
EMOTIONAL AND COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT IN CHILDREN IN FOSTER AND INSTITUTIONAL CARE – LONGITUDINAL STUDY

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Introduction

Cognitive and emotional development of children is closely related to the environment, where they live. It is supposed that children in foster care or institutional care may be exposed to long-time changes in development and can show significant growth and developmental delays.

Methods

We have conducted 2 years longitudinal study of children in foster care (n = 70), in institutional care - D (n = 50) and in functional biological families (n = 50). We have evaluated the stage of cognitive and emotional development at the beginning and the end of the 2 years period.

Results

The results of the presented study showed that emotional and cognitive development of children in institutional care is comparing to other groups statistically significantly slower than in children in foster care and functional biological families (p, 0.01). Children in foster care show similar development progress to children in biological families.

Conclusion

The results of the study propose that children institutional may show developmental delays due to absence of individual contact with a care giver, while foster care may be in cases of necessity acceptable substitution of biological family.

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