSC), which are provided to young adults and their families who are experiencing mental illness in Norway's community mental health care system (Aass et al., 2020). FCSC can be related to HopeSprings, as both programs try to achieve a therapeutic environment that leads to healing. The FCSC is a family nursing intervention based on the Illness Beliefs Model and the Calgary Family Assessment and Intervention Models (Aass et al., 2020). It focuses on teaching family members how to identify resources and strengths within the family, share and reflect on everyday life experiences while living with mental illness, and be supportive of one another (Aass et al., 2020). Families were allowed to discover new opportunities and meanings in daily life through the family nursing talks concerning family structure and function in the setting of mental illness (Aass et al., 2020). Counseling services within the community can promote healing with one-on-one counseling, family sessions with a counselor, and group therapy with peers and family to discuss feelings and topics among the group.

## References

- Aass, L. K., Skundberg-Kletthagen, H., Schröder, A., & Moen, Ø. L. (2020). Young adults and their families living with mental illness: Evaluation of the usefulness of family-centered support conversations in community mental health care settings. *Journal of Family Nursing*, 26(4), 302–314. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1074840720964397>
- Crea, T. M., Evans, K., Lopez, A., Hasson, R. G., Palleschi, C., & Sittley, L. (2022). Unaccompanied immigrant children in long-term foster care: Identifying and operationalizing child welfare outcomes. *Child & Family Social Work*, 27(3), 500–512. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cfs.12902>
- Madigan, D., & Friedman, L. S. (2021). Health care utilization of individuals affected by homelessness. *Medical Care*, 59(Suppl 2), S158–S164. <https://doi.org/10.1097/mlr.0000000000001444>
- Moseley, I., Ragi, S. D., Ouellette, S., & Rao, B. (2023). Tinea pedis in underrepresented groups: All of us database analysis. *Mycoses*, 66(1), 29–34. <https://doi.org/10.1111/myc.13522>
- Mukherjee, D., & Saxon, V. (2019). “Psychological boarding” and community-based behavioral health crisis stabilization. *Community Mental Health Journal*, 55(3), 375–384. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10597-018-0237-9>
- Rodriguez, A., Fei, Z., Barrera, W. A., Tsao, E. H., Waterman, J., Franke, T. M., Mogil, C. E., Bonilla, B., Cugley, G. M., Gillams, T., & Langley, A. (2022). Leveraging leadership in child welfare systems: Large-scale trauma- and resilience-informed training initiative.

*The Journal of Behavioral Health Services & Research*, 50(1), 18–35.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11414-022-09815-2>