

Monitoring transition to adulthood among adolescents in out of home care in Israel

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Overview

- This study examines **transition to adulthoods among care leavers**
- It examines **personal and environmental factors** contributing to **functioning and well-being**
- It is based on a **longitudinal design**, assessing the situation in three points in time
- A **mixed method** study with quantitative and qualitative sections.
- Follow up of a sample of **adolescents in residential care** (N = 276) until four years after leaving care (N = 220).
- Tested a comprehensive model of all three points in time.
- **Will not be able to present all findings. List of papers will be presented at the end for more detailed analyses**

Background

Care Leavers in a Sensitive Developmental Stage

- “Emerging Adulthood” is a period that may have important consequences for wellbeing in adult life.
- This period is of special importance to vulnerable groups, among them adolescents who have been in care in childhood and are ‘aging out’ of state care (care leavers).
- They experienced difficult life circumstances, life in care, and little support in transition to adult life.
- Studies around the world report that these young people experience difficulties in various life domains including high rates of instability in accommodation, unemployment, severe economic distress, and a low level of education.

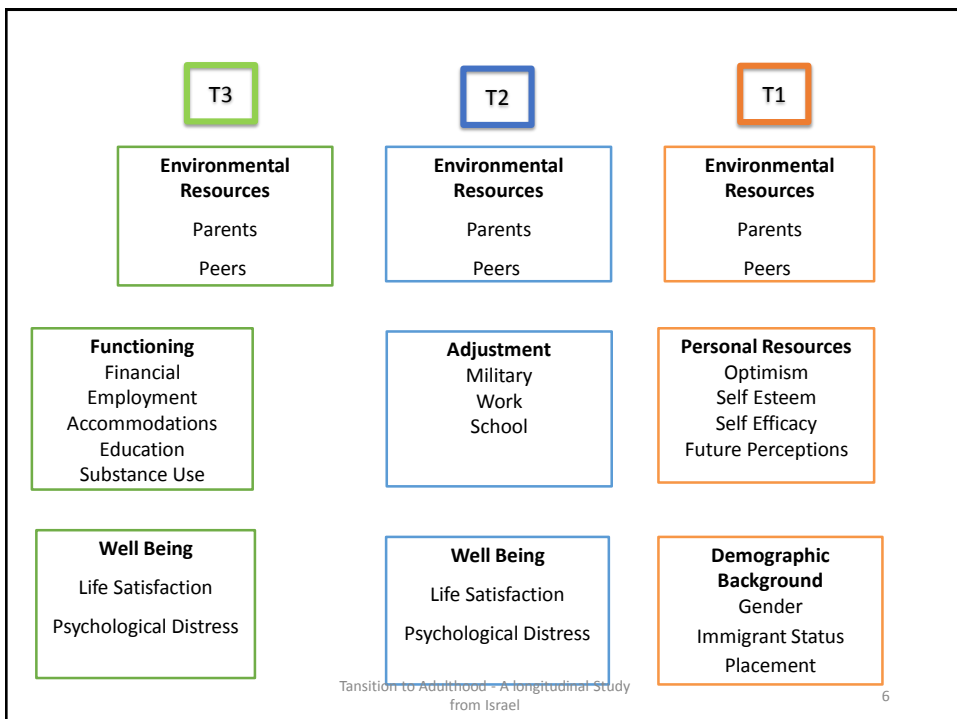
Background:

What is universal and what is context specific?

- Care leavers around the world share many attributes.
- Nevertheless, there are many context-specific influences, related, among other issues to:
 - The structure of out of home care (foster vs. residential, lengths of stay, age at entry)
 - Availability of services while in care and after (including legal and policy aspects)
 - Cultural and social differences in the expectations from the family and from society
 - Local natural developmental turning points (e.g., military service)

Study Aims

- **Describe** functioning and wellbeing
- Test a comprehensive model
 - predicting functioning and well being four years after leaving care, based on personal and environmental resources in several points in time including during the transition period



Dependent variables (as measured in T3)

- Functioning and adjustment after leaving care
 - Adjustment to the military service or work or school
 - Educational achievement
 - Accommodations
 - Employment
 - Financial status
 - Substance abuse
 - Problems with the law
- Well being and psychological distress
 - Life satisfaction
 - Psychological distress

Independent variables

- Personal
 - Demographics
 - Optimism
 - Self Esteem
 - Self Efficacy for Independent Living
 - Future Perceptions
- Environmental
 - Parental Support
 - Peer Support
 - Social Services

Sample and Design (quantitative part)

Adolescents drawn from all 19 therapeutic (welfare) residential facilities and from 7 educational residential facilities intended for youth at risk

Time	Sample	Response rate	Interview method
T1 Last year in residential care	277	-	Self-administered questionnaire
T2 1 year after leaving care	235	80.5%	By phone
T3 4 years after leaving care	220	76.6%	By phone

Sample Characteristics (at T3)

- 59.5% Males
- Mean age 22.64 (SD = 0.97); Median 22.35
- Parent Place of Birth:
 - 40% Ethiopia
 - 24.5% Israel
 - 20.6% Former Soviet Union
- Placement Stability:
 - 69.7% One placement only
 - 22.9% Two
 - 7.4% Three or more
- Length of Stay in Care
 - Range: Half a year to 16 years in placement
 - Mean 5.08 (SD 2.65) Median = 4 years

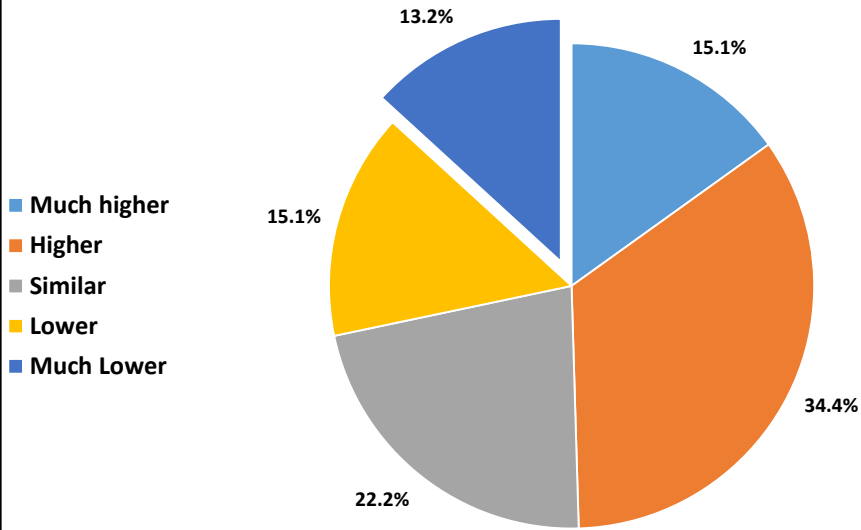
Main Instruments

Optimism	The Life Orientation Test (LOT-R)
Self Esteem	Rosenberg
Self Efficacy for Ind. living	Benbenishty & Zeira
Future Perceptions	Benbenishty & Zeira
Parental Support	The Relationship with Father/Mother Questionnaire (RFMQ)
Peer Support	The Medical Outcomes Study-MOS
Adjustment	Soldier Adaptation to Army Questionnaire (SAAQ)
Functioning	A series of instruments (income, employment, education, accommodation, substance)
Life Satisfaction	Student's Life Satisfaction Scale (SLSS)
Psychological Distress	Mental Health Inventory (MHI-5) + K10
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Descriptive Findings Overall Functioning

- **Military/Civil Service** – 75.5% participated, still serving 11.5%; Many experienced difficulties while serving
- **Employment** – 82.3% working; many changed jobs; 35% looked for a job and could not **find in the last year**. Most are satisfied with job security, less with the job itself.
- **Accommodations** – 56.4% with parents 15% with significant other; Two thirds stable last year, Two thirds satisfied or very satisfied
- **Education** – About 40% studied something but only about 10.5% in a college/university (too early?)

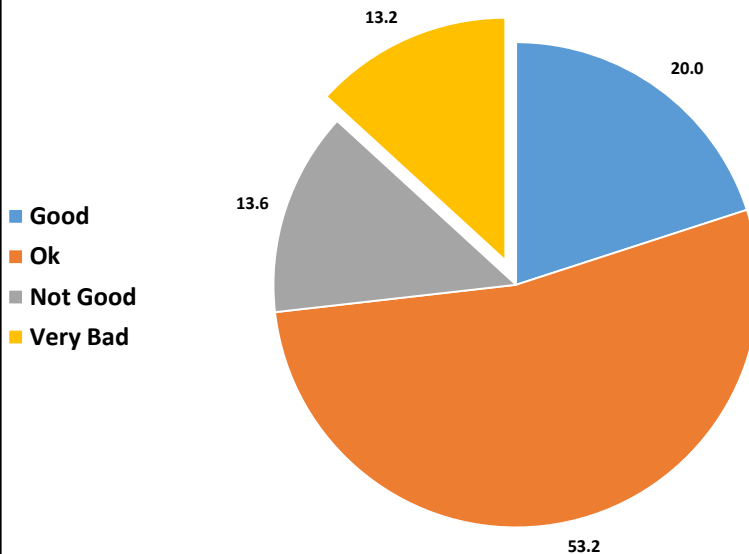
Salary Compared with Minimum Wage



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Subjective Assessment of Economic Situation



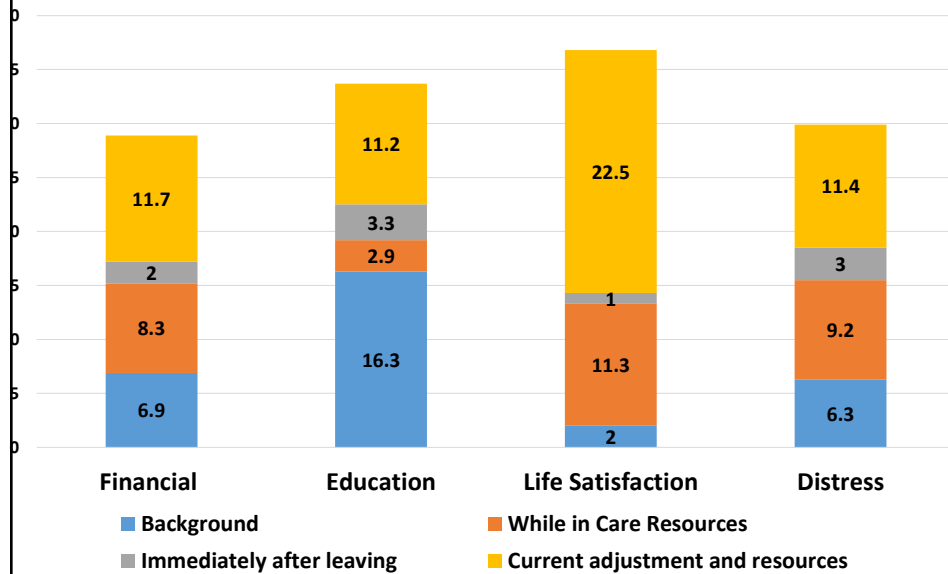
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Descriptive Findings Substance Use

- Only a few report on using marijuana
- 12.7% got drunk once last month, additional 8.1% twice or more
- 10% report 'binge drinking' once or twice past month and additional 5.5% more.

Variance Explained in Heirarchical Regression Analyses

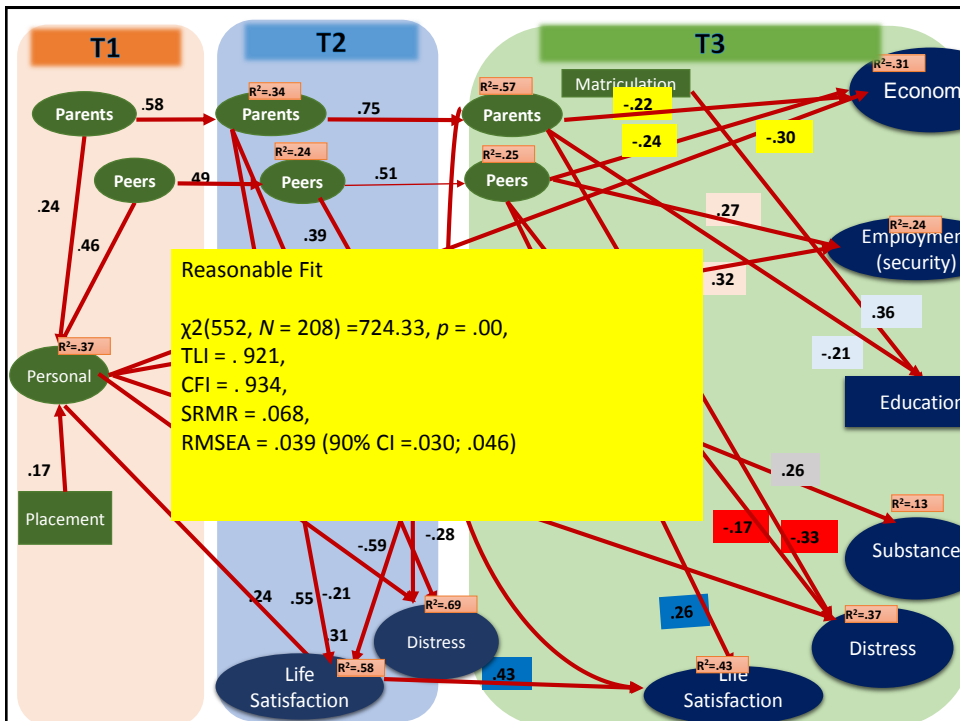


Examples of differential predictions

	Financial	Education	Distress	Life Satisfaction
Background	Gender	Gender, placement, background		Gender
While in Care Resources	Self Efficacy	Future perceptions	Self Efficacy	
Immediately after leaving		Complete Military Service		
Current adjustment and resources	Adjustment and Peer Support	Using resources	Adjustment Supports	Adjustment and maternal support

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Discussion Points

Functioning and Well Being

- Overall indications that functioning and well being are not as problematic as in current reports in the literature (especially from the US).
- Nevertheless, indications that this is highly vulnerable group in terms of employment, financial difficulties and life satisfaction.
- A group that is having more serious financial problems as well as lower wellbeing (from the qualitative)
- Education as a major challenge
- Lack of use of public supportive services

Discussion Points

Predictors of Functioning and Wellbeing

- Gender as a risk factor (financial and distress) and a strength (education)
- Immigrants as vulnerable group
- The important role of social support
- The role of parents

A current list of publications from this study (more to come...)

- Dinisman, T., & Zeira, A. (2011). The Contribution of Individual, Social Support and Institutional Characteristics to Perceived Readiness to Leave Care in Israel: An Ecological Perspective. *British Journal of Social Work, 41*, 1442-1458.
- Sulimani-Aidan, Y., & Benbenishty, R. (2011). Future expectations of adolescents in residential care in Israel. *Children and Youth Service Review, 41*, 1134-1141.
- Sulimani-Aidan, Y., & Benbenishty, R. (2013). Child maltreatment reports in Israel: The intersection between community socio-economic characteristics and ethnicity. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 83*, 29-36.
- Sulimani-Aidan, Y., Benbenishty, R., Dinisman, T., & Zeira, A. (2013). Care leavers in Israel: What contributes to better adjustment to life after care? *Journal of Social Service Research, 5*, 704-718.
- Dinisman, T., Zeira, A., Sulimani-Aidan, Y., & Benbenishty, R. (2013). The subjective well-being of young people ageing out of care. *Children and Youth Service Review, 35*, 1705 – 1711.
- Sulimani-Aidan, Y. (2014). **Care leavers' challenges in transition to independent living.** *Children and Youth Service Review, 46*, 38-46.
- Sulimani-Aidan, Y. (2015). Do they get what they expect?: The connection between young adults' future expectations before leaving care and outcomes after leaving care. *Children and Youth Service Review, 55*, 193-200.

Thanks!
Shalom!
& Lehitraout in Israel!!!
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