

**“Growing up in out-of-home care” SWG invites submissions to ISCHE 43 Conference.
Milan, 31 aout-3 septembre 2022**

Standing Working Group : Growing up in out-of-home care: Histories of children and youths in foster families and residential homes

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General purpose of SWG : Since the late 1990s, forced out-of-home placement of children and youth became an issue in the public debate in several western countries, starting with Australia and Canada. When care leavers, who were placed out-of-home during their childhood and / or adolescence, decided in growing numbers to testify about their experiences, including maltreatment and sexual abuse, and to require explanation and / or compensation, the political authorities, responsible for forced out-of-home placements, in many countries mandated research teams to shed light on the long term history of welfare policies and historical abuse. Some of these investigations have been completed, others are ongoing or still in their early stages. Focusing on the extent of abuse and mistreatment, including sexual abuse, which occurred in residential homes and in foster families, these investigations also touched upon a variety of related issues: origin and evolution over time of public policies regarding child and family welfare; political and economic issues underlying these policies; categories and categorization of children and young people in relation to public intervention (orphans, illegitimates, delinquents, maladjusted, disabled...); social and cultural origins of those children in care; situations of the families and the individual vulnerability of the children behind out-of-home placement; the nature of educational institutions (private, public); the recruitment, training and profile of staff in educational institutions (lay / religious; gender perspective); the role of various experts and professionals in placement-related processes (psychiatrists, psychologists, judges, social workers, educationalists, etc.); educational and diagnostic methods and therapeutic practices applied in the institutions; attitudes and practices toward families. This whole line of inquiries not only touches upon past discourses and practices, but also resonates with current practices and professional interrogations in the ever-growing field of child and youth welfare. Fed by this steady stream of political and media interest and scholarly input, the issue of child out-of-home placement now and in the past has thus gained an undeniably audience in Western societies and public opinions over the last decade. 2 The SWG Growing up in out-of-home care will result into international comparisons on the history, experiences and memories of out-of-home care and education. It aims at the contribution to a debate of great topical importance, so enabling historians of education to get in touch with the concerns of society. We will also strive to consider a wide range of geographical regions, which have been brought during various stages of history into contact with colonial and western-inspired child welfare policies (Latin America, Asia, Africa), but also in other political contexts (such as the Ottoman empire or former communist regimes).

At the first meeting of the SWG during the ISCHE conference in Berlin in 2018, the topic was the decision of out-of-home placement

During the ISCHE conference in Porto the focus was on the conditions of investigating the topic of ‘Growing up in out-of-home care’ from archival, methodological and ethical points of view.

During ISCHE 2021 in Örebro the SWG meeting enters the out-of-home institutions with the topic: A Gendered Educational Regime in Out-of home institutions.

SWG “Growing up in out-of-home care”, CFP for ISCHE 2022- Milan

Topic: Knowledge, powers, and practices of expertise

In this SWG session we will discuss the place of experts and their professional practices in the process of institutionalizing children and youngsters in care. The first step will be to historicize and document the rise of scientific expertise, especially psychiatric expertise, in decision-making processes leading to placements of children and youngsters. Since when and how did expert knowledge intrude into the modalities of civil, penal and educational placement? Which sciences contributed to this scientific and disciplinary knowledge (medicine, law, pedagogy, psychology, psychiatry, psychomotricity, etc.)? What do we know about their practices of expertise, namely their concrete implementation (tools, materials, methods, examinations, etc.)? How was their influence felt, either on the side of professionals in supervised education (for example in the development of training courses, recourse to biomedical vocabulary and diagnoses), or from the point of view of decision-making bodies (for example in their relations with magistrates and courts)? To what extent did this rise in expert knowledge result in a reorganization of the field of supervised education (religious or secular placement institutions), and with what effects (new collaborations, competitions, tensions) during the 20th century? What were the outcomes of these expert practices on the destinies and institutional careers of the populations concerned (youngsters and their families)? What relationship can we observe in particular between recourse to expert opinions and internment procedures? Was the influence of the anti-psychiatry movement in the 1960s and 1970s marked by a weakening of the influence of experts in the field of supervised education? What changes have been observed in this field since the 1980s, which are still poorly understood and little studied? On the basis of contemporary scientific knowledge, we want to assess the scientific soundness of this past expertise. Ultimately, this also raises the question on the scientific soundness of today's expertise in juvenile justice which still plays an important role in determining the specific needs of a child.

Topic: Savoirs, pouvoirs, et pratiques de l'expertise

Le but de cette session du SWG sera de discuter de la place des experts et de leurs pratiques d'expertise dans le processus d'institutionnalisation des enfants et des jeunes placés. Il s'agira d'abord d'historiciser et de documenter la montée en puissance de l'expertise scientifique, et tout particulièrement de l'expertise psychiatrique, dans les processus de décision débouchant sur des placements infantiles et juvéniles. Depuis quand et selon quelles modalités les savoirs experts font-ils intrusion dans les modalités du placement civil, pénal, éducatif? En fonction de quels savoirs mobilisés et de quels ancrages disciplinaires (médecine, droit, pédagogie, psychologie, psychomotricité, etc)? Que sait-on des pratiques mêmes de l'expertise, à savoir leur mise en œuvre concrète (outils, matériaux, méthodes, examens, etc). Comment leur influence s'est-elle fait sentir, soit du côté des professionnels de l'éducation surveillée (évolution des formations, recours au vocabulaire biomédical et aux diagnostics), soit du point de vue des instances décisionnaires (relations avec les magistrats et les tribunaux)? Dans quelle mesure cette montée en force des savoirs experts s'est-elle traduite par une recomposition du champ de l'éducation surveillée (institutions de placement religieuses ou laïques), et avec quels effets (nouvelles collaborations, concurrences, tensions) au cours du 20^e siècle? Quels effets ces pratiques d'expertise ont-elles eu sur les destinées et les carrières institutionnelles des populations concernées (les jeunes, leur famille)? Quelles relations notamment peut-on observer entre recours aux expertises et modalités d'internement? La diffusion des convictions anti-psychiatriques dans les années 1960-1970 s'est-elle marquée par un amoindrissement de l'influence des experts dans le domaine de l'éducation surveillée? Quelles évolutions sont observables dans ce domaine depuis les années 1980, encore mal connues et peu étudiées?

Enfin, cette thématique interroge les fondements scientifiques de l'expertise actuelle au sein de la justice des mineurs, laquelle joue encore un rôle majeur dans la détermination des besoins spécifiques de l'enfant.