N442 Literature Review

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Organization: Cunningham Children's Home

Introduction

For the completion of the Legacy Project, the Cunningham Children's Home located at 1301 N. Cunningham Ave, Urbana, Illinois was chosen. This organization has been a vital resource to the Champaign-Urbana area for 130 years since its founding in 1895 (Cunningham Children's Home, 2025). Cunningham Children's Home is a child welfare and educational services agency that provides a wide range of supports to children across the state of Illinois (Cunningham Children's Home, 2025). Two of their most prominent services include their Circle Academy and Gerber Education Program, which provide individualized education for children with learning disabilities (Cunningham Children's Home, 2025). Cunningham Children's Home also has several housing programs that help children and adolescents find safe and stable housing. These individuals also receive counseling and care from clinically trained professionals who use trauma -informed care to create individualized treatment plans (Cunningham Children's Home, 2025). This specific organization was chosen due to its relation to the nursing profession and community health. Cunningham Children's Home provides much needed care and support to over 900 children and their families in the Champaign-Urbana area and helps children live up to their fullest potential (Cunningham Children's Home, 2025). It is well known that children who experience adverse childhood events such as physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, homelessness, and/or living with family members who abuse drugs and alcohol are much more likely to experience mental health problems and overall poorer health compared to children who do not have such experiences. Therefore, Cunningham Children's Home is extremely important in

helping to improve the health and well-being of children and fostering the development of healthier adults.

Time was spent volunteering at Cunningham Children's Home on 3/8/25 and 3/10/25. While there, the students helped to create Epsom salt bags for children to soak their sore feet in. These bags are especially helpful for their Caminos kids who are migrant refugees that have traveled a long way to Illinois and stay at Cunningham temporarily while their immigration paperwork is being done. The foot soaks provide a therapeutic way for the children to relax and find some relief from their difficult journeys. The nursing students also assisted in photographing quilts for Cunningham's Festival of Quilts fundraising event occurring this April. The Festival of Quilts is an annual event held at Cunningham where handmade quilts are gifted to the organization and then auctioned off for fundraising. The Festival of Quilts is a very symbolic event as the children who stay at Cunningham Children's Home select a handmade quilt that is theirs to keep and it symbolizes them being wrapped in warmth, safety, and love (Cunningham Children's Home, 2025). Overall, the student nurses had a wonderful time at Cunningham Children's Home and learned a great deal about how their organization helps the local community. The following information is a literature review that incorporates recent literature highlighting the importance of the types of services that Cunningham Children's Home provides and their relation to nursing practice.

Sengsavang Carr Articles:
1. "CHASE (Children's Housing Assessment for a Safe Environment): a protocol for the inspection and modification of injury risks in children's homes" https://research.ebsco.com/c/yptdrc/search/details/4rpfy2jt2z?db=ccm%2Cmdl %2Ce680sww%2Cafh%2Ca9h%2Ce700xna&isDashboardExpanded=true&limiters=RV

There is abundant information regarding successful home safety upgrades thanks to decades of research and practical experience. However, not every group in society has benefited from safety changes. Inadequate living conditions in low-income areas can significantly compromise child safety, restricted access to safety gear, and knowledge on preventing injuries (Omaki et al., 2023). Three hundred low-income families with children under seven years old in Baltimore City and Baltimore County are the subjects of this long-term study. They were referred via the Green & Healthy Homes Initiative (GHHI) home visiting programs (Omaki et al., 2023). The previously created technique, the Children's Housing Assessment for a Safe Environment (CHASE), will evaluate home injury hazards during three house visits (Omaki et al., 2023). The results will be used to create a scope of work that includes home improvements tailored to the risks identified. The qualified Housing Intervention Services team will make the necessary house adjustments to prevent injuries in the home if the parent or caregiver cannot do so. Improvements in the general surveillance of home injuries are required, as is better data on children's injuries sustained in residential settings (Omaki et al., 2023).

2. "Forgiveness in Children Placed in Children's Homes: Understanding, Process and Motivation for Forgiveness"

Negative experiences for children placed in children's homes include victimization by community members, interpersonal disputes with classmates, and abuse by caretakers forgive (Salifu Yendork et al., 2022). Because there is not much research, it is unclear how these kids forgive these unpleasant experiences. The current study investigated the bad experiences children

in residential care experienced, how they understood forgiveness, and why they were willing to forgive (Salifu Yendork et al., 2022). Ten children in residential care ages nine to eighteen, who lived in two Accra children's homes, participated (Salifu Yendork et al., 2022). According to the results of these interviews, participants have friendly connections with their caregivers and classmates (Salifu Yendork et al., 2022). Still, they deal with relational issues regularly, such as being lied to, insulted, bullied, teased, and denied gifts. The authors of this article believe that their understanding of forgiveness is influenced by religious beliefs, relational context, and the perceived advantages of forgiving, and it differs significantly from all three of the current conceptions of the idea forgive (Salifu Yendork et al., 2022). Deferral to God, educating or confronting the offender about the consequences of their actions, and reporting the perpetrator to a higher authority were all steps in the forgiveness process (Salifu Yendork et al., 2022).

Madalyn Goble Articles:

1. "Trauma-informed care"
   https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article/148/2/e2021052580/179745/Trauma-Informed-Care

   Nearly 50% of children in the United States have experienced a potentially traumatic event in their lives (Forkey et al., 2021). These events can shape a child's physical and emotional health, development, and behavior. The authors of this article discuss the impact of trauma on the well-being of children and how important it is to understand a child's trauma when beginning to care for them (Forkey et al., 2021). The authors begin by providing examples of traumatic events that children may experience, including natural disasters, refugee trauma, intimate partner abuse, neglect, and separation from a caregiver (Forkey et al., 2021). The authors then describe the different levels of trauma and reactions a child may experience and ways to provide primary,

secondary, and tertiary prevention for each level (Forkey et al., 2021). The article's next section discusses the well-known "fight or flight" response and what happens in the body while this reaction occurs. The article also discusses the physiological impact stress and trauma can have on a child while defining different types of trauma and identifying at-risk populations (Forkey et al., 2021).

The authors of this article discuss how pediatric providers and others who care for children can rephrase their wording to better articulate their concerns (Forkey et al., 2021). One example includes asking a child what happened to them instead of what is wrong with them. This simple change of words can display genuine concern instead of appearing to blame the child for what they have gone through (Forkey et al., 2021). The next section of the article discusses how to detect trauma in children and tools for screening (Forkey et al., 2021). The authors then discuss how to talk to children and their caregivers about trauma and how it can play a significant role in a child's life and the lives of those around them (Forkey et al., 2021). The authors emphasize the importance of training all involved in a child's life and their care in trauma-informed care (Forkey et al., 2021). They also stress the importance of involving interprofessional team members and community resources (Forkey et al., 2021). The authors end the article by discussing the need to care for the entire family unit, with the goal of having at least two generations involved in the treatment process (Forkey et al., 2021).

2. "Adverse childhood experiences and trauma-informed care"
   https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0891524520302315

The author begins by discussing adverse childhood experiences (ACE) and why understanding them and their effects is essential for caring for children (Goddard, 2021). The author describes different types of ACEs and says those who experience these events have a

higher rate of developing alcoholism, illegal drug abuse, and depression and are more likely to commit suicide (Goddard, 2021). The next section of the article discusses how ACEs can lead to an early death for those who live through them (Goddard, 2021). The author explains that ACEs can have both long and short-term effects on children's development and can cause physiological abnormalities (Goddard, 2021). Later in the article, the author details the stress reaction in the brain and other body parts and how repeated activation of this response can negatively affect the body long-term (Goddard, 2021).

The author goes on to describe trauma-informed care and its different components (Goddard, 2021). The first component discussed is to realize the effect trauma can have on the pediatric patient (Goddard, 2021). The next is to recognize the various signs and symptoms a child may present with following a traumatic experience (Goddard, 2021). The third refers to responding to the signs and symptoms presented using a multidisciplinary approach (Goddard, 2021). This approach includes utilizing medical staff, community resources, educational staff, and other resources needed to care for the child and their family (Goddard, 2021). The fourth component of trauma-informed care is resisting re-traumatization (Goddard, 2021). Resisting re-traumatization is essential in trauma-informed care as it can help create a therapeutic relationship between a child and caregiver. It is vital for those providing care to a child to understand that how they give the care can trigger a memory of a traumatic event in a child. Doing something as simple as changing how a service or therapy is administered can make all the difference for a child (Goddard, 2021). The author concludes the article by explaining that current events, such as the current attitude regarding immigrants and political refugees, the racial tensions experienced worldwide, and the remaining trauma of the COVID-19 pandemic, are expected to result in

ACEs and traumatic responses in children around the world and that trauma-informed care is more important than ever (Goddard, 2021).

Erica King Articles:

1. **"**Social Adaptation and Resilience of Children in Care Institutions: A Systematic Review of Effective Strategies and Practices" https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/23493003241291696nd Resilience of Children in Care Institutions: A Systematic Review of Effective Strategies and Practices - Irfan Ahmad Hajam, Shabnum Jan, 2025

   The authors of this article performed a systematic review in order to explore the practices and strategies that can aid in fostering resilience and social adaptation in children who reside in care institutions (Hajam & Jan, 2025). They analyzed three main aspects of care institutions which are: care-giving relationships, enrichment activities, and programs and practices (Hajam & Jan, 2025). Through their evaluation, the authors found that care-giving relationships can influence not only the children, but can also influence the caregivers' training and education as well as their mental health (Hajam & Jan, 2025). Enrichment activities were found to enhance children's socialization, life skills, identity formation, communication, and emotional competence (Hajam & Jan, 2025). The programs and practices offered through care institutions for children can contribute to the child's mental strength, socio-emotional behavior, life skills and adjustment, as well as to the child's feeling of inclusion and idea of family values (Hajam & Jan, 2025). In conclusion, the authors discovered through their review that care facilities can be very helpful in helping children become resilient and develop their social skills (Hajam & Jan, 2025).

2. "Experimental Evaluation of Transitional Living Services for System-Involved Youth: Implications for Policy and Practice"

The authors who wrote this article wanted to assess the impact of a program called YVLifeSet that helps young adults in Tennessee who are from the child welfare and juvenile justice system transition to adulthood (Courtney et al., 2019). The authors point out the fact that research conducted over the past two decades has shown that youth who are from the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, who are transitioning to adulthood, are at a high risk of experiencing poorer outcomes (Courtney et al., 2019). The YVLifeSet program was developed in Tennessee and has been providing residential care services to youth transitioning to adulthood since 1994 (Courtney et al., 2019). The program offers these youth services such as financial assistance, educational and vocational training, life skills training, and counseling (Courtney et al., 2019). The authors performed a study by creating a program group and a control group. The program group was offered YVLifeSet services, while the control group was only offered a list of other social services and resources that were available in the community (Courtney et al., 2019). A survey was then conducted with both groups after 12 to 14 months which collected information about education, employment, economic well-being, housing stability or homelessness, employment, and involvement with the criminal justice system (Courtney et al., 2019). After collecting all of the data, the researchers found that the YVLifeSet program had a positive impact on housing instability, economic hardship, employment, and health, but had no impact on the measures of education, justice system involvement, and social support (Courtney et al., 2019). In conclusion, this study provides guidance for program development as well as future research about case management for transition-age youth (Courtney et al., 2019).

Sarah Minacci Articles:

1. "Project Extension for Community Health Outcomes (ECHO) Autism: A Successful Model to Increase Capacity in Community-Based Care" https://www.mdpi.com/2076-3425/12/3/327

The authors of this article provide an overview of the ECHO Autism model and data that supports the model's efficacy (Sohl et al., 2022). ECHO stands for Extension for Community Health Outcomes and is a unique educational program where Autism experts provide education to professionals in local communities on how to deliver evidenced-based care to children with ASD (Sohl et al., 2022). This is particularly important because children with ASD often require comprehensive care from interdisciplinary healthcare providers as ASD is associated with several medical and psychiatric health problems such as depressive/anxiety disorders, sleep dysfunction, seizures, tic disorders, ADHD, and more (Sohl et al., 2022). The ECHO model aims to provide community-based professionals such as doctors, nurses, psychologists, and educators with increased knowledge about how to best provide care and support to individuals with autism so that they and their families can live their best lives (Sohl et al., 2022). The program involves teaching healthcare professionals how to screen for and diagnose ASD, how to manage co-occurring medical issues, and how to address the complex needs of children with ASD (Sohl et al., 2022). In areas where the ECHO program has been put in place, there have been significant increases in the percentage of pediatricians who were compliant with autism screening guidelines (Sohl et al., 2022). One particularly successful tool used in the ECHO program is the STAT (Screening Tool for Autism in Toddlers and Young Children) tool that has helped physicians provide more prompt diagnoses of ASD and increased access to services an average of 2 to 6 months sooner than without the use of the screening tool (Sohl et al., 2022). With the use of the ECHO program GPs have also reported decreased barriers to caring for children with ASD in their practice (Sohl et al., 2022). Overall, a vital aspect of the ECHO program is patient and

family-centered care and the model promotes incorporating a parent of a person with ASD as a "content expert" when providing education to local communities. In all, the ECHO program works to reduce healthcare disparities for children with ASD particularly in rural and underserved communities (Sohl et al., 2022).

2. "Health and adverse childhood experiences among homeless youth"
   https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33827511/

The authors of this article aimed to investigate how Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and housing status relate to child health (Barnes et al., 2021). Unfortunately, ACEs are common in childhood with 45% of children under 17 experiencing at least one ACE in the U.S (Barnes et al., 2021). Children with ACEs are more likely to report overall poor health and recent studies have shown that children who report 4 or more ACEs experienced significant mental health symptoms (Barnes et al., 2021). The authors of this article hypothesized that children experiencing unaccompanied homelessness (without family) would have more chronic health conditions and ACEs compared to those who are homeless with family and that health problems would increase with each additional ACE (Barnes et al., 2021). They gathered data from 119,254 8th–11th graders and the results of their study found that children experiencing family homelessness reported more mental health problems than housed children and children experiencing unaccompanied homelessness were at even higher risk for victimization, substance abuse, infectious diseases, and mental health problems (Barnes et al., 2021). Additionally, the authors found that most children who were homeless with a family member had at least 1 or more ACEs, but 20% of children who were unaccompanied homeless had over 4 ACEs (Barnes et al., 2021). Each additional ACE increased the odds of chronic mental health conditions by 65% and both chronic mental and physical health conditions by 74%, which clearly showed that youths experiencing homelessness have a greatly increased risk for overall low health (Barnes et

al., 2021). The authors noted that the results of their study have important implications where

clinicians and health systems should advocate for policies that include stable housing and family

relationships as incredibly important protective factors (Barnes et al., 2021).

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