

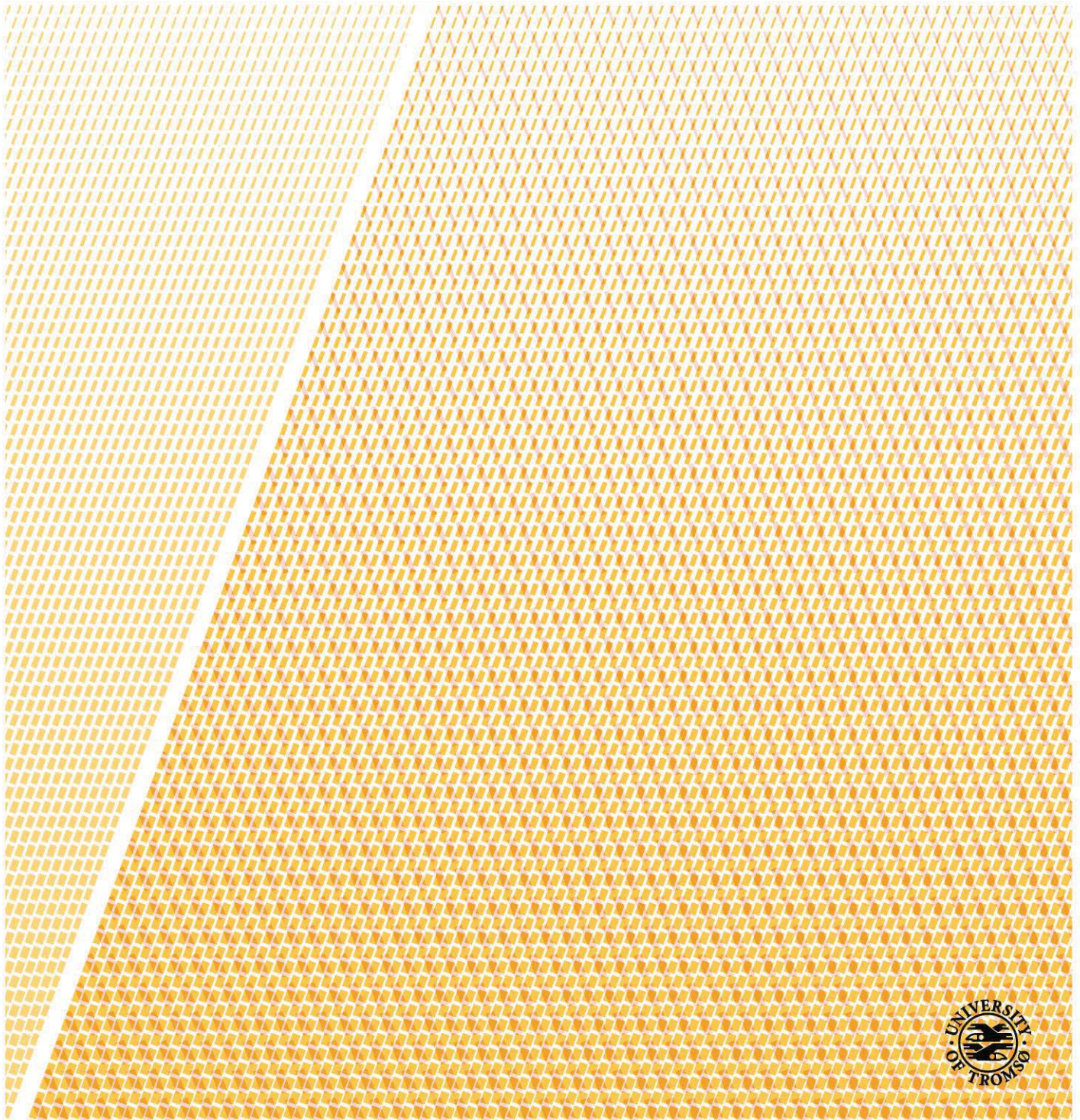
Upbringing by relatives

Incorporating new understandings and perspectives into the study of kinship foster care

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Acknowledgements

Twenty years ago, Amy Holtan began her national study of kinship foster care. She interviewed children who were cared for by non-parental relatives within child protection jurisdiction, their caregivers and birth parents. She also collected questionnaires with the help from childrens caregivers and birth parents. In 2008, Renee Thørnblad followed up on this study. Six years later, in March 2014, the torch was handed to me. Throughout this time, members of over 200 families have participated, many of whom have contributed twice or three times. On behalf of Holtan, Thørnblad and myself, I would like to thank all the participants – children, foster parents and birth parents - who in different ways have contributed to the research project throughout the years. The experiences and information you have shared has given, and will continue to give, valuable insights into what kinship care is and what it involves in a Norwegian context. I would especially like to thank the women and men who participated in the study in 2015. Without you, this doctoral dissertation would not have been possible.

I started my doctoral dissertation a short time after receiving my master's degree in sociology. Reading up on the kinship care literature, I understood that I had entered a new and unfamiliar world. As such, the first part of my PhD journey was as a phase of confusion and frustration. Fortunately, my supervisor for the PhD project was Renee Thørnblad. Through fruitful discussions, Renee helped me to distil these feelings and transfer them into words. This later become characteristic of Renee's mentorship: to capture the essence of the problem in question and to provide sufficient tools to overcome it. I am aware of how fortunate I have been to have Renee as my supervisor, and would like to express my sincere gratitude. Thank you Renee, for the countless discussions we have had and the support you have shown along the way. You have been generous, not only with your time, but with your knowledge. You are truly a wizard of reflexive thinking and it has been a privilege to work under your supervision.

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Abstract

Growing up with relatives is not a new phenomenon. Throughout history, upbringing by relatives has been a solution in the private sphere in various cultures to meet challenges such as parental death, poverty, teenage pregnancies and parents' substance abuse. *Kinship foster care*, on the other hand, as a category and service within child protective services, is a relatively new phenomenon which can be dated back to the late 1980s.

Upbringing by relatives has traditionally been an area of interest among anthropologists. Family life and relationships have been explored among sociologists and historians for decades. With the institutionalisation and categorisation of kinship foster care, upbringing by relatives has become a relevant topic also for social work researchers.

Following an increased use of kinship care placements since the 1990s, social work researchers have produced a large body of literature related to this phenomenon. The main focus here has revolved around what results kinship care “gives”, what outcomes children “have”, whether kinship care is as safe and stable as non-kinship care arrangements, and other issues related to the “effects” of kinship care compared to non-kinship care. Hence, under the gaze of social work research, upbringing by relatives has been studied less as *family* and more as a *technology*.

The main aim of this doctoral dissertation is to bring family into the study of kinship care, and to locate the phenomenon in society. To this purpose I propose an alternative way of approaching kinship care in research. *Upbringing by relatives* builds on contemporary understandings of family found within the sociology of family life. The questions I explore here are: What type of knowledge can we gain from approaching kinship care as upbringing by relatives? In what ways does this knowledge contribute to the area of kinship care research and the sociology of family life? Why is it important to incorporate this “new” understanding in kinship care research? The dissertation consists of three research papers, each seeking to contribute to answer these questions.

Paper I addresses the knowledge production on kinship care. Here, I present the concept of upbringing by relatives as an alternative to approaching kinship care as a service. Using effect studies as a case, the paper critically discusses what type of knowledge we gain when we approach kinship care as a service. Upbringing by relatives is explored through exceptions in

the kinship care literature and a discussion of the contribution that the sociology of family life can make.

Both empirical papers in this dissertation build on an underlying understanding of kinship care as upbringing by relatives. Paper II is an analysis of the childhood narratives of 26 young adults (aged 19-29 in 2015) who grew up in foster care with relatives. Growing up in long-term foster care means being subjected to the foster child status for most of one's childhood. The starting point for the analysis is that the foster child status provides cultural and public narratives, images and positions for the young adults to employ when interpreting childhood experiences. The paper examines how this status is made relevant in the production of childhood narratives.

Paper III explores the *meaning* and *content* which children ascribe to their relationships with their birth parents, and how this changes over time. To explore this question, the paper draws on a qualitative longitudinal data set, in which children who grew up in kinship care in Norway were interviewed over a 15-year period. Three case studies were selected, and we follow two girls and one boy through their three interviews as children (T1: 10-11 years old), emerging adults (T2: 19-20 years old), and young adults (T3: 28-29 years old).

On the basis of these three papers, I argue that upbringing by relatives leads to a different and much needed type of knowledge, which is necessary if we are to obtain a better understanding of kinship care. It gives knowledge about the variety of family forms and relationships which kinship care consists of and how they change over time. Moreover, it gives us insight into the formal aspect of kinship care and the possible unintended consequences this may have.

“Upbringing by relatives” serves as a tool, a reminder of what kinship care consists of – of different family forms and relationships practiced in different social and cultural contexts. It opens up a frame to explore kinship care in, where questions posed to all family forms become relevant – a frame where we do not automatically take on perspectives, questions offered to us by child protective services. As such, the construction allows us to gain *new* knowledge about kinship care instead of reproducing already established understandings.

List of papers

I. Skoglund, J., & Thørnblad, R. (2017). Kinship care or upbringing by relatives? The need for ‘new’ understandings in research. *European Journal of Social Work*. Advance online publication.¹ doi:10.1080/13691457.2017.1364702

II. Skoglund, J., Holtan, A., & Thørnblad, R. (2017). The meaning and making of childhoods in kinship care – young adults’ narratives. *Nordic Social Work Research*. Advance online publication. doi:10.1080/2156857X.2017.1422139

III. Skoglund, J., Thørnblad, R., & Holtan, A. (in review): Children’s relationships with birth parents deprived of parental responsibility.

¹ *Advance online publication* means that the manuscript has been published, but has not yet been assigned a volume, issue, or page numbers.

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1. Introduction

Background

There is a long history in Norway, as in other countries, of children being cared for by relatives when birth parents are unable to care for the children themselves. *Formal kinship foster care*², on the other hand – as a category and service within child protective services (CPS) – is a relatively new phenomenon. Researchers from different countries have documented that child welfare workers have been reluctant to accept relatives as viable placement alternatives for children (Berridge & Cleaver, 1987; Egelund, 1997; Hessele & Vinnerljung, 1999; Scannapieco, 1999; Sinclair, Baker, Lee, & Gibbs, 2007). Over the last decades, such attitudes have changed and kinship care has emerged as the preferred choice for placement in Western Europe, the US, Australia and New Zealand (Ainsworth & Maluccio, 1998; Broad, 2004; Hegar & Scannapieco, 1999). In Norway, changing attitudes became apparent in 2004 when child welfare workers were given new guidelines, stating that they “should always consider whether someone in the child’s family or close network could be appointed foster parents.” (§ 4) (Norwegian Ministry of Children and Family Affairs, 2003).

Through interventions in the private sphere the public domain expands. As argued by Thørnblad and Holtan (2011b, p. 50), the institutionalisation of kinship care and the introduction of policies that favour placing children with relatives can be understood as an example of such an expansion. Moreover, it can also be understood as an *adjustment* where children and their families’ problems are adapted to conform to already established categories in CPS (Järvinen & Mik-Meyer, 2003, p. 10). Through this adjustment a new construction of upbringing by relatives has emerged, and the phenomenon can now be understood and approached as a *service* within CPS, inscribed with an institutional definition and goals.

With the institutionalisation and categorisation of kinship care, combined with an increased use of kinship care placements since the 1990s, upbringing by relatives has become a topic of interest amongst social work researchers. While the research field of kinship care has a rather short history, upbringing by relatives has been an area of interest among anthropologists for decades. From this research we know that *why* and *how* upbringing by relatives has been practised, and the *meanings* ascribed to such arrangements, can vary greatly from one cultural

² Formal kinship foster care is known as *kinship foster care* in the US, *family and friends care* in the UK, and *kith and kin care* in Australia (Winokur, Holtan, & Batchelder, 2014, p. 3). In the Scandinavian countries, kinship care is often referred to as *slektsfosterhjem* in Norway, *slægtspleje* in Denmark and *släktinghem* in Sweden.

setting to another (Bledsoe & Isingo-Abanike, 1989; Carsten, 1991; Fortes, 1949; Meier, 1999; Shell-Duncan, 1994). How kinship care is made sense of, practised and understood has been given little attention in social work research. Rather, the main focus here has revolved around what results kinship care “gives”, what outcomes children “have”, whether kinship care is as safe and stable as non-kinship care arrangements, and other issues related to the “effects” of kinship care compared to non-kinship care. This is reflected in a large number of outcome studies produced since the 1990s³ and the scope of reviews of the kinship care literature (Brown & Sen, 2014; Cuddeback, 2004; O'Brien, 2012).

Compared with the myriad of quantitative studies, the paucity of qualitative studies that include the perspectives of children, youth and young adults is striking. Amongst the few qualitative studies available, most consist of descriptive analysis aimed at presenting children’s “voices” on growing up in kinship care (e.g., Altshuler, 1999; Burgess, Rossvoll, Wallace, & Daniel, 2010; Messing, 2006). The focus is not so much on children’s *understanding* of their family situation, but on their *opinions* or *views* on growing up this way. Moreover, the findings from these studies are often used to discuss the benefits and challenges of growing up in kinship care – the “pros and cons” of the service. Hence, while these qualitative studies include children’s perspectives, the aim is more or less consistent with that of effect studies – to gain knowledge on what kinship care, as a service, “does” to children. On the basis of previous research, I find it reasonable to argue that under the gaze of social work research, upbringing by relatives has primarily been studied as a service in CPS. Thus, the phenomenon has been studied less as *family* and more as a *technology* (Ulvik, 2009).

Aim and research questions

The main aim of this doctoral dissertation is to bring family into the study of kinship care, and thus to locate the phenomenon in society. To this purpose I have developed an analytical approach that allows us to study kinship care as family. *Upbringing by relatives* builds on contemporary understandings of family found within the sociology of family life (Finch & Mason, 1993; Gubrium & Holstein, 1990; Morgan, 1996) and makes theoretical and empirical

³ In 2009, Winokur, Holtan and Valentine conducted a Cochrane Campbell review where 62 quasi-experimental studies were included. In 2014, Winokur Holtan and Batchelder published an updated version, including 102 studies. The numbers does not reflect the total numbers of outcome studies at each time, but the number of studies that fulfilled their criteria.

studies from this tradition relevant to the study of kinship care. To clarify, it involves acknowledging that:

- Kinship care consists of a variety of family forms and relationships, actively created by its members.
- Family life and relationships are practiced and negotiated in different social and cultural contexts and change over time.
- Families found within the category kinship care do, like all families, live *in* society, side by side with other contemporary family forms.
- Kinship care is not a “thing” or “technology”, but a context in which these families practice and make sense of parenthood, childhood and family.

The questions I seek to explore here are:

- What type of knowledge can we gain from approaching kinship care as upbringing by relatives?
- In what ways does this knowledge contribute to the area of kinship care research and the sociology of family life?
- Why is it important to incorporate this “new” understanding in kinship care research?

This doctoral dissertation consists of three papers, each contributing to answering these questions:

- Skoglund, J. and Thørnblad, R. (2017): Kinship care or upbringing by relatives? The need for ‘new’ understandings in research.
- Skoglund, J., Holtan, A., & Thørnblad, R. (2018): The meaning and making of childhoods in kinship care - young adults’ narratives.
- Skoglund, J., Thørnblad, R., & Holtan, A. (in review): Children’s relationships with birth parents deprived of parental responsibility.

Paper I addresses the knowledge production on kinship care. Here I present the concept of upbringing by relatives as an alternative to approaching kinship care as a service. Using effect

studies as a case, the paper critically discusses what type of knowledge we gain when we approach kinship care as a service. Upbringing by relatives is explored through exceptions in the kinship care literature and a discussion of the contribution that the sociology of family life can make.

When we approach kinship care as upbringing by relatives, in contrast to a “thing”, this raises questions about the formal aspect of kinship care and what it has or can involve. Paper II exemplifies one way in which this issue can be explored. Here, we analyse the childhood narratives of 26 young adults (aged 19-29 in 2015) who grew up in long-term kinship care. Growing up in long-term foster care means being subjected to the foster child status for most of one’s childhood, a status from which one cannot escape. The starting point for the analysis is that the foster child status provides cultural and public narratives, images and positions for the young adults to employ when interpreting childhood experiences. The question we ask is how this status is made relevant in their production of childhood narratives.

While the approach raises issues around the formal aspect of kinship care, it also allows us to explore family relationships. This is the topic of paper III. More specifically it explores the *meaning* and *content* which children ascribe to their relationships with their birth parents, and how this changes over time. To explore this question, the paper draws on a qualitative longitudinal data set, in which children who grew up in kinship care in Norway were interviewed over a 15-year period. Three case studies were selected, and we follow two girls and one boy through their three interviews as children (T1: 10-11 years old), emerging adults (T2: 19-20 years old), and young adults (T3: 28-29 years old).

The aim of the three papers is of course not only to show how and why kinship care can and should be approached as upbringing by relatives. Rather, the dissertation as a whole seeks to contribute to the limited tradition of qualitative research related to children and adolescents who grow up in kinship care. Moreover, it represents one of the very few studies which includes the perspective of young adults who grew up in kinship care.⁴ As such, this dissertation adds in different ways to rather unexplored areas in the kinship care literature. With that said, it is not only relevant inside the realms of social work research. Because the dissertation explores

⁴ I have only found one study focusing exclusively on kinship foster care which includes young adults’ perspectives. This is a mixed method study conducted by Del Valle, Lázaro-Visa, López, & Bravo (2011). It explores young adults’ transition to adulthood from kinship care in the Spanish context.

kinship care as upbringing by relatives – as family, it is also relevant to other areas of research such as the sociology of family life.

A story about a reflexive research project in the making

This study is a part of the national longitudinal research project “Outcomes and experiences of growing up in foster care” and represents the third phase (T3) of data collection. Amy Holtan’s doctoral dissertation from 2002, “Childhood in foster care with relatives” (*Barndom i fosterhjem I egen slekt*), was the first study (T1) in the project. Renee Thørnblad’s doctoral dissertation “Kinship care – public service in private homes” (*Slektsfosterhjem – offentlig tiltak i private hjem*) (2011), represents the second study (T2). The two studies both challenged contemporary understandings of kinship care at the time they were written: Holtan, by challenging the negative perceptions attached to kinship at the time and Thørnblad by challenging the way we understand children in kinship care - they are not only foster children (clients), they are also children living everyday life in different families.

By proposing and exploring alternative ways of approaching kinship care in research, my dissertation seeks to contribute to this small group of researchers who have sought to challenge contemporary ways of thinking about kinship care. The need to conceptualise and present “new” ways of approaching kinship care stems from my encounters with the research field of kinship care on the one hand, and with families within the category kinship care on the other. In the following paragraph, I try to give insights into this experience by telling a story about the starting phase of my PhD-journey.

In March 2014, when I began this study of young adults who had grown up in kinship care, I had little knowledge of the field, or of CPS more generally. I had just received my master’s degree in sociology, and my main interest revolved around family life and relationships. Reading up on the kinship care literature, I soon came to realise that I had entered a “field of its own” - one where the questions posed about contemporary families had little relevance. Rather, the main questions revolved around the ability of kinship care as a service to provide “sufficient” care, the positive and negative aspects of growing up in kinship care, the effects of growing up this way, and so on. Not surprisingly, the qualitative interviews conducted by Holtan (T1), Thørnblad (T2) and myself (T3), gave me a different view of the everyday lives of the persons who fall into the category kinship care. To cut a long story short, I found a

considerable gap between the image presented of kinship care in the research literature and the interview material. Paper I sprung out from this experience. It was an attempt to provide a different way of approaching kinship care in research, one that lay closer to the “lived experience” of the families within the category “kinship care”.

This ambition to cast a gaze on a phenomenon in a way that does not reproduce contemporary mainstream conceptions of that phenomenon is closely linked to Foucault’s (1976) notion of “rupture”⁵, and particularly Bourdieu’s call for researchers to break with the preconstructed (for example, in Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). As emphasised by Pierre Bourdieu, the preconstructed is everywhere – referred to here as:

(...) the common sense, that is, the representations shared by all, whether they be the mere commonplaces of ordinary existence or official representations, often inscribed in institutions and thus present both in the objectivity of social organizations and in the minds of the participants (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 235).

To Bourdieu, all categories in which we classify the social world with are preconstructed. This leads to a challenge for the researcher because there are already established ways of understanding the phenomenon we are studying (Prieur & Sestoft, 2006, p. 216). As a service within CPS, the aim of kinship foster care is to provide a good and safe childhood for children. If we uncritically adopt this understanding in research, we automatically ask if the service is capable of doing so. In the study of children who grow up in different out-of-home care settings the dominant questions are different versions of *how do they fare?* For young adults who no longer have the status of foster children, a question that inevitably will be asked is *how did it go?* Instead of producing new knowledge, we end up documenting and ratifying something already constructed (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 236). Hence, the argument of finding “new” ways of approaching kinship care is an attempt to break with the preconstructed. By this I am not arguing for a move away from the term “kinship care” altogether. Rather, I seek to contribute with a tool that reminds us of what kinship care consists of: a range of different family forms and relationships organised and structured in different places at different times. This, I argue, allows for new questions to be asked and for new knowledge to come into view.

⁵ Foucault’s notion of rupture can be understood and applied in different ways. I refer here to the act of freeing oneself from prevailing perceptions of the phenomenon in question.

One challenge however, is that “kinship foster care” is only one example from a wide administrative terminology found within CPS. *Placement, foster child, after care, reunification* and so on exemplify this terminology. The researcher who uncritically adopts this language, as well as established understandings found within CPS, also risks taking on established understandings. According to Ulvik (2009, p. 22), one of the challenges of foster care research is that many researchers are recruited from the very field they are studying. The challenge, she argues, is that because they are already embedded in the logic of CPS, they risk taking it for granted. Following Ulvik’s reflections, it might be argued that I, who do not have a background in CPS, have an advantage – I am an “outsider”. I have strived to live up to the role as an outsider through the conceptualisation of upbringing by relatives. The reader will also notice that I never use the word foster child, but instead consistently employ the terms “children who grew up in foster care” or “young adults who grew up in kinship care”. I do, however, use the term *foster parent*; this, despite knowing that most of the interviewees in the study never used it themselves. The adoption of this term can in some cases be related to an uncritical use of the terminology offered by CPS, but in many cases it also exemplifies a lack of an alternative terminology. Nevertheless, this contradiction exemplifies that the dissertation is not free from gaps or unresolved question. Hence, it is best read as a project in the making.

Interpretive social constructionism – a frame for knowledge production

This doctoral dissertation springs from, and has been conducted within, a social constructivist framework. As emphasised by Gubrium and Holstein (2008), the term *constructionism* has “reverberated” across the social sciences since the 1960s. The leading idea has been, and continues to be, that the world does not simply exist “out there” independently of us as observers (Guba, 1990, p. 22). Rather, social actors “actively construct the world of everyday life and its constituent elements” (Gubrium & Holstein, 2008, p. 3). While constructionism has been highly influential in how social sciences are conducted today, the movement has also been highly criticised. According to the influential philosopher Ian Hacking, the phrase “social constructionism” is both obscure and overused. While stressing that constructionism has liberated many aspects of our social life which we previously took for granted as “fixed” (e.g. motherhood), he further argues that constructionism “has made all too many others smug, comfortable, and trendy in ways that have become merely orthodox” (Hacking, 1999, p. vii). Twenty years ago, Bertilsson and Järvinen (1998, p. 9), argued that it was particularly the

younger generations who had been captivated. The problem, they argued, was that they (the younger generation) deployed the term “social constructivist perspective” as *ad-hoc* solutions, and/or failed to clarify what this involved theoretically and methodologically. Whether this is the case today is uncertain. Nevertheless, to avoid being understood as a “younger, smug, trend-follower”, I dedicate the following section to describing the strain of constructionist thought which this dissertation springs from.

According to Harris (2008), constructionism in sociology can be approached as a continuum, with interpretive social constructionism (ISC) representing one end of the spectrum and objective social constructivism (OSC) representing the other.⁶ The core principal of ISC is that social phenomena are “interpreted entities whose existence and qualities are dependent in large part on people’s meaning-making practices” (p. 233). Moreover, the meaning of these entities is not inherent. Rather, they are created, learned, used, and revised in social action. From this relativistic stance, everything can be seen, described or used in different ways. As such, the aim is not to uncover, nor discover what things “really” mean, but to examine how reality is produced *by* and *for* members of various social settings (p. 234).

Unlike the interpretive social constructivist, the objective social constructivist focuses on “real state of affairs” and the creation of “real things”, produced by “actions of individual actors and groups, by constraining social forces, by the operations of class, race, gender, politics, or religion, and so on” (Harris, 2008, p. 234). Interpretations and culture often play a part in OSC analysis, but the focus is primarily on gaining knowledge of what is “really going on” and “why this happened”.

As might already be evident and will continue to be evident throughout this dissertation and its three papers, I can be placed closest to the ISC end of the spectrum. This is reflected in my language, analysis and understanding of “family”, “kinship care”, “child protective services” and so on. With that said, the reader will see that I am not always consistent in the usage of the ISC perspective. For example, in paper II, where I explore young adults’ childhood narratives I also discuss the question “what leads to which stories being told”. In other words, I not only focus on *how things are defined as they are*, which is the analytical aim of ISC, but also on *why things occur as they do*, which is closer to OSC (p. 235).

⁶ As emphasised by Harris (2008, p. 232), interpretive social constructionism has roots in a number of diverse traditions, such as symbolic interactionism, ethnomethodology, phenomenology and pragmatism. Representatives of this perspective include Berger and Luckmann (1966), Blumer (1969), Garfinkel (1967) and Gubrium and Holstein (1990).

Key definitions

Kinship foster care is internationally defined as “the full-time nurturing and protection of children who must be separated from their parents, by relatives, members of their tribes or clans, godparents, step-parents, or other adults who have a kinship bond with a child” (CWLA, 1994). Because of the scope of this dissertation, a more suitable definition is “children being cared for by non-parental relatives within child-protection jurisdiction” (Holtan, Handegård, Thørnblad, & Vis, 2013, p. 1087). In the following text I will refer to “kinship foster care” also as “kinship care” and “children who grew up in foster care with relatives” in order to avoid repetition and improve fluency. *Non-kinship foster care* refers to arrangements where children are cared for by people other than relatives.

Child protective services (abbreviated to CPS) is used to designate both child protection and child welfare systems. The term *child welfare worker* refers to members of social work professions who work in/with child welfare (Picot, 2016, pp. 5-6).

Organisation of the dissertation

The dissertation consists of eight chapters. In the following chapter I provide insights into some of the processes leading up to the institutionalisation and categorisation of kinship care as a service within CPS. The aim is to explore kinship care in a socio-historical context, and to give insight into the field in which upbringing by relatives is now inscribed. I end the chapter with an overview of the number of children growing up in kinship care today, and identify the main characteristics of the families in which they grow up.

In chapter three, I describe the research field of kinship care in more detail, and discuss why questions about effects have become so relevant in this field. I also give examples of what I argue can be understood as exceptions in the research literature – studies that approach kinship care as family. Moreover, I show that there is an area specifically dedicated to research “on” and “with” youth who grew up in kinship care, foster care and other types of “out-of-home care placements”. This is often referred to as the “leaving-care literature”. Because the empirical papers primarily draw on interviews with young adults, I show what perspectives this literature can offer, and explain why I have not adopted them in my own study.

Chapter four is dedicated to the main field in which family, parenthood, childhood and other related issues are studied today, namely the sociology of family life. The chapter gives insights into changing conceptions of family, and perspectives which I argue are particularly useful in studies of children and young adults who grew up in foster care with relatives. I also show that, just as social work researchers show little interest in sociological theory, sociologists rarely include foster care arrangements in their discussions of contemporary family life. Hence, chapters three and four both give insights into two separate fields of research with boundaries which include and exclude particular objects of research on the basis of their respective categorisations.

In chapter five I explore kinship foster care as a context. Here I outline some of the main characteristics of the framework in which upbringing by relatives is practised (in Norway) today. I pay particular attention to the foster child status, and discuss the greater room for action which follows this status, both for children and for young adults. This is a rather underemphasised area in the foster care literature. To make the chapter as rich as possible, I use quotes from the qualitative data material to exemplify my arguments.

Chapter six concerns method and methodology. As already mentioned, this doctoral dissertation is part of the national longitudinal research project “Outcomes and experiences of growing up in foster care” and represents the third phase (T3) of data collection. I use this chapter to show how I carved my own path through the structure set by the research project. I provide insights into the research process, with particular focus on the stages before the interview process, the interviews and the analysis conducted in relation to papers II and III.

In chapter seven, the three papers are presented. This is followed by a discussion in chapter eight where I use the results from the three papers to answer the main research questions in this doctoral dissertation.

2. The institutionalisation of kinship care in a changing child protective services

Kinship foster care is now incorporated as a service among other services within CPS. According to Thørnblad (2011, p. 16), the categorisation and institutionalisation of kinship foster care can be related to three main developments: the establishment of CPS and transformations in their governing laws and policies; changing priorities among the services, and birth parents and relatives changing positions in CPS. In this chapter I offer insights into these processes. I also outline some of the main characteristics of today's CPS. This is followed by an exploration of the role of relatives as foster parents in the earlier phases of CPS. Finally, I describe and discuss some characteristics of the families within the category kinship foster care. The aim of the chapter is to explore kinship care in an historical context, to give insights into the field in which upbringing by relatives is now included, and by doing this to get a better understanding of what "kinship care" consists of.

In my exploration of the historical development of the Norwegian CPS, I rely on studies conducted by specialists within a number of disciplines focusing on child welfare and foster care in Norway. I have only found one scholar who has provided a partly coherent historical account of the history of the Norwegian CPS (Hagen, 2001). Others touch upon aspect of this development through explorations of the establishment of CPS (Dahl, 1985), law reform (Larsen, 2002), and placements of children from 1900-1950 (Andresen, 2006). These, along with other relevant studies, provide perspectives from disciplines such as criminology and sociology, and represent important sources for this chapter.

Transforming child protection: legal changes

Initiatives for children in need of protection, care and nurture have a long history in Norway. The first signs of public child protection in Norway can be traced back to the 12th century. Laws were implemented stating that farm owners were obliged to give shelter and food to the poor for a certain period. This system was termed pauperism (*legd*), and pauper children (*legdebarn*) were a common phenomenon in most districts in Norway (Hagen, 2001, p. 17). Closer to our own time, between 1639 and 1670, the first orphanages were established in Norway (in Trondheim, Oslo and Bergen), initiated by local philanthropists with the consent of the King.⁷ The aim of these orphanages was to teach poor and homeless children crafts, honesty and godly morals in order to prevent them from “falling outside society for good” (Midré, 1990, pp. 46-7, my translation).

The Act on the treatment of neglected children of 1896 (Vergerådsloven)

From the late 1880s until the 1950s, the state’s involvement in, and control of, childhood and family life expanded, and children who could not live with their birth parents increasingly became a concern for the authorities. In 1900, the Act on the treatment of neglected children of 1896 (*Vergerådsloven*) was implemented, marking the first public child protection system in the world. In a time when criminal actions among children and youth were increasingly problematised, the 1896 Act emphasised the importance of upbringing, discipline and education rather than punishment (jail sentences) (Hagen, 2001, p. 21). Child welfare boards (*Vergerådet*) composed of judges and non-professionals were constituted and granted extensive powers, including the possibility of placing children under the age of 16 in out-of-home care (reform schools, orphanages or foster care).⁸ The primary aim of such placements was to protect society from delinquent and neglected children and youth (Ericsson, 2002). They were to be taken care of according to their deviant backgrounds – to ensure that they received the right type of upbringing, training and discipline (Dahl, 1985).

⁷ At the time, they were not called orphanages, but «Children’s houses» (*Børnehus*).

⁸ In 1934, this age limit was raised to 18 years.

The Child Welfare Act of 1953

The Child Welfare Act of 1953 represented the first extensive reform of child protection since the 1896 Act. The Act granted new preventive duties, requiring CPS to work towards keeping children *in* their families. Poverty was no longer seen as a legitimate reason for placing children in out of-home-care. Children's living conditions were to be improved and a greater range of supportive measures to families were implemented, including financial support and monitoring (Larsen, 2002). One of the primary aims of this legislation was to replace the traditional moralistic attitudes towards deviant children based on religious views with scientific knowledge grounded in psychology, psychiatry, pedagogy, and medicine. This new knowledge base brought new understandings of the concepts of "care" and "children's needs" into view, emphasising the importance of stability and belonging for children. In the Child Welfare Act of 1953, these new ways of thinking gained ground. The emphasis on protection of families was to be secured through "the best interest of the child" and the "biological principle". The latter refers to the view that children should grow up with their biological families - they belonged together; and, if children were separated, maintaining contact with their birth parents had a value in itself (Haugli & Havik, 2010, p. 159).

The Child Welfare Act of 1992

The Child Welfare Act of 1992 is the most recent legislation in Norway.⁹ It is the legal foundation of CPS today, and defines child welfare workers' responsibilities and guides their decision-making.

The 1992 Act represents a strengthening of children's rights, highlighting their status as "separate individuals with legally guaranteed rights" (Ericsson, 2000, p. 19). It affirms the primacy of the best interest of the child in all decisions (Ericsson, 2000; Stang, 2007), which in 2003 was strengthened by the incorporation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. With this new legislation (§ 6-3), children above seven years of age were also granted the right to be heard in all processes affecting their lives.

⁹ In 2014, a child welfare law committee was appointed to investigate and prepare the child welfare act of 1992. The aim was to strengthen children's rights and safety, and to make regulations more accessible. Changes in the Child Welfare Act (the Child Welfare Reform) will be processed in the Norwegian parliament in March 2018. Proposition 73L has been confirmed, stating that all municipalities have a duty to search in children families and network for potential foster homes.

With its emphasis on preventive duties and supportive measures for families, the 1992 Act exhibits continuity with the previous Act of 1953. The reaffirmation of family treatment and the centrality of the family institution in society are reflected in the emphasis on the “biological principle”. However, it has later been argued that the family treatment principle was downplayed in the preparatory work for the Child Welfare Act of 1992 (Larsen, 2002) and that the Act in itself reflects an emphasis on psychological rather than biological ties. The change in conceptions of children’s “needs” for secure psychological ties rather than biological ties is reflected in the 2012 public report on the protection of children’s development (NOU, 2012, p. 5). As noted by Picot (2014, p. 697), the report not only challenged the biological principal as the basis of child welfare policies in Norway, it also aimed to state the primacy of psychological parenting over biological parenting.

Child protective services: contemporary characteristics

From the Act on the treatment of neglected children of 1896 to the Child Welfare Act of 1992 and up to the present day, CPS has undergone radical changes. One of the aims of the Act of 1992 was to lower the threshold for offering services provided by CPS, as well as to increase the use of helping measures (Backe-Hansen, Madsen, Kristoffersen, & Hvinden, 2014). As such, the Child Welfare Act of 1992 marked the beginning of a new era in child welfare. It represented a changing policy philosophy: a move away from *protection* to *prevention*. Since the year 2000 a new phase emerged, that emphasised the promotion of equal opportunities and welfare for children (Skivenes, 2011, p. 160). It concentrates on the child as an *individual* with legal rights and goes beyond protecting children from risk to promoting children’s welfare and well-being. This approach has been termed a *child-focused orientation* (Gilbert, Parton, & Skivenes, 2011, p. 252). In turn, CPS has *expanded*, with an increased number of children receiving services from CPS (in the form of both in-home and out-of-home services). At the end of 1994, nearly 27,000 children received support; at the end of 2010 the number was 37,296; and at the end of 2016 39,260 (Statistics Norway, 2017a). As Gilbert et al. (2011, p. 246) show in their comparative analysis of CPS, expansion is not only a trend in the Norwegian, but in all countries included in their study.¹⁰ Moreover, an interesting finding from this study is that Norway had a higher increase in out-of-home care placements from 1994 to 2008,

¹⁰ Gilbert, Parton and Skivenes (2011), included ten countries in their comparative study: The US, Canada, the UK, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Belgium, Netherlands, Germany and Norway.

compared to Sweden and Denmark in similar periods.¹¹ Recent figures from Statistics Norway show that the number of out-of-home placements in Norway has further increased, from 10,847 in 2008 to 15,820 in 2016 (Statistics Norway, 2017a). In other words, it is not only increased use of in-home-services which has resulted in an expansion of CPS, but also increased use of out-of-home care services. I follow up on the issue of priorities of services below. It should also be pointed out that in light of these changes, a new market has emerged where private, commercial, companies (e.g. Aleris and Ungplan) offer child welfare services such as foster care placements. The fact that these private companies have increased dramatically in the past ten years is a rather controversial socio-political issue in Norway today.¹²

While expansion and increased commercialisation represent important characteristics of CPS today, another is *professionalisation*. Professionalisation has emerged as a result of growing demands for professional competence among child welfare workers following the Child Welfare Act of 1992 (Skivenes, 2011, p. 168). Closely related to this issue, is the growth in *formal procedures* and *evidence-based initiatives*. This reflects a growing political will to make front-line professionals more formally accountable for what they do and how they do it (Gilbert et al., 2011, p. 249), to reduce the randomness of decisions and to raise the quality of the provided services (Hennum, 2014, p. 447).

Reflections on changing laws, policies and practices

The historical development of child protection laws and policies in Norway should not be interpreted as a linear evolution (Larsen, 2002; Picot, 2014). That said, the development does reflect specific changes. According to Larsen (2002), the changes which occurred in child welfare laws and policies between 1896 and 1992 can be understood as a type of reverse trajectory: from a focus on protecting society, to families and finally to the individual. This transformation is not unique, but rather it can be understood as a reflection of general societal changes such as new welfare arrangements, increased national wealth, commercialisation of social services, and changing social structures. Moreover, it can be related to changing

¹¹ Out-of-home care rates per 1000 children, as showed in table 12.1 in Gilbert, Parton, and Skivenes' comparative analysis (2011, p. 247): **Denmark:** 9.5/1000 – 10.2/1000 (1993-2007), **Sweden:** 6/1000 (2000) – 6.6/1000 (2007) and Norway: **Norway** 5.8 (1994) – 8.2 (2008).

¹² Se for example: <http://fontene.no/nyheter/privat-barnevern-sjudoblet-pa-ti-ar-6.47.283785.b67a37a857> (Uploaded 29.01.2018).

conceptions of children, what childhood is or should be, children's needs and positions, as well as who is most suitable to meet their needs. As such, CPS in Norway can be understood as a *mirror of society* (Ericsson, 1996).

The shift towards a child-focused orientation in CPS has been the object of a broad consensus in Norway. In the research literature, however, we can also find examples of more critical views on this development, particularly in relation to the knowledge that underpins the child-focus orientation:

(...) one of the central and prevailing representations in child welfare and child protection policies drawing the literature promotes the universal individualized child combined with the individualistic understanding of children's lives (Hennum, 2014, p. 444).

According to Picot (2014), one of the "side effects" of this view is that control has become less explicit. Her argument is based on an analysis of the changing child welfare laws and policies in Norway, and the knowledge used by politicians for legitimizing child welfare interventions between 1896 and 1992. As Picot shows, CPS started with a law aimed at combating criminality and ended with a law based on (universal) psychological theory of child development. Opposing arguments related to children's well-being become difficult, almost impossible (p. 698), while the possibility of indirect regulation of family life is increased (Hennum, 2010, 2014).

Changing priorities of services

The questions of where poor and/or neglected children should live, and from whom they should receive care, have been much debated across the history of Norwegian CPS.

In the late 19th century, the placement of preference was residential care/children's homes. The thinking was that foster care was unnatural, since foster parents would not be able to give these children a similar upbringing to that of their biological children. From this (utilitarian) perspective, foster children would be strangers, someone who always came second, over whom the foster parents (i.e. foster father) would have little influence (Thuen, 2002, p. 223). Yet "the family" was presented as an ideal – a model – for how to "run" institutions. At that point in history, therefore, many children grew up in more or less closed institutions, governed by pastors/managers whose duties were those of "fathers" who at the time were regarded as

household heads. The use of this model, which was dominant in the first part of the 20th century, reflects the functionalistic view of family life at the time, described more fully in chapter 4. Moreover, it reflects a view of childhood as a time to learn how to become proper citizens, meaning hardworking, obedient and virtuous workers. The aim of upbringing in institutions was, in other words, related to societal interests rather than interests of the individual child (Dahl, 1978).

Residential placements reached a peak in the interwar years (1918-1939) (Andresen, 2006). After recurrent disclosures of maltreatment and abuse towards children who grew up this way, CPS gradually moved away from the idea that institutions represented the best option for children's upbringing. The total number of institutions gradually decreased from the mid-1940s onwards (Ericsson, 2002). Around this time, "new" images of children and childhood became influential, which emphasised that childhood should be a carefree, secure and happy phase of human existence (Boyden, 1990). Children's "development" and "needs" were given increased importance, something which foster families rather than institutions were considered best suited to accommodate. Combined with an emphasis on "the child", the question turned – from what the child could give the families, to the foster families resources and abilities to maintain the child's needs. The turning away from institutions towards foster care placements is reflected in recent figures from Statistics Norway. By the end of 2016, only 8% of children who lived in out-of-home care lived in residential care, 74% lived in foster care and the remaining 18% were registered as living by themselves with supervision (Statistics Norway, 2017a).

Finally, it should be added that the use of adoption has also taken place during this development. From the post-war period and well into the 1960s, domestic adoptions were common in Norway (Andresen, 2006, p. 192). Since the 1970s, the number of domestic adoptions has decreased, and today they are rarely used as forms of placements (Statistics Norway, 2017b).

The changing positions of birth parents and relatives

Until the post-war period, birth parents and relatives had an uncertain and unpredictable position in the lives of children who grew up in foster care or institutions. According to Andresen (2006, p. 170), many foster parents regarded birth parents as a disturbance or a threat. Because foster parents could more or less deny birth parents contact with their children, many birth parents (mostly mothers) preferred that their children grew up in institutions rather than

foster homes. There were two ways in which contact with birth parents could be facilitated for children who grew up in institutions: children could be given permission to go out, or birth parents could visit the institution in which their child lived. Some institutions regularly facilitated contact while others were restrictive and sought to prevent it (p. 171).

In recent decades, the position of birth parents and relatives in CPS has changed radically. According to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), Article 9 (UN General Assembly, 1989), children who are separated from their birth parents have the right to “maintain personal relations and direct contact with both parents on a regular basis, except if it is contrary to the child’s best interests”. In line with the UNCRC, legislation in Norway and in other countries places a duty on CPS to facilitate contact between children and their birth parents.

As described in paper III, changing conceptions of contact must be understood in relation to the incorporation of the “biological principle” (Haugli & Havik, 2010). One of the primary aims of birth parental contact today is to maintain and support the *relationship* between children and their birth parents, an aim reflecting the impact of theories of attachment (e.g., Bowlby, 1969). From this perspective, parental relationships are seen as important for children’s emotional and psychological well-being, and for meeting their developmental needs (Neil & Howe, 2004). Moreover, it has been argued that contact allows children and young people to have a more realistic view of their birth parents (Fahlberg, 1991), and to preserve their family relationships (Mallon & Hess, 2014). However, as emphasised above, the importance given to biological relations co-exists with a “child-focused” orientation. For example, a recent governmental report recommended that the biological principle should be subordinated to a new principle called “attachment-supportive development”. Here it was suggested that the rights of children and birth parents to have contact should be maintained only to the extent that they allow the development of a bond of attachment which supports the child’s development (NOU 2012, pp. 110-113). The extent of this influence is uncertain. What we do know is that many resources have been put into facilitating contact between children and birth parents in past decades and that contact has rarely been terminated (Haugli & Havik, 2010).

Upbringing by relatives as foster care arrangements

Throughout most of the history which this chapter has referred to, children have been raised by relatives without the involvement of the state and without this being understood as a foster care arrangement. In the book “Kinship Foster Care” (1999), Rebecca Hegar gives an overview of previous research, which has explored upbringing by relatives as practiced outside the realm of CPS in Oceania, Africa, and North America. Drawing on a range of anthropological studies, as well as other literary sources, Hegar shows that upbringing by relatives has been, and continues to be an established practice in many countries on these continents. Not only has upbringing by relatives been a solution to challenges such as parental death, children have also been sent to grow up with relatives in order to help in the home of the caregiver (Hegar, 1999, pp. 17-27).

A comprehensive overview of how and why upbringing by relatives has been practised in Norway throughout history is difficult since there are few sources providing insights into the phenomenon. That said, it is safe to argue that upbringing by relatives has a long tradition also in Norway (Seip, 1994; Sogner, 1984). There are many reasons why children have lived with relatives, and the reasons have varied over time, including parental death, poverty, birth parents’ work situation, and drug abuse to name but a few. While we know little about upbringing by relatives as a private arrangement, historical exploration of CPS gives some insights into the use of relatives as foster parents.

Following the Act on the treatment of neglected children of 1896 (*Vergerådsloven*), the Norwegian children Acts of 1915 (*De Castbergske barnelover*) were enacted. This legislation act established both birth parents as having responsibility for their children’s maintenance, moral education and instruction (Andersland, 2015). However, no law stated that relatives had a similar responsibility for children in their families who needed care. As emphasised by Andresen (2006, p. 90), children who were born out of wedlock were considered “illegitimate”. There was shame attached to their existence and relatives could opt out of taking on the burden that followed when caring for these children. Despite this stigma, records of foster care placements in Bergen from 1903 to 1941 show that many children grew up in foster care with relatives. In fact, more children who grew up in foster care in Bergen at the time grew up with relatives than with strangers (p. 91). The records show that most of these children grew up with grandmothers, some with aunts and only a few with other relatives. The numbers only reflect those children who grew up in foster care (in Bergen), with relatives who received financial support from the state. Relatives who cared for children in their families without receiving such

support were not registered. It is not documented how common it *really* was for children to grow up with grandmothers, aunts or other relatives. The first national registrations (Statistics Norway (SSB)) of children growing up with relatives in foster care appeared in 1992.

The incorporation of kinship foster care as a service

The incorporation of kinship care as a service within CPS was formalised in the “Regulations on Foster Care” (*Forskrift om fosterhjem*), which were introduced on 1 January, 2004. As mentioned in the introduction, these regulations stated that child welfare workers “should always consider whether someone in the child’s family or close network could be appointed as foster parents.” (§ 4) (Norwegian Ministry of Children and Family Affairs, 2003).

The introduction of policies that favour kinship care as a foster care option represents a turning point in the CPS’ attitudes towards relatives as foster parents. While relatives caring for children in their families was considered a guarantee of good care in the early 1900s (Andresen, 2006), this view changed in the 1970-80s and CPS were reluctant to accept relatives as viable alternatives for children to grow up with. This reluctance was not unique in the Norwegian context, but a widespread trend in all Western industrialised countries where professionalisation of CPS and social work had expanded (Berridge & Cleaver, 1987; Scannapieco, 1999; Vinnerljung, 1993). In the US context, Jackson (1999, p. 100) relates this to the *theory of generational abuse*, which suggests that parents who abuse their children have themselves been abused. For this reason kinship care placements were not encouraged or considered viable. In the Scandinavian context, Thørnblad (2009, p. 222) relates the scepticism to social work approaches in the 1960s which sought to prevent negative *social heritage* (Jonsson, 1969). While the two theories are closely linked, the latter can be interpreted as a broader perspective as it takes into account the socio-economic aspects of heritage.

Since the 1990s, kinship care has increasingly emerged as the preferred choice for placement also in Western Europe, the US, Australia and New Zealand (Ainsworth & Maluccio, 1998; Broad, 2004; Hegar & Scannapieco, 1999). In Norway, as well as in other Western countries, shifting attitudes towards kinship care can be understood as a result of a combination of different factors.

One of the most important ones is the priority given to foster care above residential care in past decades. In the same period when foster care as an institution expanded, the move away from institutional care resulted in a shortage of foster homes. Another important reason can be related to an increased emphasis on a strengthening of “resources-oriented” approaches in CPS (Strandbu, 2007). This is reflected in the Recommendations to the Norwegian Parliament (*Stortinget*) 121 (2002-2003) (*Innst. S.121*). It emphasises the importance of finding solutions in “vulnerable” children’s families and networks. This has resulted in a changing position of families when decisions are made in the field of CPS (Thørnblad, 2011, p. 27).¹³

Shifting attitudes towards kinship care must also be understood in relation to a growing emphasis on ethnicity and cultural belonging, especially in countries such as the US, Australia, New Zealand and Canada. For example, according to Yardley, Mason and Watson (2009, p. 19), a focus on kinship care in official Australian policy was the result of attempts by policymakers to address the concerns expressed by Aboriginal communities about the way Aboriginal children had historically been inappropriately placed with non-Aboriginals. In Norway, the importance of ethnicity and cultural belonging has been debated in relation to the Sami population. Since 2004, it has been stipulated in the Regulations on Foster Care (§ 4) that child care authorities should take into account the child’s ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic background when choosing a suitable foster home.

According to Thørnblad (2009, p. 222), an additional reason for shifting attitudes towards kinship care can be related to research findings showing that foster care placements in general did not have the intended effects. She refers here to Vinnerljungs (1996) twin study showing little difference in the outcomes of the sibling who had remained in their childhood home and the sibling who had been placed in foster care. Moreover, research from the US context indicated that kinship care could be more stable (e.g., Dubowitz, Feigelman, & Zuravin, 1993; Goerge, 1990; Wulczyn & Goerge, 1992). The study conducted by Holtan (2002) in the Norwegian context showed many of the same tendencies. These studies did not necessarily determine policy changes. Rather, they can be said to have contributed to legitimising kinship care as a viable placement option for children who for different reasons cannot live at home (Thørnblad, 2009). Moreover, this research supported arguments in favour of kinship care. In

¹³ In the US, the use of kinship care placements increased drastically in the 1990s. It has been argued that financial matters represent an important reason for this (e.g., Dubowitz et al., 1994; Iglehart, 1994). That is: because kinship caregivers required less formal training than non-kinship caregivers, it was a cheaper option for CPS. Whether this is the case in the US today, and whether this was a reason for shifting attitudes in Norway we do not know.

the US, proponents such as the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA)¹⁴ (1994) argued that growing up in kinship care would enable children to live with persons whom they knew and trusted. It would reduce the trauma children could experience when placed with persons who are initially unknown to them. Moreover, they argued that it could reinforce children's sense of identity and self-esteem, which flows from knowing their family history and culture. Kinship care could facilitate the children's connections to their siblings; and strengthen the ability of families to give children the support they need (p. 13). Thørnblad (2009) later offered a more critical interpretation of this shift. Through her analysis of the discourses that were presented in this process in Norway, she argued that:

(...) they can be related to a traditional family model where biological relatedness is given significant meaning. Looking at child protective services in a historical perspective it can be argued that the position of the child's relatives, in this context, goes from representing "risk factors" (negative social heritage) – to having a privileged position as a resource and guardian of the child's best interest. This also applies where children are taken into care by the state (Thørnblad, 2009, p. 232, my translation).

Families within the kinship care category: prevalence, characteristics and types

Changing perceptions of kinship care are to some degree reflected in a gradual increase of children growing up in foster care with relatives. At the end of 2003, 7070 children were growing up in *foster homes*¹⁵, and kinship care represented 19.9% of these placements. At the end of 2016, kinship care represented 24.6% of a total 11,771 foster homes placements (Statistics Norway, 2017a). A similar frequency of kinship care placements can be found in the UK (19.7%) and in Sweden (30%). The highest proportion of kinship care placements can be found in Spain (75%) (Del Valle & Bravos, 2013, p. 255). In the US, kinship care has become the predominant form of out-of-home care since the 1990s. The low percentages found in Norway, Sweden and the UK could be interpreted as reflecting continued negative perceptions

¹⁴ CWLA is an American organisation dedicated to promoting the protection and well-being of children, and plays a significant role in promoting best practices among those in the field of child protection in the US.

¹⁵ *Foster home* is a category constructed by SSB and includes "foster homes of family and close network", "foster homes outside family and close network", "public family homes under § 4-27 of the Child Welfare Act", "emergency shelter homes" and "other foster homes measures" (ssb.no). If we only compare kinship foster care (foster homes in family and close network) and non-kinship foster care (foster care outside family and close network) the percentage of kinship care is 27% (Statistics Norway, 2017a).

of placing children with relatives.¹⁶ While this might be true in some cases, previous studies from Sweden (Linderot, 2006) and the UK (Farmer & Moyers, 2008) have found that many child welfare workers are positive to the idea of kinship care, but rarely look actively in the child's network to find suitable foster parents. Rather, they respond to relatives who want to take care of the child or children who already live with their relatives.

An important question in this regard evolves around *who* assumes the responsibility for children when they grow up with relatives. Above, we saw records of foster care placements in Bergen from 1903 to 1941 showing that it was primarily women, grandmothers and aunts, who assumed such responsibilities. Studies from Norway (Holtan & Thørnblad, 2009) and other countries (Cuddeback, 2004) give a similar picture today. Compared to non-kinship foster parents, kinship foster parents are more likely to be single grandmothers, and most placements occur among the birth mother's relatives with lower educational level and income.¹⁷ Whereas comparing kinship caregivers with non-kinship caregivers gives us some insights into caregivers' characteristics, very few compare kinship caregivers with the general population. One exception is Holtan and Thørnblads' (2009, pp. 474-75) study, where they argue that it is non-kinship caregivers who have the atypical family structure. Because the Norwegian Child Welfare Act (2003) gives priority to married/cohabitant couples, non-kinship caregivers represent more two-parents households compared to what is common in the general population. In contrast, the authors found that kinship caregivers are similar to the general population in that they have the same percentage of single parents.

Exploring caregivers' characteristics is important because the findings reveal that in many countries, kinship care is often an undertaking of working class women. While this is one characteristic of kinship care as a category, another is the complexity of relationships in the category kinship care. One study which has explored this issue from the Norwegian context is

¹⁶ In 2014, the Norwegian journalists Thunold and Grøm Bakken brought this issue into the open. Based on figures from SSB showing that the percentage of "new" placements in kinship care had dropped from 38% in 2008 to 31% in 2012 they titled their news article "Increasingly fewer children grow up with relatives in foster care" (my translation). However, the data on "new placements" are difficult to use. It refers to children who were not registered as having received services the previous year. A "new" child can therefore have received services prior to a placement. This means that the drop from 38% to 31% can reflect that after 2008 more children received in-home services before they were placed in kinship care. This is just an example, but it shows just how complex statistics related to CPS can be.

¹⁷ In the Norwegian context, Holtan and Thørnblad (2009) found that 73% of the placements were maternal. According to the authors, this must be understood in relation to the child's living arrangement *before* the formalisation of the foster care placement. In their study, 66.9% were living with their birth mother, 8% lived their birth fathers, while 24.6% lived with both of their birth parents (2009, p. 470).

Amy Holtan (2002, 2008). Because foster parents and birth parents are related, the formalisation of foster care arrangements involves a renegotiation of relationships and obligations with one another (2008, p. 1024). Through her study of children's, birth parents, and relatives understanding of the arrangements she constructed five types of families: *the extended family*, *the polynuclear family*, *the monopolising family*, *the broken family* and *the biological family*. According to Holtan's constructions, each type is characterised by different levels of solidarity and understandings of the assignment. Drawing on a quantitative sample from the same study,¹⁸ Holtan estimated that roughly 50% of the kinship care families she explored could be categorised as polynuclear families:

(...) a type of family where the child experiences having his or her close family in several households. It covers placements having high solidarity between foster parents and parents, and a different understanding of the assignment, and also placements where both parents and foster parents consider themselves as demarcated families (Holtan, 2008, p. 1030).

Holtan's study, as well as the characteristics of kinship care we saw above, give us some insights into the category "kinship care in Norway". More precisely, many of these studies give insights into the families whose children are adults today. Holtan's study, for example, was conducted between 1998 and 2002. While most of the children in her study knew their foster parents well, and some had lived with their relatives before it was formalised as a foster care arrangement, we might see another pattern developing in the future. Because of the new guidelines from 2004, child welfare workers should now "search" children's families for potential foster parents. This means that many children who grow up in kinship care today and in the future, might grow up in foster care arrangements with starting points more similar to children in non-kinship care arrangements. By this I mean that we might see a pattern where children are placed with relatives whom they have little knowledge of beforehand. It might also involve a higher recruitment of cohabiting/married relatives.

¹⁸ Questionnaire data, gathered through foster parents of 124 children (Holtan, 2008, p. 1027).

3. The research field of kinship care

In the first part of this chapter I provide insights into the origins of the research field of kinship care. As I have already emphasised, the main aim in this field has revolved around the effect of kinship care compared to non-kinship care. In this chapter I describe the results of such research, before I move on to discuss *why* the issue of effect is so important in this field. I also give examples of exceptions in the research literature, to better clarify what I define as studies which approach kinship care as family.

The empirical papers in this doctoral dissertation draw primarily on qualitative interviews with young adults who grew up in kinship foster care. In the second part of this chapter I give insights into available theoretical perspectives offered by social work research through which to analyse the young adults' accounts. I also explain why I have not adopted such perspectives in my own study.

Upbringing by relatives under the gaze of social work research

The first research to focus explicitly on kinship care emerged in the US in the 1990s (e.g. Berrick, Barth, & Needell, 1994; Dubowitz, 1990).¹⁹ Today, almost 30 years later, there is an extensive body of research on kinship care from different national contexts, including the Norwegian (Angel & Blekesaune, 2015; Havik, 1996; Holtan, 2002; Thørnblad, 2011; Vis, Handegård, Holtan, Fossum, & Thørnblad, 2016).

The research field of kinship care emerged in response to the expanded use of kinship care placements in the US. The expansion was described as a controversial development: A rapid increase of children were now being placed in kinship care without much knowledge of the placement type compared to other forms of foster care (Berrick et al., 1994; Dubowitz, 1994). Of particular concern was how little knowledge was available on the “quality” of kinship care arrangements compared to that in non-kinship foster care. Despite little research evidence, this issue was widely debated. As emphasised in the previous chapter, proponents argued that kinship care could secure continuity and provide other positive factors in children’s lives. Others, however, were less enthusiastic and questioned the ability of kinship caregivers to protect children from continued neglect and abuse by their birth parents, the quality of their care, and the outcomes for children (Bartholet, 1999; Gebel, 1996; Goerge, Wulczyn, & Fanshel, 1994; Pierce, 1999).

In the early 1990s, Dubowitz and his colleagues noted that “While there are strong views to both sides of this issue, there has been little research on how children fare in kinship care” (Dubowitz et al 1994, p. 86). Moreover, the evidence for “positive features” of kinship care were argued to be “conjectural and anecdotal”, which did not allow child welfare professionals to make evidence-based decisions (Goerge et al, 1994).

More than a decade later, Paxman reviewed the literature on kinship care, and concluded that:

The existing research tends to focus on the demographic characteristics of children in kinship care, the characteristics of kinship carers and the provision of services. There is limited research examining the effectiveness and outcomes of kinship care for children (Paxman, 2006, p. 1).

¹⁹ In the US in the 1980s, some studies included kinship care families in their analysis (e.g. Berridge & Cleaver, 1987; Rowe, 1984), but did not explore kinship care directly.

The few studies that had been conducted on the effect of kinship care compared to non-kinship care, suggested that children who grew up in kinship care did well, and often better than children in non-kinship care. Due to significant methodological challenges, Winokur, Holtan and Valentine conducted a Cochrane review, published in 2009. Because the literature on the topic increased rapidly in the following years, Winokur, Holtan and Batchelder conducted a follow-up review, which was published in 2014. In 2014, 102 quasi-experimental studies met the methodological standards the authors considered acceptable. The countries included in the review were Norway, the Netherlands, Spain, the US, Sweden, and the UK. Based on their meta-analysis, Winokur et al (2014, p. 20) argued that children in kinship care experience better outcomes compared to children in non-kinship care regarding behavioural problems, adaptive behaviours, psychiatric orders, well-being, placement stability and other measures. The discussion around the effects of kinship care compared to children in non-kinship care, however, did not end with this study – it continues to be a driving force in the research field of kinship care (e.g. Andersen & Fallesen, 2015; Bell & Romano, 2015; Denby, Testa, Alford, Cross, & Brinson, 2017; Font, 2015; O'Higgins, Sebba, & Gardner, 2017; Wu, White, & Coleman, 2015).

Knowledge about results of the services provided by CPS is important. On a general level, it is important because the state is responsible for providing children in care with safe and stable homes that ensure their well-being. Moreover, this research has been particularly important for the families within the category “kinship care”, since it has played a key role as a counterweight to negative perceptions of growing up in foster care with relatives. With that said, it also presents numerous challenges, especially when effect studies constitute the majority of the knowledge production on kinship care. In paper I, effect studies are used as the basis for a discussion of the fruitfulness of approaching kinship care as a service in CPS. Here we argue that kinship care is reduced to a homogeneous, universal category, unaffected by time, place or other categories – something we can measure and compare. Children, on the other hand, are portrayed as passive receivers of care – through whom we can measure the effect. As Ulvik (2009, p. 29) has pointed out, the construction of the research object is technological and analogous to biomedicine: it is the effect of “the pill” which is studied.²⁰

²⁰ Ulvik made this remark in her critical discussion of the dominance of effect studies in foster care research, thus reminding us that questions about effects are not unique for the kinship care research – they are a central issue in the foster care and social work literature more broadly. Ulvik’s critical discussion served, and continues to serve, as a rare contribution to the foster care literature. It was therefore an important inspiration for the writing of paper I.

Researchers' preoccupation with the effects of kinship care versus non-kinship care reflects that:

(...) academics work within communities in a particular time and place, and that the intellectual climate in which they live and work determine the problems they investigate, the methods they employ, the results they see, and the ways they write them up (Hyland, 2004, p. 6).

In paper I, the one-sided focus in kinship care research is related to the adoption of evidence based thinking and practice (EBP) in CPS. As emphasised in chapter two, the aim of EBP is to reduce the randomness of decisions and to raise the quality of the provided services. Evidence is here more or less synonymous with quantitative research, preferably research conducted with an experimental research design (RCTs). Closely related to this is that social work researchers today are faced with increased expectations to access external funding to support their research, or they conduct research commissioned by government authorities. The focus in research will therefore to a large degree be determined by governments and reflect contemporary political issues more than the curiosity of the researcher. However, research trends are not simply determined by governments; researchers also play an important role in maintaining a particular focus. As Bourdieu once wrote:

(...) researchers' tendency to concentrate on those problems regarded as the most important ones (*e.g.* because they have been constituted as such by producers endowed with a high degree of legitimacy) is explained by the fact that a contribution or discovery relating to those questions will tend to yield greater symbolic profit (Bourdieu, 1975, p. 22).

While the quest for power by both government forces and researchers can explain the more or less one-sided focus in kinship care research, it does not tell us why the issue of effects has a high profile. In paper I, we argue that questions about results come to us quite "naturally" when we approach kinship care as a service, because the aim of the service is to provide the child with a good and safe childhood. Hence, if we uncritically adopt this positivistic understanding,

we cannot escape the logic of CPS - the categories, language and problems that appear to us as self-evident (Skoglund & Thørnblad, 2017, p. 4).²¹

While kinship care has primarily been studied as a service within CPS, the research literature also includes exceptions. One example was presented in the previous chapter (Holtan, 2008), and other examples will be presented in the following two chapters. Another rare contribution is that of Brown, Cohon, and Wheeler (2002). Based on interviews with 30 African-American adolescents growing up in foster care with relatives, the authors show that the foster care model does not capture the lives of the families they live in. The reasons for this is that the model is based on an ideal of the culturally sanctioned, two parent, mother-and-father dyad caring for children. Many African-American families who struggle against social and economic adversity, however, tend to have more diverse and flexible family forms. For example, they tend to rely more on extended family members for social and economic support. This became apparent in their analysis. To best support these families, they should therefore not be evaluated against the “nuclear family” archetype. Rather, extended family forms represent resources, and these families should be supported in ways that draw on such inherent strengths (Brown et al 2002, pp. 73-74). When I define this and other studies as exceptions in the kinship care literature, it is not exclusively because they represent qualitative studies. Rather, it is because they approach kinship care as family and they take variation, complexity and context into account. As such, these studies manage to produce *new* knowledge instead of reproducing already established notions of kinship foster care.

Young adults who grew up in kinship care – available perspectives

The questions that appear to us as evident in a particular research field at a particular time, depend on a number of factors. In the following paragraphs, I explore what questions appear

²¹ It is important to acknowledge that it is not only in foster care research where questions about children’s outcomes have appeared “naturally”. For example, commenting on the cohabitation research from the US context, Kroeger and Smock have argued that: “Just as numerous studies emerged in the 1980s and 1990s examining the ramification of divorce for children, family scholars are intensively studying the implications of cohabitation for children” (2014, p. 224). In Norway and other countries, similar questions were posed in relation to the emergence of same-sex parenthood. In other words, questions about outcomes and effects have been posed about family forms in which have emerged that contrast with the biological heterosexual nuclear family.

and what perspectives are available through the lens of social work research, in studies related to young adults who grew up in families formalised as foster care arrangements.

In the out-of-home care literature, there is an area specifically dedicated to research “on” and “with” youth and young adults who grew up in foster care, kinship care and residential care, often referred to as the “leaving-care literature”. Adolescents and young adults who grew up in foster care and other out-of-home care settings have gained much attention among social work researchers in the past few years. In the majority of these studies, the concept of “transition to adulthood” has gained considerable influence on how the lives of these young adults have been analysed and interpreted. This applies to qualitative as well as quantitative research contributions, in both Europe, Northern America and the Middle East (Hiles, Moss, Wright, & Dallos, 2013; Kääriälä & Hiilamo, 2017; Stein, 2008b; Stein & Munro, 2008), with the aim of gaining “insights into the lives of these young people during their journey from care to living independently in the community” (Stein, 2006, p. 273).

Research into the lives of these young adults’ shows that they are more likely to be unemployed, to have mental health problems, to be homeless, have lower educational qualifications and be younger parents compared to the young adults who did not grow up in out-of-home care settings. This is a well-documented pattern in all industrialised countries where data have been collected on this issue (Backe-Hansen et al., 2014; Kääriälä & Hiilamo, 2017; Stein & Munro, 2008; Stott, 2013). Many researchers have organised this evidence within a social exclusion framework, contributing to a greater awareness of the reduced life chances of young people “leaving care”. In the last decade this perspective has been challenged, firstly, for the lack of attention paid to young adults’ agency to impact their own future (Chase, Simon, & Jackson, 2006) and secondly, for masking the variation of different outcomes represented within the group (Stein 2006). In light of this critique, more and more social work researchers have adopted a resilience framework in their analysis of young adults’ transition to adulthood (e.g., Bengtsson, Sjöblom, & Öberg, 2018; Breda, 2015; Hedin, 2017; Höjer & Johansson, 2013; Samuels & Pryce, 2008). One of the pioneers behind this trend is Mike Stein, who defines resilience as:

(...) the quality that enables some young people to find fulfilment in their lives despite their disadvantaged backgrounds, the problems or adversity they may have undergone or the pressures they may experience. Resilience is about overcoming the odds, coping and recovery. But it is only relative to different risk experiences – relative resistance as distinct from invulnerability – and is likely to develop over time (Stein, 2008a, p. 36).

The perspective of resilience seeks to incorporate the relationship between risk and success factors, critical turning points and roads of development. In other words, the researchers who incorporate this perspective are interested in the ways in which young people in care and those transitioning out of care handle the situation they are in and how they are able to draw on the resources they have in order to avoid negative outcomes (Bakketeig & Backe-Hansen, 2008; Stein, 2008a)

In their study of the effects of kinship care in Denmark, Knudsen and Egelund (2011) argued that because children and young people who grow up in kinship care have more contact with their birth parents and other relatives compared to children who grow up in non-kinship care, they have more resources to draw on in the transition to adulthood. They have a “family for life” (p. 139). Apart from one Spanish study (Del Valle et al, 2011), very few have contributed to the leaving-care literature with studies “of” and “with” young adults who grew up in kinship care. This does not mean that these young adults’ accounts have been explored within other frameworks. Rather, it reflects that young adults who grew up in kinship care constitute a rather unexplored group in the kinship care literature. The empirical papers (II and III) in this dissertation seek to add to this research. What will become evident is that I have not adopted a resilience framework in either of these papers. A resilience perspective involves approaching young adults as a vulnerable group. This means that the young adults’ life situations are evaluated and interpreted in relation to this vulnerability; positive outcomes in adult life are interpreted as against the odds, and negative outcomes become a confirmation of this prediction. In paper II, I explore this vulnerability not as a fact, but as an image made available to young adults through the foster child status and their upbringings. Hence, I do not ask what childhood did to them or what they did to overcome childhood – but what they do with their foster child status to construct specific childhoods (see also chapter five). In doing so, I show that a resilience framework is not the only lens through which to explore how young adults make sense of their childhoods and their life situations.

Finally, the concept of transition to adulthood is not a concept specific to the out-of-home care literature, but springs from the disciplines of sociology and psychology (Gillies, 2000). The out-of-home care literature draws primarily on a psychological understanding of this concept – of the individual adapting to developmental changes. Some have criticised this concept, as it easily results in an essentially individualistic emphasis on the young person regarded as undergoing a “transition” to independence (Gillies, 2000; Wyn, Lantz, & Harris, 2011). In the light of this critique, these same researchers encourage others to study the life situations of

youth and young adults in *relation* to their family relationships, not necessarily as being in transition away from them. As I show in chapter six, this advice has been taken seriously in the analysis of papers II and III, where life situation and family relationships have been studied in relation to each other.

4. The sociology of family life

In parallel with the emergence of kinship care research, family life and relationships gained a renewed research interest among sociologists and other scholars. This interest can be related to the changing expectations, commitments and practices in family life and intimate relationships in recent decades (Gabb & Silva, 2011; Gillies, 2003). With a few exceptions, there has been little attention paid to the relevance of these theoretical developments in kinship care research. Similarly, kinship care has gained little attention within the sociology of family life.

When we approach kinship foster care as upbringing by relatives - as family - perspectives from sociology regarding family life and relationships become relevant. Like Chambers (2012) I approach the sociology of family life as an umbrella covering topics often considered as subfields, i.e. childhood, parenthood, personal life and so on. I begin the chapter with a short historical overview of the changing conceptions of family. I also provide insights into some ways in which the sociology of family life and its concepts can be relevant for studies that include the perspectives of children and young adults. I end the chapter with a discussion of why the families within the category kinship care and other related categories have such a marginalised position in the field of the sociology of family life.

Changing conceptions of family

In the first half of the twentieth century, structural functionalism was the dominant framework in which sociologists explored family and relationships. In the functionalist perspective, society is seen as a set of social institutions performing specific functions to provide continuity and consensus. “The family”, in this perspective plays an important role in contributing to society’s needs and upholding social order. One of the most prominent figures in developing functionalism fully as a theoretical model, and best known for exploring family from this point of view, was Talcott Parsons (Parsons & Bales, 1955).

At a time when the extended family was understood as being threatened by industrialisation, Parsons, together with Bales, explained changes in family structure as a need of modern capitalist societies. According to them, the families’ two main functions were to ensure the *primary socialisation* of future generations and to provide *personal stabilisation* for both adults and children. The functional nuclear family, they argued, was best equipped to handle the demands of industrial society through the specialisation of roles between husband and wife; the husband taking on the instrumental role of breadwinner and the wife adopting an affective role attending to the domestic and emotional needs of the family.

Not surprisingly, the functionalist concept of the nuclear family as proposed by Parsons received critique, especially from feminist writers. In the 1970s and 1980s, they challenged the view that male and female roles were consequences of biological compatibility, that men were naturally equipped to be breadwinners and women were designed to fulfil their biological role as the child-rearers. Not only did they challenge the naturalisation of this division in the light of male dominance, they also challenged the vision that the nuclear family was a harmonious and egalitarian realm. Historical feminists also showed that the nuclear family was not the actual reality for all people (for a discussion see: Chambers, 2012; Gillies, 2003).

The feminist critique involved a marginalisation of family sociology and from the 1970s and well into the 1980s family life was primarily explored from feminist perspectives. By the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, however, the sociology of family life experienced a revitalisation and the functionalistic paradigm was replaced by new approaches. This involved a shift from understanding “the family” as constituted by particular relationships within particular locations, towards a conceptualisation of family as a fluid and open-ended set of relationships that are created and recreated over time (Finch & Mason, 1993; Gubrium & Holstein, 1990; Smart, 2007; Smart & Neale, 1999).

The development of these new perspectives can be understood in relation to changing expectations, commitments and practices in family life and intimate relationships.²² Since the 1970s, women had entered the labour market, divorce and cohabitation had increased, leading the way to a plurality of family forms (e.g., single parent families, divorced families and same-sex families) (Gabb & Silva, 2011; Gillies, 2003). As David Morgan highlights, it was also a matter of changing perceptions:

In some senses the fluidity was always present for the simple reason that family relationships were never simply or uniquely confined within households but extended out and across households in a relatively weakly bounded fashion. In some countries at least, there was always an element of choice as to who might, in this wider sense, “count” as family just as, in terms of everyday experience, family relationships might overlap with friendships and neighborhoods (Morgan, 2011, p. 21).

Morgan has been particularly influential in the move away from simplistic understandings of family as an objectively knowable entity. In the 1990s, he introduced the concept of “family practices” (Morgan, 1996, 1999), focusing on family as an adjective - an activity - as opposed to a noun. Morgan encouraged researchers to study the way everyday activities constitute family experience. In doing so, he reframed family as something people *do* rather than something people *are*. According to Finch (2007), however, it is not enough to “do” family – they also need to be *displayed*:

(...) the meaning of one’s actions has to be both conveyed to and understood by relevant others if those actions are to be effective as constituting ‘family’ practices (p. 66).

Another term that has been reconceptualised in recent decades is *kinship*. Since the 1980s, anthropologists have challenged cultural notions of kinship as “biological facts”, stressing that biology can be ascribed different meanings from different people at different times (e.g., Carsten, 2000). In short, it reminds us of the active aspect of *relating*, and that relationships are

²² Another reason for the revitalisation of the sociology of family life was that changes in family life to a large degree were being interpreted in relation to grand theories about social change (Gillies, 2003, p. 8). One of the most influential was the theory about individualisation and de-traditionalisation, exemplified by prominent sociologists such as Ulrich Beck and Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim (1995), Anthony Giddens (1992) and Zygmunt Bauman (2003). In a broad sense, the individualisation thesis suggests a radical transformation in family life and relationship aspiration and choices (McCarthy & Edwards, 2011, p. 118). At one end of the individualisation continuum, we find Bauman and his pessimistic view, perceiving the shift away from “given” kinship systems towards elective kinship as an exclusively negative change. He emphasises the frailty of contemporary family bonds, and argue that they are threatened (Bauman, 2003, p. 31). At the other end, we find Giddens (1992) who offers a more optimistic view. For Giddens, the “freeing” of traditional, status-bound roles, has involved a greater democracy and equality in relationships.

not simply given by one's position in family genealogy (Smart, 2007). This does not mean that people can simply choose whom they have in their lives. Children, for example, have very little power to determine where they live, and by whom they are raised. Nevertheless, they are active in the negotiating of boundaries, roles and relationships in their everyday life.

The reframing of family and kinship offered by anthropologists and sociologists is important in order to understand the families found within the category kinship care. When a kinship foster care placement is formalised, birth parents and relatives must renegotiate relations and obligations with one another. As showed in the final part of Chapter two, this can be “played out” quite differently from one set of relationships to another, and can change over time (Holtan, 2008). Closely related to this is that children who grow up with relatives in foster care might have very different understandings of their living arrangements and family. One might portray her family as consisting of both grandparents (foster parents) and her birth parents. She might call her birth mother “mum”, and her birth father “dad”, but she views her grandparents as her parents. Another might view his aunt and uncle as temporary guardians until his “real” mother and father get “back on their feet”. The meaning and content in which children ascribe their relationships with their birth parents and how this change over time is explored in paper III.

Idealised notions of family and parenting

While acknowledging that there is no such thing as “the family”, only families (Gittins, 1993) constructed through social interaction by the use of language (Gubrium & Holstein, 1990), the idea of the cultural notion of the heterosexual nuclear family based on biological relatedness still holds a strong image of what makes a family. Images of the “proper family” filter their way into our everyday lives, and are central in the construction and understanding of family (Gillis, 1996; Nordqvist, 2012; Smart, 2007). According to Gillis (1996), we all have two families – “one we live *with*, and one we live *by*”. (p. xv). The families we live by are the ideal, constituted through myth, ritual, and image. These families never let us down – they are nurturing and protective. The families we live with, on the other hand, are often much more complex and less reliable. Both of these families are in a state of continuous change and reconstruction.

In very few cases does the gap between the families we live by and with seem more evident than for children who grow up in foster care arrangements. The term “foster care” break with cultural notions of the “proper family”, and has connotations of uncertainty and impermanence.

In the “proper family”, children and birth parents live together and parents strive to practise “intensive” forms of motherhood and fatherhood to give the child the best type of childhood in order to secure the right type of “development” (Faircloth, 2014; Hays, 1996). Children who grow up in foster care, on the other hand, meet their birth parents through formal and informal arrangements (see paper III). For different reasons, their birth parents have been deprived of the right to care for them – they have been assessed as unfit parents by the state. In what ways these images of “ideals” and “reality” are given meaning when children make sense of their family life and relationships has received little attention. However, we do find examples of qualitative interviews with children in foster care constructing accounts of disappointment towards their birth parents, especially their mothers (Kiraly & Humphreys, 2013; Messing, 2006). Disappointment, however, does not equate to the understanding of one’s family situation as abnormal or deviant. As I show in the next chapter, many children and adolescents who grow up in kinship foster care arrangements highlight *normality* when talking about their family life and relationships.

Young adults – family and childhood narratives

Socially and culturally, young adults in their 20s are expected to transition from financial and emotional dependency on their families to greater independence. Following this line of thought, questions concerning family life and relationships in the lives of young adults’ will revolve around the level of support they receive from family members, whether they have “started” their own family, and other questions related to the transition to independence.

Another important aspect of the lives of young adults, which has received much less attention, is the importance of family histories and childhood narratives.²³ This argument must not be confused with psychological perspectives which indicate that childhood is a determinant of one’s adult “outcomes”. Rather, it refers to the increased significance of childhood reminiscences as a resource for the construction of the self (Gullestad, 2004), and the social and cultural importance given to knowing one’s family history (Smart, 2007, p. 49). According to Lawler (2002, pp. 5-6), people in Western countries today almost inevitably look to childhood

²³ As emphasised by Gullestad (2004), the prominent place of childhood experiences in modern life narratives can be traced to the generalisation of psychological thinking: “Through the institutionalization” of psychoanalytical knowledge, these ideas have become crucial aspects of contemporary perceptions and understandings. Childhood is seen as the “natural” foundation of the adult self (p. 4).

as the grounds of adulthood, and, for this reason, childhood is ascribed a “special” status. This is reflected in many different ways in Western cultures today. One example is that children who grow up in foster care have the right to study documents related to them personally. A significant part of this right is the view that it allows these children in adulthood to know about their past and to construct a “coherent” life story.

As emphasised by Smart (2007, p. 40), our childhood memories and family histories can become especially significant at particular times, in annual rituals (such as Christmas) or as individual acts (through aging). In paper II, I explore childhood and family relationships through the young adults’ accounts. There is, however, a paradox attached to the practice of recalling experiences from one’s childhood: we have all been children, but we do not have direct access to that experience. All we have are stories compounded out of the stories we re-tell ourselves and others, and stories told to us (Rogers & Rogers, 1992, p. 19).²⁴ Stories of childhood do not represent the objective truth, nor are they stable or consistent. As the past is remembered, it is interpreted and reinterpreted in the light of the knowledge and understanding of the subjects “present” (Lawler, 2008, p. 31). Drawing on the works of George H. Mead, Järvinen and Mik-Meyer (2003, p. 51) take this point further and argue that an individual’s social situation is a determinant of what he or she tells about the past. Moreover, new information, experiences and/or changing life situations can lead to different interpretations of certain events or periods (Gullestad, 2004, pp. 22-23). In other words, narratives of childhood do not represent *actual* experiences and events, but *accounts*²⁵ of experiences and events. In this regard, it is particularly important to remember the context in which people construct their life-stories, and what sources they have available to draw on (Gullestad, 2004, p. 34). I explore this issue in the next chapter, through a discussion of the foster child status and what type of framework for interpretation this opens up for.

²⁴ According to Smart (2007, p. 38), individual memory is formed and shaped also by others around us. The families we live with provide important contexts for our earliest memories. Not only is it here where our first memories are formed, but it is also here where we “learn” what to remember and what should be forgotten (Misztal, 2003, p. 15).

²⁵ The concept of *account* can be understood and used in different ways. In a broad sense, accounts can be viewed as ways in which individuals explain (describe, legitimise, criticise and idealise) specific situations (e.g. Bittner, 1973; Garfinkel, 1967). In a narrower sense, accounts can be understood as “(...) a statement made by a social actor to explain unanticipated or untoward behaviour (...)” (Scott & Lyman, 1968, p. 46). In this dissertation I draw on both understandings.

Decentering or retaining the concept of family?

So far, I have provided insights into changing conceptions of family, and how theoretical perspectives from the sociology of family life might be relevant for the study of kinship care. One of the challenges of focusing on family, however, is that it is loaded with moral, political and emotional baggage. Ever since the interventions of feminist scholarship into the area of family life, the term “family” has been rendered problematic. As I showed above, the reconceptualisation of “the family” has been found as a solution to such problems. Other sociologists have argued that we need to move away from the concept of family altogether. The thought is that ideas of “family” can serve to normalise some living arrangements and relationships whilst marginalising, stigmatising or excluding others. One who has searched for a new, more flexible language to capture significant aspects of our lives and relationships without becoming bogged down in the trappings of “family”, is Carol Smart (2007) and her concept of *personal life*. Not only does she argue in favour of a new concept, she argues in favour of a new research field where it is not family which is in focus, but people’s personal lives. As a starting point for her argumentation Smart highlights the paradox which sociologists have faced in the past few decades: while being increasingly critical of the term “family”, it continues to exert an emotional hold on us. Similar to Morgan’s concept of family practices, Smart’s concept of personal life seeks to include not only families as conventionally conceived, but also newer family forms and relationships, reconfigured kinship networks, and friendships. What is “new” about this concept is that it seeks to bring to the forefront people’s personal lives, lived out in relation to their class position, ethnicity, gender, etc., and their life projects. Moreover, Smart seeks to capture the movement in people’s lives; not only do changes in family (e.g. divorce) tell us something about family life – such changes can transform the personal lives of people. Space is another important aspect of the concept. According to Smart, the older distinctions made between the private and public spheres which have conceptualised family life as a distinct place or institution separate from other social spaces and structures, must be overcome (see also chapter 5). Personal life, she argues, is lived in many different places and spaces, it is cumulative (through memory, history and the passage of time) and forms a range of connections, making the concept more flexible. Without going further into the concept here, the main argument can be summed up as follows: her concept of personal life intends to embrace all those aspects of our personal lives that are meaningful to us. It is not intended to replace concepts such as family, but to employ a new, inclusive language which recognises that family only reflects a limited range of personal relationships that are meaningful to us.

Smart's contribution was important in the writing of paper III where I explore children's relationships with their birth parents from childhood to adulthood. While I do not use the term "personal life", I found it important to analyse such relationships without reproducing contemporary understandings of such relationships as natural and important. Moreover, this perspective allowed me to analyse relationships with birth parents in relation to the interviewees' life situation and other relationships instead of as separate, static entities. With that said, however, I do not agree with Smart that the sociology of family life should be replaced with a new field of personal life. Rather, I argue in line with Morgan (2011, pp. 33-53) that personal life may overlap with family conceptually and empirically, but it does not equate to it. Family remains important to people as distinct aspect of their everyday lives and experiences, and the term allows us to engage critically with contemporary political rhetoric and policy developments (Edwards & Gillies, 2012; Edwards, McCarthy, & Gillies, 2012).

A sociology of family life, for whom?

In the light of changing conceptions of family, family researchers have encouraged other researchers to explore many kinds of family relationships in order to enrich the picture of contemporary family life (Chambers, 2001; Silva & Smart, 1999). In turn, we have witnessed studies of family life and relationships following divorce (Ribbens McCarthy, Edwards, & Gillies, 2003; Smart & Neale, 1999), studies of friends as family (Pahl & Pevalin, 2005), and same-sex families (Nordqvist, 2010; Weeks, Heaphy, & Donovan, 2001).

In the area of social work research at its broadest level, studies of mothers in prison (Enroos, 2010) and families of adoption (Jones & Hackett, 2012) have explored the relevance of concepts from the sociology of family life. In the foster care research little attention has been paid to the relevance of these theoretical developments. However, there are exceptions. Two contributions can be found in the kinship care literature (Holtan, 2008; Thørnblad & Holtan, 2011b). Another example is from the study conducted by Holland and Crowley (2013) on "looked after children" and their birth families. Eight young women and men aged between 17 and 25, who had experiences from foster care, kinship care and residential care were interviewed three times. Drawing on the interviewees' life stories, the researchers explored the different ways in which the sociology of family life could enhance our understanding of such stories. Holland and Crowley argue that a sociological emphasis on children as active subjects who participate in family relationships, rather than just passively receiving them, is reflected in the young people's

accounts. Furthermore, they give insights into the active aspect of constructing family, showing how the interviewees actively constructed “who counted” as their families, and how they negotiated different relationships in their lives. Following these, and further arguments in favour of adopting sociological concepts into the study of “looked after children”, they argue that sociologists may also gain from exploring the experiences of families involved in social work. Firstly, to view them in relation to other marginalised groups, and secondly because “looked after children” have “unique” insights into “practices, codes, rules and norms having, by definition, lived with more than one set of primary caregivers during their childhoods” (pp. 64-65).

The second and final study I provide insight into here, which argues in favour of sociological perspectives, primarily on foster care research, is Wildeman and Waldfogel (2014). Unlike Holland and Crowley, they do not explore the relevance of perspectives from the sociology of family life, but sociological perspectives more broadly, asking: “so what can sociologists bring to this topic beyond what research in economics, psychology, and social work has brought?” Their paper, however, is particularly important here: not only do they argue that sociological perspectives have been given little relevance in the foster care research – they emphasise that sociologists also have paid little attention to children and their families who grow up in foster care settings. They do so by proposing the following question: “If the presence, fortunes, and behaviours of parents are so consequential for their children, how can we expect children in foster care to fare throughout their lives?” Their answer to this is: “The short answer, for better or worse, is that sociologists – and most other social scientists – do not know because they have to date paid little attention to children in foster care ” (Wildeman & Waldfogel, 2014, p. 600). I have continuously argued that this can be related to the fact that within social work research, foster care arrangements are constructed as services – hence they become something else, something different that needs field specific questions and theory. To the sociologists, the field becomes a separate world in which one is not equipped to engage. Yet, it is important to remember that sociology and social work have not always been separate scientific fields, that “once upon a time social work and sociology were one discipline (...)” (Levin, Haldar, & Picot, 2016, p. 1). In their recent contribution “Social Work and Sociology” (2016), Levin and her colleagues give insights into the historical separation of the disciplines. While the authors, along with other contributors, point to different challenges to this separation, a question they do not ask is what the consequences are when foster care arrangements are not included in the study of contemporary family life. One challenge, I argue, is that broad and complex images of family

life are not represented in presentations of “contemporary family life”.²⁶ As such, sociological representations of family life becomes a “boundary work”, where some living arrangements are recognised as “families”, while kinship care and non-kinship care arrangements become something else – and their deviance are reaffirmed.

²⁶ One example is in Syltevik’s (2017) newly published paper “A sociological perspective on changes in the family in Norway”. Here she asks: *What characterises families in Norway today and how has this changed in the last 50 years*. While Syltevik provides a rich and important exploration of family life in Norway and how this has changed, she does not include the expansion of CPS – an important phenomenon affecting many children and adults in Norway today. In addition, while she includes the rise of same-sex couples, cohabitant relationships and divorce as examples of developments, she does not acknowledge that many of these families fall under categories “foster care arrangements”.

5. Kinship care: a context to live in and to look back with

(...) the traditional opposition between the public and the private conceals the extent to which the public is present in the very notion of privacy. (Bourdieu, 1996, p. 25, italics in original)

There is a tradition amongst sociologists, as well as philosophers and other scholars, to think about public and private spheres as two distinct realms with incompatible rationalities. From this perspective, the state is perceived as part of the *impersonal* public sphere. Families on the other hand, are viewed as *private* – a “locus of warmth and intimacy” - protected from public intrusion (Wyness, 2014, p. 59). In recent decades, the public/private dichotomy has become increasingly challenged and difficult to uphold. Changing notions of children and childhood represent an important reason for this. As described in chapter two, social policies and measures towards children in Western countries draw on and promote the image of the universal individualised child with rights combined with individualistic understandings of children’s lives. Through this image, the state makes it possible to conduct subtle control of families with children (Hennum, 2011, 2014, 2015).

While family life in many Western countries is characterised by *indirect* regulation by the state (through the child), the families we find within the category “kinship care” experience a *direct* form of regulation. As such, kinship foster care can be understood as an arena where rationalities symbolically presented in the private and public sphere meet and become closely intertwined. In this chapter I focus on what this involves for how upbringing by relatives is practised, with particular attention on what it means or can involve for children who grow up in kinship care – in childhood and adulthood. To make the chapter as “rich” as possible, I draw on some of the data from the interviews with young adults who grew up in foster care with relatives.

Regulation through contractual relations

As shown in chapter two, kinship foster care is often based on already established relations between family members, the child and his or her birth parents. Unlike other foster parents, these relatives have not expressed an interest in becoming foster parents, but have agreed to become caregivers for a particular child. Hence, kinship care placements, unlike non-foster care placements, are essentially different because children are not moved from one family network to another, but rather, they are moved to a different part of their family network. These examples often involve grandparents who “stepped up” to care for their grandchildren, when their own children were unable to care for the children themselves.

While families in kinship care arrangements are fundamentally different from non-kinship care arrangements, kinship care has equal status to other foster care arrangements and is regulated according to current legislation. When the state takes over the care for the child and a foster care placement is formalised, the birth parent(s) (most often the birth mother) will retain the formal parental responsibility, while the respective relative or relatives become responsible for the day-to-day care of the child. CPS have the formal responsibility for the child, who becomes a client of the welfare state. As such, grandchildren, nephews and nieces are ascribed status according to the terminology found in child protection legislation, as a *foster child*. Grandparents, aunts and uncles are formally redefined as the child’s *foster parents*. In paper II, I argue that the process where situations in the family are translated into “system language” and adjusted to conform to the already established categories of the welfare state is central to the process of clientisation (Järvinen & Mik-Meyer, 2003, p. 10). This means that not only are people’s situations categorised – they are also transformed into recognisable problems and dealt with according to the relevant category.

All kinship foster care arrangements are formalised through *the foster care contract* (The Ministry of Children).²⁷ The contract:

“(…) regulates the relationships between foster parents and child protective services (...). By entering into this agreement, foster parents accept taking on a foster care mission for the child protective services. On behalf of the child protective services, the foster parents are to give the foster child a safe and good home and ensure the foster child’s everyday needs” (The Ministry of Children 2010, my translation).

²⁷ The foster care contract (*Fosterhjemsavtalen*) can be read online: <https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/upload/bld/barnevern/2011/fosterhjemsavtalen2011.pdf>

The foster care contract, like other contractual relations, ensures a formal, rational arrangement between legal parties, that the care and responsibility of a child does not rest on emotions (love, duty, sentiment), but, rather, that it is an *assignment* that implies payment - a time-limited arrangement that is mutually revocable. In other words, one can say as does Thørnblad (2011, p. 41), that the foster care contract moves families (symbolically) into the field of child protection and the logic of CPS becomes superior to the logic of “the family”.

Contractual relations break radically with contemporary notions of *family* relations. As argued by Ulvik (2005), parent-child relationships are seen as irrevocable in our culture. This is reflected in the fact that we do not have the term *ex-child* in Norwegian (nor English) vocabulary, implying that the termination of parent-child relationship as not an option. In a similar way, we do not have the terms *ex-grandchild* or *ex-niece*. Family, in other words, is symbolically everlasting, while contractual relations are not.

Personal and professional caregivers

In terms of the relatives’ basis for caregiving, Holtan (2002) makes a distinction between *personal* and *professional care*. Personal care refers to the informal, emotional, continuous and experience-based, while the professional refers to formal, temporary, rational and research-based (pp. 114-115). In the everyday lives of children who grow up with relatives, the two rationalities can come into conflict. Financial compensation as one example of this. Money and payment are fundamental aspects of caregiving in different care sectors in Norway today (e.g. care of elderly). When relatives care for children in their families, the motive is expected to be love and solidarity, not money. Being paid to care for a nephew, niece or grandchild can therefore be a difficult issue for many relatives who function as foster parents. This is reflected in Holtan’s (2002) qualitative study of kinship foster care. Many of the foster parents she interviewed emphasised the absence of an economic self-interest – it was love for the child, not the money, which motivated them. A grandfather and his partner who were interviewed expressed it like this:

Grandfather: That they were going to pay for us having him here (...)

Partner: That was quite strange.

Grandfather: It was not because of the money, that’s for sure (laughing).

Financial compensation was also an issue among some of the 26 young adults I interviewed for this doctoral dissertation. One example can be found in my interview with “Nina” (25). From the age of six, she had lived with her aunt, a single woman who worked part-time as a nurse. According to Nina, her aunt was an “incredible woman” who had given her a “wonderful childhood” and she “deserved every penny” that had been given to her by CPS. In Nina’s case, money is interpreted as recognition of her aunt’s devotion to her in her childhood, not as the motive for providing care. An example of the opposite can be found in the interview with Henry (23), who also grew up with a single aunt:

I’ve always identified as a foster child because I’ve never called her “mum” and...and when I found out how much you receive for being a foster parent, I was a bit like “oh, it’s a job to have me” and it sort of gave me the feeling that I was only there because of the money.

For Henry it would seem that the discovery of how much his aunt received for being his foster parent was evidence of her motives, *and* served as an explanation as to why their relationship had never been like a parent-child relationship. It might be true that his aunt did in fact take on the role as foster parent because of the money. What is interesting here, however, is not the actual motive, but the interpretation that is available to Henry. Other young adults, who did not grow up in foster care, do not have the option to interpret “bad” or “weak” relationships with birth parents in a similar way. This brings me to an issue which is particularly important in this dissertation, namely the choices of action and interpretation which accompany the foster child status.

The foster child status

The term “foster child” has certain connotations. A few decades ago, there was considerable stigma²⁸ attached to the foster child status (Hagen, 2001). In the UK context, Rogers (2016) argues that many children who grow up in foster care still have to manage stigma in their everyday lives. While this might be so, there is little doubt that the foster child status – the

²⁸ Goffman (1963) defines stigma as “an attribute that is significantly discrediting” and proposes that the person who is stigmatised is reduced “from a whole and usual person to a tainted, discounted one” (p. 3).

meaning we attach to it – has changed.²⁹ Today, the status have a connotation of children who are *vulnerable* and *at risk* of negative outcomes in adult life as a result of their birth parents’ deviant behaviour.

As I showed in Chapter three, this vulnerability is also an image which many researchers take on in their analysis. An under-communicated issue, therefore, is that the foster child status also opens up a larger repertoire of choices for children who grow up in foster care, compared to children who do not. The fact that children who grow up as “foster children” have other choices in everyday life is central to the formal aspect of kinship care.

One example relates to everyday routines. As argued by Ulvik and Gulbrandsen (2015), explorations of children’s everyday life and their interpretations of everyday routines and activities is important – it is a base for exploring situated experiences. Children who do not grow up as foster children negotiate their bedtimes, curfews and other activities and wishes through their parents – maybe with the help of other people in their life (e.g. siblings). Children who grow up in foster care, however, can negotiate their wishes through a third party – the child welfare worker. The wish to move out at the age of 16 is an example of this. In other words, “foster children” have a different position from other children and young people, and in theory they have more power to influence their life situations. Some of the young adults I interviewed in relation to the research project (T3) told me stories of how they, as children, had involved their assigned child welfare worker in such negotiations. One example is found in my interview with Robin (21). Talking about his childhood he said:

They were just very, very strict, but I managed to get a new contract in my teens in collaboration with the child protective services – allowing me a later bedtime, more internet and that sort of thing. So, that was nice.

Another example of choices which accompany the foster child status, and which reflect crossing rationalities, is that children who grow up with the foster child status today have the right to express their opinions about their foster parents. It is enshrined in “Regulations on Foster Care”

²⁹ To exemplify: In Norway today we have organisations for children (8-20 years) who grow up in foster care (or “receive” other types of services) such as “The Change Factory” (*Forandringsfabrikken*). The organisation works toward bringing child and youth “voices” into view. When presented in the media they do not present themselves as shameful or deviant, but as “children with rights”. The organisation’s home site is: <http://www.forandringsfabrikken.no/article/about-us-english#>

(§ 9) that during visits child welfare workers should give the child the opportunity to express opinions about the “conditions” in the “foster care placement”, and to facilitate conversations with the child without the presence of the foster parents. While it has been shown that children display different types of agency in their encounter with CPS (Thørnblad & Holtan, 2011a), it is reasonable to argue that the system’s regulations and the foster child status facilitate a context in which children become evaluators of their foster parents as well as of their childhoods.

The final example I will give here relates to the rights of foster children to study documents related to them personally. I touched upon this issue in the previous chapter. In her analysis of child protection reports in Norway, Hennem (2011) found that such documents do more than satisfy bureaucratic demands for record-keeping about the delivery of services – they construct specific images of children and their families in relation to middle-class norms and values – on how things “should be”. The purpose, she argues, is often to prove the necessity of moving children from one category to another. In doing so, professionals also construct “strikingly similar life stories of deviance and abnormal events” (2011, p. 343). In other words, the child’s life, situation and family relations are described from a specific perspective with specific goals. The question, is how such reports influence how childhood, family relations and so on are understood by the child, adolescent or adult who reads public documents about their lives. I touch upon this issue implicitly in paper II, where one of the young adults said that his suspicions had been confirmed when reading his own journal – he *had* been traumatised as a child. To him, the journal served as confirmation that he had been neglected throughout his childhood.

The choices which follow the foster child status seek to ensure that children who grow up “in care” on the state’s account are secured a safe and good childhood. However, these “choices” can also become “forces” where more or less “normal” aspects of everyday life are interpreted as something different. This raises questions around how children who grow up in foster care with relatives perceive their family relationships and their childhoods. Qualitative studies of children who grew up in kinship care indicate that the formal aspect of their upbringing by relatives is given little significance. In most cases, children do not understand their family relationships or upbringing as different, but highlight *normality* (Burgess et al., 2010; Egelund, Jakobsen, & Steen, 2010; Thørnblad & Holtan, 2011b). This means that the foster child status is reduced to a formality. The question I pose in paper II, is if and how the foster child status is made relevant in the construction of childhood narratives among young adults. As the analysis shows, it can offer a powerful framework for the interpretation of one’s childhood.

6. Method and methodology

Some of our best-known research stories begin with an image of the curious researcher who seeks to find an answer to a question or problem that she or he has been struggling with for some time.³⁰ Similar to most studies conducted today, my study tells a rather different story. As mentioned in the introduction, it is part of the research project “Outcome and experiences of growing up in kinship care” and represents the third time (T3) for data collection. This means that I did not choose the topic myself, but was given a position in an already existing project with an established project plan for T3 containing aims and expectations. By joining the research project, I was also given access to data collected from the two previous studies (T1 and T2). Conducting a study embedded in this type of project gives both guidelines and numerous possibilities. The aim of this chapter is to give insights into the choices I made along the way. The chapter is divided into three main sections. In the first I describe the original project plan for T3 and the recruitment process. In the second I give insights into a turning point in the study and the interview process. The third section discusses the framework in which the analysis for the papers took place. Ethical considerations are discussed throughout the chapter.

³⁰ A classic example is the story about Sir Isaac Newton and the falling apple.

T3: The original plan

The original project plan for T3 was titled *The social integration of foster children as adults in light of growing up in kinship care* (Holtan & Thørnblad, 2013). The plan consisted of information about the two previous studies (T1 and T2), as well as a plan for T3 with expectations to follow up on the same participants through interviews and questionnaires. As can be read in the plan,³¹ the authors presented potentially fruitful theoretical concepts and research questions for T3, while also emphasising that the person responsible for T3 would be able to influence all stages of the research process.

I soon realised that the transition to adulthood was a dominant framework in studies approaching young adults who grew up in out-of-home care settings. As I showed in chapter 3, this is known as the “leaving care literature”. Because of the age of the participants at T3 (19-29 in 2015), this became a “natural” framework to adopt and I gave T3 a new working title: *The transition to adulthood in light of growing up in kinship care*. Here I took on the aim often presented in the leaving care literature: to gain insights into the young adults’ journeys from living in care to living independently in the community (Stein, 2006). I took as my starting point that young adults who grew up in out-of-home care score lower when it comes to education, income, etc, and higher on more negative outcome measures such as psychological problems, suicide and so on. Further, I referred to Mike Stein and used one of his most famous arguments, that the transition to adulthood for these young adults is both *accelerated* and *compressed* (Stein, 2004, p. 297). Finally, I followed this up by giving insights into the study conducted by Knudsen and Egelund (2011) on the effects of kinship care, where they concluded that young adults who grew up in kinship care have more resources to draw on in their transitions to adulthood, compared to young adults who grew up in non-kinship care. Collaborating on the original project plan, I asked how these resources would be expressed in my data. On the basis of this, and other questions related to “leaving care”, I constructed a questionnaire (Appendix VI) and a semi-structured interview guide (Appendix V). However, after conducting a pilot interview I took a step away from the concept of transition to adulthood as understood in the leaving care literature and changed the interview guide. I expand on this turning point below. In the following paragraphs I describe the research project as well as the recruitment processes at T1, T2 and T3.

³¹<file://homer.uit.no/Jsk018/My%20Documents/1.%20PHD%20%20RKBU/K.%20KAPPEN/Vedlegg/1.%20Original%20projet%20plan.pdf>

Recruitment: T1, T2 and T3

In all follow-up studies, recruitment depends on how previous studies have been conducted. Hence, to understand recruitment at T3, some insight into the project and the two previous phases for data collection is needed. The research project “Outcome and experiences of growing up in kinship care” is a national longitudinal study, initiated by Amy Holtan in 1998. (A full list of the projects publications can be found in Appendix VII). Holtan’s study (T1) included in-depth interviews with children, birth parents and foster parents, and a survey of children in state custody. The sample consisted of children (4-13 years) born between 1986 and 1995 who had been taken into care and had lived in kinship foster care or non-kinship foster care arrangements for at least one year. The quantitative sample for T1 consisted of the foster parents of 135 children placed in 124 kinship foster homes with a response rate of 58%. In addition, a comparative sample of children in non-kinship foster homes participated, including the foster parents of 111 children in 90 non-kinship foster homes, with a response rate of 47%. The qualitative sample at T1 consisted of 18 foster families.

Renee Thørnblad conducted T2. In 2008, the children were aged between 13 and 22 years. Because of the children’s ages at T1, the ethical regulations did not allow Holtan to record their names, only their month and year of birth, and the foster parents’ names, addresses and telephone numbers. Hence, recruitment at T2 was conducted through children’s foster parents who at T1 had consented to be contacted again with a request to participate in a follow up study. A total of 233 foster parents were invited to participate in the study (of which 124 were kinship foster parents, and 109 were non-kinship foster parents). Of these, 129 participated (63 of whom were kinship foster parents and 66 were non-kinship foster parents), representing a response rate of 55.4%. All youth over the age of 18 were asked if they wanted to be interviewed, resulting in 12 interviews of whom 10 had been interviewed at T1.

Unlike the two previous studies, T3 was directed only towards the children (now adults), not their foster parents or birth parents (see table 1). As already mentioned, the “children” who participated directly (through interviews) or indirectly (through questionnaires filled out by foster parents) at T1 and T2 were aged between 19 and 29 in 2015. In theory, all of these young adults could now be asked to participate in the study, except for the 28 who did not consent to be contacted again for a follow up study after T2. This left me with a total of 223 young adults to *invite* to participate at T3. Among these, I only had the names of young adults who at T2 consented to be contacted again: 28 young adults. I did not have the names of the

remaining 195. Hence, as with T1 and T2, the recruitment for T3 was conducted primarily through the foster parents. However, there was one major difference. After the recruitment at T2, the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Tribunal of the Ministry of Children and Equality (*Barne- og likestillingsdepartementets råd for taushetsplikt og forskning*) (Appendix II) had absolved foster parents of the duty of confidentiality, and they could freely give me the information I needed (contact details) in order to send out information sheets. This meant that I did not need to ask the foster parents to redistribute information sheets and requests for the young adults' participation. Once I had their names and addresses I could send these directly to the children, who by then were adults.

Information sheets (Appendix III) were sent out to all persons registered as foster parents for the children at T1 saying that they would receive a call from me in the near future asking for information about the young adults. After receiving the names and addresses, I sent out information sheets (Appendix IV) and asked if they wanted to participate. In the beginning of the recruitment process, all the young adults were asked if they wanted to be interviewed, fill out questionnaires, or both. However, I soon realized that more young adults wanted to be interviewed than first expected. Because of the time frame of the study, I elected to limit the interviews to young adults who grew up in kinship care. This means that most young adults who grew up in non-kinship care were only asked if they wanted to fill out questionnaires.

Twenty-nine young adults agreed to participate in interviews (27 grew up in kinship care and two in non-kinship care) and 72 young adults answered questionnaires, resulting in a response rate of 32.3%. The low level of participation in the quantitative part of the study can be traced to a range of factors. Some foster parents (those of 27 young adults) were, for different reasons (death, undisclosed address and so on), not traceable. Some foster parents (those of 20 young adults) did not want to give out the information we needed. In addition, we were informed that four of the young adults had died since T2, and one was in prison. To sum up: *we know* that 52 young adults did not receive our invitation. If we deduct this number, the response rate was 42% in the quantitative part of the study.

Table 1 gives an overview of the project and its aim at T1, T2 and T3.

Informants	T1 1999/2000			T2 2006/2008			T3 2014/2015	
	Amy Holtan			Renee Thørnblad			Jeanette Skoglund	
	CBCL/PSI ³²	Survey	Interview	CBCL/ASR	Survey	Interview	Survey	Interview
Children			X	X	X	X	X	X
Parents			X			X		
Foster parents	X	X	X	X	X	X		

The studies conducted at T1 and T2 were approved by the Regional Ethical Committee and the Norwegian Data Inspectorate. This study (T3) was approved by the Norwegian Data Inspectorate (Appendix I).

The pilot interview: a turning point

While the questionnaires were being sent out regularly following the receipt of consent to participate, I decided to conduct a pilot interview. I chose one of the first who agreed to being interviewed: “Tom”, a 25-year old man who had lived in non-kinship foster care since he was four years old. The interview took place in his flat. Before I had even managed to pick up the interview guide, he started talking. He told me that he had moved into foster care at the age of four, due to his birth mother’s alcohol abuse. He referred to his foster parents as his parents, and his foster siblings as his siblings. He told me how much he had disliked the term foster child while growing up, and about the “annoying” visits from CPS. He also talked about his memories of living with his birth mother, and his relationship with her today. Other topics included his job, interests, his future plans and so on. Two hours later, I pulled out the interview guide and looked for unanswered questions. One topic we hadn’t covered was moving out from his (foster) parents’ house:

³² CBCL: Child behavioural checklist, PSI: Parenting stress index and ASR: Adult self-report are standardised age adjusted survey forms.

I: How old were you when you moved out?

Tom: About 19

I: How did you experience moving out? Do you remember how you felt?

Tom: Relieved I guess. I mean, who wants to live with their parents when they're 19? It was so nice to get my own place – about time really. (Tom, 25)

After the interview, I wrote the first lines in my newly purchased research journal. This is a short excerpt from what I wrote:

Interview 1 February 2015

He talked and talked, and I could sit back and listen. It was obvious that he had thought about the interview. Not just about what he wanted to say, but how he wanted to be understood. When talking about his childhood and the foster parents he grew up with it seemed especially important to him that I understood that this was his family – a real family. Not only did he tell me about their role and importance in his life, but also his role in their life [...] There were so many questions from the interview guide I didn't ask. Not because he wouldn't have answered, but because it felt wrong for some reason, like the questions would challenge his perception of normality – like it would have made him different in a way. The one question I did ask, about moving out, was embarrassing...

Mike Stein, one of the prominent researchers in the leaving care literature has suggested that “care leavers” fall into three main outcome groups: those “moving on” from care, those “surviving care” and those who are “strugglers” (Stein, 2006, 2008b). Each category is based on the understanding that the young adults have disadvantaged backgrounds, and that they can be categorised according to their ability to overcome these disadvantages – their resilience. Based on the criteria for each category, Tom would be placed in the “moving on” category. “Moving on” refers to “care leavers” with high degree of resilience who, against the odds manage to successfully “transition” into adulthood (Stein, 2006, p. 277). I had not necessarily planned to use these concepts to categorise the young adults per se. However, the underlying understanding of these young adults and their life situations reflected in these concepts were the same understandings that the interview guide had been structured around. After the

interview with Tom, however, I began questioning the relevance of adopting the framework that the leaving care literature had offered me. For example, it felt wrong to classify him as someone who had done well in life *despite* growing up as a foster child. I use “felt” because I refer here to my “inner voice”, my “intuition”, telling me that this would not be an interpretation Tom would have accepted. Also, while the transition to adulthood concept (as understood in the leaving care literature) evolves mainly around the individual, Tom’s accounts were embedded in webs of relationships. Looking back on the time after this first interview, I remember being both disappointed and a bit scared. Not only had I just conducted an interview that did not resonate with my expectations, I had also “lost” my theoretical framework.

A short time after this interview, I came across a paper written by Val Gillies (2000) – a critical analysis of how the concept of transition to adulthood was used in psychology and sociology in studies of young people. As emphasised in chapter 3, Gillies encouraged researchers not to take the concept of transition to adulthood for granted:

This will hopefully lead to less reliance on established categories of ‘ knowledge ’ in favour of more grounded research, based on the actual understandings and experiences of young people and their families (Gillies, 2000, p. 225).

While this quote was primarily directed towards research on youth, her paper and main message were particularly influential in the subsequent choices I made. Moreover, although it was written 15 years earlier, she made me recall one of the fundamental questions in sociology: *why do I ask this particular question in this particular context?*

Based on the pilot interview and what I had learned from it, I decided that I wanted to focus less on the young adults’ individual “leaving care story” and more on what they themselves found important. With guidance from Hanne Haavind, as well as from Holtan and Thørnblad, I made a new interview “plan”. In contrast to the original, semi-structured interview guide, the plan was now to ask each interviewee to talk around three main areas: the background to why they grew up in foster care, their childhood and adolescence, and their life today. To be able to conduct such an “open” interview, while still locating the interview in the context of their

upbringing³³ I wrote a new information letter, a “contract”, to clarify the aims of my study. I memorised this text, and it served as an introduction to each interview:

Everyone I interview is different in many ways. What you *do* have in common is that you grew up with relatives in foster care. For various reasons, the child protective services decided that you could not grow up with your birth parents. In my study, I want to know more about what these decisions have meant for you in your life. There are some studies that include the perspectives of foster parents, child welfare practitioners and in some cases also children. Very few, however, have interviewed young adults who grew up in foster care with relatives.

In this interview, I want you to talk around three main topics: your childhood, your adolescence, and your life today. I do not want you to talk about topics unwillingly –you decide what you want to focus on in the interview. As I wrote in the information sheet, you have the power to withdraw from the study at any time. This means that during or after the interview, you can say that you want to withdraw, without giving any explanation. If so, I will erase the recordings of the interview.

The interviewees: upbringings and life situations

While 27 young adults who grew up in kinship care agreed to be interviewed, one withdrew from the study on the day of the interview, without giving a specific reason for this. The remaining sample consisted of 26 young adults (15 women and 11 men), aged between 19 and 29. The average age was 22 (18 were aged 19-24 and eight were aged 25-29).

The 26 young adults had in common that they grew up with relatives in foster care for most or longer periods of their childhoods. Using the official terminology from CPS, the upbringing of the 26 young adults can be described as *long-term placements*, meaning that they had lived most of their childhood in kinship care. However, there is some variation. This is described more thoroughly in the methodology section in paper II. Of the young adults, 14 grew up with aunts and uncles (nine on their birth mothers side, five on their birth father’s side). 10 grew up with grandparents (eight on their birth mothers side and two on their birth father’s side) and two with their birth mother’s aunt and uncle. These numbers, showing that most of the young

³³ Referred to by Burgess as “conversations with a purpose” (1984, p. 102).

adults grew up with relatives on their birth mother's side, are consistent with previous research findings (see chapter 2).

While there is variation in terms of the interviewees' upbringing, we also see variation in the young adults' life situations at the time of the interview. Two still lived at home with their foster parent(s) and one had moved back in with her grandmother to save money. The other interviewees lived alone, with partners or friends. Six of the interviewees received aftercare. In Norway, *aftercare* refers to various types of support received from CPS after turning 18. With the foster child's consent, their time in care can be extended until the age of 23. Two of the interviewees were planning to receive aftercare in order to receive financial support when starting their university education and six had received aftercare until they had turned 23.

Eight had primary school as their highest level of education, 16 had completed secondary education, one had a bachelor's degree and one had a master's degree. In terms of employment, 12 of the young adults said that work was their main occupation, while seven stated that it was higher education. Two of the interviewees were on maternity leave and four were unemployed. The four who did not work received different types of welfare support, as did six other young adults.³⁴ When we look more closely at these financial and educational variables, we see that those with primary school as their highest educational level were the ones receiving social support, working part time or not working at all. This group constituted approximately one third of the sample, while two thirds were more similar to the average Norwegian in their twenties, based on financial and educational variables.

Lastly, 16 said that they had previously or were still suffering from depression, anxiety or other psychological problems. This is a high number, and may be said to reflect research nationally and internationally showing a higher incidence of psychological problems among young adults who grew up in care, compared to the average population (Backe-Hansen et al, 2014). However, since we do not know if anxiety and depression was an actual diagnosis or just a way of expressing difficult emotions at a particular time, it is impossible to give an accurate account.

An often-mentioned limitation in the foster care and kinship care literature is the homogeneity in the group of people (children, adolescents and young adults) who agree to be interviewed. For example, according to Burgess et al (2010, p. 304), "it is more straightforward to access

³⁴ In other words, a total of 10 young adults received welfare support, but only four of these were unemployed. The remaining six worked part-time.

young people who have had a positive experience of kinship care and who are living in stable kinship care placements”. While there is probably some truth in this, not all of the interviewees had “positive experiences” and not all had lived in “stable placements”. This is visible in both of the empirical papers. It can therefore be argued that the interviewees who participated in at T3 represent a more diverse group of young adults than what is commonly represented in the kinship care literature.

Table 2 is a presentation of the interviewees (T3). Information is based on young adults own statements. See list of abbreviations on next page.

Age and gender	Grew up with	Age when “placed”	Prior placements	Moves during the placement	Receives /received after care	Living situation	Occupation	Highest educational level
27 (f)	Aunt and uncle (m)	2	No	No	No	Lives alone	100% disabled (U)	Upper sec
24 (f)	Grandmother (m)	6	No	No	Yes	Lives with grandmother	Works part time + school	Lower sec.
23 (f)	Aunt and uncle (m)	3	No	No	Yes	Cohabitant	Works full time	Upper sec.
27 (f)	Grandparents (f)	4	R.C	Informal	No	Cohabitant	Unemployed (AAP)	Lower sec.
26 (f)	Grandparents (f)	3	R.C	Informal	Unsure	Cohabitant	Unemployed (AAP)	Lower sec.
27 (m)	Aunt and uncle (m)	2	W.O.R	No	No	Lives alone	Works full time	Bachelor degree
22 (f)	Aunt (m)	2	No	F.C + R.C	No	Lives alone	Unemployed (AAP)	Lower sec.
24 (m)	Grandparents (m)	2	No	No	Yes	Lives with grandparents	Works part time (U.B)	Upper sec.
22 (f)	Grandparents (m)	2	No	No	No	Cohabitant	Works full time	Upper sec.
23 (f)	Aunt and uncle (f)	1,5	No	No	Yes	Cohabitant	Works part time + school	Lower sec.
22 (f)	Grandparents (m)	0,5	No	No	Yes	Lives with friends	University student	Upper sec.
19 (m)	Aunt and uncle (f)	3	No	No	Yes	Lives alone	University student	Upper sec.
23 (m)	Aunt (m)	1	No	No	Unsure	Lives alone	Works part time	Low. Sec.
29 (f)	Aunt and uncle (m)	8	No	No	No	Cohabitant	Works part time (AAP)	Low. Sec
20 (m)	Aunt and uncle (f)	2	No	No	Unsure	Lives with aunt and uncle	Works full time	Upper sec.
29 (m)	Grandparents (m)	4	No	No	No	Lives with friends	Works full time	Upper sec.
27 (m)	Aunt and uncle (m)	1,5	No	F.C	Unsure	Lives with friends	Works full time	Master’s degree
23 (m)	Aunt (m)	2	No	No	No	Cohabitant	University student	Upper sec.
21 (f)	Aunt and uncle (m)	1	No	No	Yes	Folk High School	Student	Upper sec.
22 (f)	Aunt (f)	1	R.C	Informal	Yes	Cohabitant	Works part time (U.B)	Upper sec.
20 (f)	Grandparents (m)	1	No	No	Yes	Lives alone	University student	Upper sec.
24 (f)	Grandparents (m)	2	No	No	No	Cohabitant	University student	Upper sec.
23 (m)	Aunt and uncle (f)	4	R.C	No	Unsure	Lives alone	Works full time	Lower sec.
25 (m)	Aunt and uncle (m)	1	No	No	Yes	Lives alone	Works full time	Upper sec.
24 (m)	Grandparents (m)	2	No	No	Yes	Lives alone	University student	Upper sec.
21 (f)	Aunt and uncle (m)	1	No	No	Yes	Lives with friends	Works full time	Upper sec.

Abbreviations and definitions for table 2:

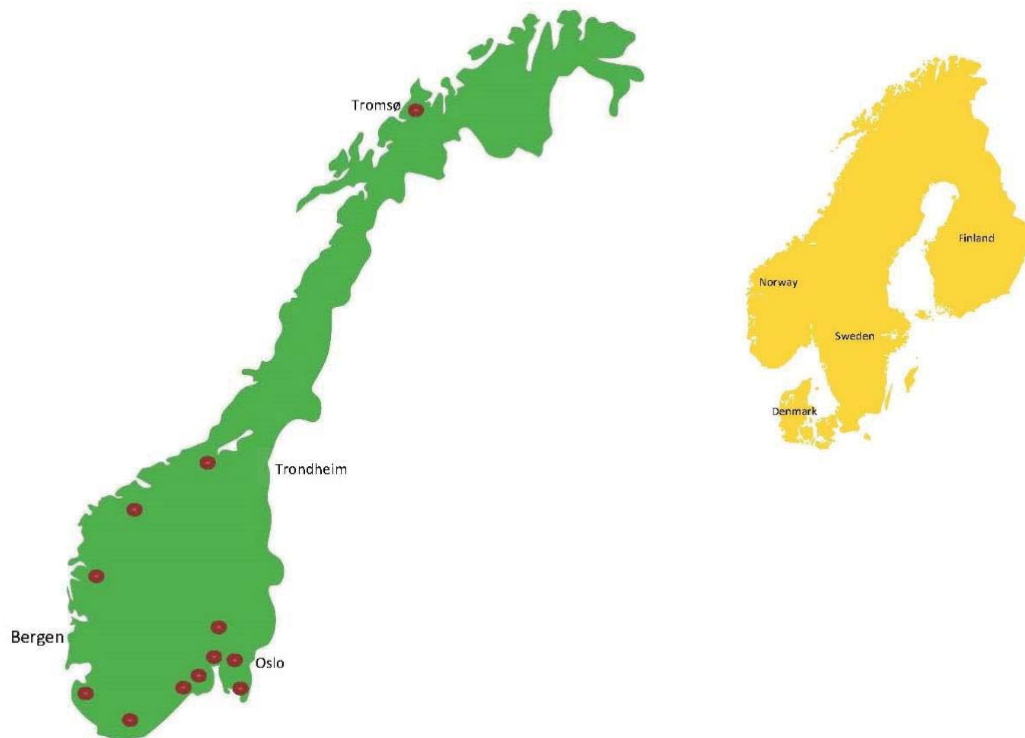
“Grew up with”:	(m) = mother’s side. (f) = fathers side
“Prior placements”:	R.C = residential care W.O.R = lived in foster care with other relatives
“Moves during the placement”:	Informal = lived with another relative for a period of time F.C = non-kinship foster care
“Receives/received after care”	Unsure = the interviewees were unsure if they had received after care
“Living situation”:	Cohabitant = lives with partner
“Occupation”:	(AAP) = receives financial welfare support (<i>arbeidsavklaringspenger</i>) (U) = receives disability benefits (UB) = receives unemployment benefits
“Highest educational level”:	Lower sec = lower secondary school (<i>ungdomsskole</i>) Upper sec. School = upper secondary school (<i>videregående skole</i>)

The interviews: the short version

Because of the national character of the research project, the interviews took place in different parts of Norway: in the north, south, east and west (see table 3). The interviewees chose the time and location of the interview, resulting in 14 interviews conducted in the interviewees’ homes, 10 in cafes, and two in group rooms at the university where they studied. The interviews lasted between 60 and 180 minutes, with an average of 90 minutes. All interviews were digitally recorded with the permission of the respondents, and later fully transcribed.³⁵

³⁵ All interviews were transcribed by a professional transcriber.

Table 3: A map of Norway. The red dots show where the interviews were conducted. The yellow map locates Norway in a Scandinavian geographical context.



The interviews: the long version

The paragraph above offers the shortest possible description of the interview process. The transcribed interviews, however, were more than the result of a simple information-gathering process. If we acknowledge, as I do here, that interviewing is a social encounter in which knowledge is constructed, these interviews are considered both as sites of, and as occasions for, producing knowledge (Holstein & Gubrium, 2003, p. 4). In other words, the interviewer does not *collect* or *gather* data, but participates together with the interviewees in *generating* data. This understanding inevitably leads to questions around the interview context – about what led to what being said. Context refers here both to what is “around” the interview (the frame set by the interviewer) and to what occurs “in” the interview (the interaction between researcher and interviewee). To give insights into both, I have chosen some aspects of the interview process, and in the following paragraphs I show just how complex qualitative interviews can be.

One important aspect of the context set in this study is that the interviewees were asked to participate because they grew up with relatives in foster care. This gives room for different stories and tools for self-presentation compared to being interviewed simply about growing up in Norway between 1986 and 1995. Drawing on the experience of the pilot interview with Tom, I wanted as far as possible to create a frame in which the formal aspect of their upbringing was toned down. I tried to give room for the interviewees' "own understandings", instead of "leading" them into specific tracks. For example, I always located and used the words the interviewees themselves used to refer to the different people in their lives. I never used words such as foster child, foster home, foster care or any type of "technical" language, unless they themselves used these words. Many referred to their aunts as their mothers, so naturally, I also referred to the aunt and foster mother as "your mother". It was interesting that some of the interviewees might refer to their relatives at the start of the interview with "foster care language". In such cases, I always asked if they used these words in their everyday life. A common answer was that they never referred to their grandparents or aunts and uncles as their foster parents. One said that he would sometimes use such terms in order to help people make sense of "how things were". Another interviewee laughed when I asked her about this and said "I don't know why I said that. I've never called grandma "foster mother" in my life". It is important to highlight that toning down the formal aspect of the interviewees' upbringing does not mean that there was no room for opinions about CPS. Rather, my aim was not to encourage a "client perspective", where the interviewee automatically took on the role as an expert and evaluator of CPS as well as his or her own childhood, family relationships and so on. This striving to create a frame in which the interviewees could talk about their past, present and future more "freely" allowed me to later explore how the interviewees "used" their foster child status during the interview (paper II). To me, this was more than a "fruitful" interview style; it was what I considered to be the most ethical approach.

While the *reason* for an interview sets a particular frame for the interview, the person conducting the interview will of course also play a role. As in all forms of social interaction "research interactions are influenced by who we are, what we are, where we are, and how we appear to others" (Halloway, Lawton, & Gregory, 2005, p. 42). It was not a 45-year old male child welfare worker who conducted the interviews, but a 29-year old female sociologist. Before beginning the interview process, I thought about how I should present myself to the interviewees in order to develop trust. This involved a conversation with myself and with others

(friends and colleagues) about everything from what I should wear, to whether I could “snuse”³⁶ during the interview. Two of my main concerns, however, were my age and my background. Questions I asked were: Would they feel comfortable being interviewed by someone close to, or the same age as them? Would someone with a background in CPS have a higher degree of legitimacy for conducting the interviews? It is of course not possible to give a clear answer to these questions. Nevertheless, my experiences from interviewing a total of 29 young adults³⁷ is that most felt comfortable and wanted to share their experiences and opinions with me. I also believe that because of my age, the interviewees felt that they could talk more freely about some issues, for example drug use. In addition, not having a background in child protection was a positive experience – I could be a novice. They had to explain to me the role CPS had, or used to have, in their lives.³⁸ However, one consequence of this may have been that I “missed out” on stories which the interviewees would only tell to someone with a background in child protection.

While my main concerns had evolved around how *I* should present *myself* and act during the interview, I had given little thought to the very people I was about to interview – how their presence and personalities would shape the interview and how I would respond to this. Moreover, I had not considered that the interviewees might have very different motives for being interviewed. This, however, is crucial in understanding what type of data were produced during the interview.

On the basis of my experiences, the interviewees can roughly be divided into two main groups: those who had “stories to tell” and those who did not. The group who had stories to tell consisted of both women and men. They told me that they had looked forward to the interviews and they often started talking straight away or began the interview with the question “where do I begin?”. When I asked why they had agreed to participate, they told me two things: they wanted their stories to be told and they wanted to express their opinions about CPS. In the after math of the interviews, I often thought about this group – a group that talked about their childhoods and the challenges they had experienced without visible discomfort. What is the probability that I would

³⁶ To “snuse” is a common practice in Norway and other Nordic countries in particular, and refers to tobacco in small patches which are put under the lip.

³⁷ I also interviewed three young adults who grew up in non-kinship care. These interviews are not included in this study.

³⁸ It can be added that many were uncertain when it came to details about the role of CPS in their childhoods. It was not uncommon for the interviewees to say that they could call their grandma/aunt/mum and check if I wanted the details.

have met a group like this if the study had been conducted 20-30 years ago, when growing up as a foster child was highly stigmatised? Probably very small? This is a side note, but it is important because it reminds us that the interviewees are not just a diverse group of young women and men who grew up in foster care with relatives. Rather, they grew up in foster care with relatives at a *particular time*. Hence, as Harriet Bjerrum Nielsen puts it, their accounts represent “small pockets of history” (Bjerrum Nielsen, 2017, p. 57). Because their accounts are reflections of the time when they were constructed, I argue that this also means that they are highly relevant outside the area of social work. Their accounts not only tell us something about “kinship care”, but of the times that we live in.

The second group, mostly men, were less enthusiastic. They were not reluctant to talk *per se*. Nor, as far as I could tell, were they “ashamed” to be interviewed because of their past as former foster children who grew up with relatives. However, they did not have the same eagerness as the other group. Some said that it was their grandmother or aunt who had encouraged them to participate. They felt that they did not have much to contribute to a study of former foster children, because they had experienced such normal childhoods. Those who said this would often apologise for not having much to tell. In contrast, a few men in this group said that it was difficult to talk about the past. They expressed that they had experienced difficulties in their childhoods and did not know how much they wanted to talk about this or their family relationships. Such expressions can be interpreted as confirming the many voices arguing that former and present foster children are vulnerable and need “extra protection” in research. I disagree with this view. Growing up in foster care does not automatically lead to vulnerability. However, I do acknowledge their expressed difficulties with talking about these issues. Family relationships and childhood memories are intimate topics which, for many people, can be difficult to discuss (Gabb, 2008, p. 21). The point I’m trying to make here, is that, depending on each of the interviewees’ motives and attitudes toward being interviewed I had to adjust the interview style. By style here, I mean several aspects of interaction, from tone of voice to follow-up questions. This reminds us that knowledge is situational, contextual and interactional. As highlighted by Mason (1996, p. 40), it requires the interviewer to be flexible and sensitive to the dynamics of each interaction. In one sense, it means that the interviewer must effectively customise each interview on the spot. This, however, was not always easy - in particular with those who did not have stories to tell. In response to their “lack of stories”, I would find myself asking questions from the original interview guide or the questionnaire. In retrospect, after reading the interview transcripts, I see that this was a pattern in my interview style: when the

interviewees stopped talking and silence came, I would (in a slight panic) lean on my original questions. For example, among those who in different ways expressed that they had positive life situations, I would ask why they thought that they had done so well in life. While such “leading”, unintended questions did occur, they did give rich and important data – as can be read in the analysis of paper II.

A discussion of how knowledge is produced through interviews is problematic because the accounts are constructed from the perspective of the interviewer. In this final section, I will therefore give insights into conversations I had after the interviews. While still from the interviewer’s perspective, it does give interesting insights into the interview settings and what influenced what was said and what was not.

After each interview, I asked each of the young adults how they had experienced the interview. During these talks many would “reveal” to me what they had thought during the interview – making this talk a type of “backstage arena”. In retrospect, I feel that these conversations probably gave me the most insights into the interview context and what impacted on what was said and how. One example was “Klara”, a 23-year-old university student. During the interview she told me stories about her birth mother that contrasted greatly with contemporary conceptions of what a mother is or should be. This, of course, was not the only interview about birth parents who had “failed” at parenting. According to Klara, however, she had made a deal with herself that if I, the interviewer, gave indications of feeling sorry for her or “making a fuss”, she would not open up. To her, the fact that I did not respond with the kinds of words or expressions which indicated that I was getting emotional, meant that she could talk “frankly” about her childhood and her mother. Klara’s case gives insight into an issue that is difficult to predict. My interview “style”, which might be experienced as a bit cold or too neutral, might have been positive for Klara. Yet, with others, it might have meant that they did not feel like “opening up”. A good match is difficult to predict.

Klara’s example shows just how complex qualitative interviews can be. To add to this complexity I end this section by giving a final example which show that even the weather can play a part in knowledge production. This interview took place in a café with a 23-year-old man, “Trygve”. We sat on opposite sides of the table, next to a window. It was a beautiful day and the sun was streaming into the café, straight into my eyes. Trygve was one of those who started talking before we even sat down – a story, which predominantly evolved around troubled

relationships and a neglected childhood. When we left the café afterwards he told me that he had at some point been wondering whether he should continue his sad story in there. I asked him if it had been difficult for him. He said: “no, but I could see that it was for you – you were quite tearful”. Bewildered, I thought back to the interview which had taken place just five minutes before – I remembered my sensitive eyes struggling with the sun hitting my cornea, producing tears. To Trygve, these tears had not just made him wonder whether he should stop, but they had functioned as a recognition of the sadness of the tale.

Possible unintended consequences of participation

One of the most important and common principles involved in a discussion of research ethics concerns harmful consequences that could result from the actions of researchers. While we do have regulatory frameworks and ethics codes suggesting that harm must be avoided, *the risk* of harm is probably unavoidable in any activity. When acknowledging that there is always some potential for harm in research, it requires that the researcher makes a reasonable assessment of the likelihood and severity of any particular kind of harm. What counts as a significant risk of significant harm is a matter of judgement and a matter for discussion (Hammersley & Traianou, 2012, p. 57).

The main questions I asked during the research process were: What are the unintended consequences of asking these young adults to participate in a study on the background of their upbringing? How does it feel to be asked to participate *again* – to be involved in a longitudinal study? What are the possible unintended consequences of being interviewed as a former “foster child” who grew up with relatives?

All of the young adults who were asked to participate in the study were subjected to the status/category “foster child” as children – a status from which they could not escape until the age of 18. To some, the request to participate might be experienced as a “haunting” presence or as a constant reminder and a renewed demarcation of difference. In fact, some of the foster parents I contacted for information refused to give it for this reason. They gave different versions of “enough is enough – she/he is over 18 now – let’s just leave them alone”. This experience adds to the one I had in the pilot interview with Tom - a reminder to avoid approaching the young adults and their backgrounds as unique or different. As I aimed to show above, I actively tried to “normalise” things: from the text I read before each interview to the

creation of a frame in which the formal aspect of their upbringing was toned down. Another strategy was my response to difficult issues, as I also showed through Klara's case above. My strategies followed in the lines of Goffman (1967), who once argued that when an individual becomes over-involved in a topic of conversation, others are "drawn from the talk to the talker". "One man's eagerness is another man's alienation". Readiness to become over-involved is a form of "tyranny practiced by children, prima donnas and lords, placing feelings above moral rules that should have made society safe for interactions." (pp. 122-123).

While strategies were employed to avoid transferring common experiences of life into something exceptional, it should be added that some of the interviewees told me (after the interviews) that they now saw their childhood "in a new light". Some compared the interview to a therapy session, and joked that they now understood themselves better. Similar responses from interviewees have been found in other qualitative research projects, including some with young adults' perspectives (e.g., Silva, 2012, p. 509). To what extent this can be counted as a harmful consequence is up for discussion. It might just be that the interviewees just wanted to give me recognition of a job well done, or that they appreciated the conversation.

"Choosing data" on the basis of interests, intuition and curiosity

After conducting 26 interviews, as well as having access to qualitative and quantitative data at T1 and T2, and the quantitative data from T3, it is safe to say that I had a large amount of data available. In the empirical papers, I draw only on a small portion of these data. The choice to focus only on the qualitative data set in this dissertation relates to a number of different issues, one being my interest in qualitative method. More importantly, through the writing of paper I and conducting all the interviews (which also inspired paper I), I found it important to take my experiences, intuition and curiosity seriously. By this I mean taking seriously the fact that these young adults grew up in different families in different places, that they had different understandings of their childhoods, families and relationships and that they represented a heterogeneous group in different ways. I wanted to explore further the many questions I had asked myself throughout the interview process. In my journal I had written down the question: "How can two "similar" challenges in childhood be portrayed so differently by two people"? Another question was: "Why are they so generous towards their birth parents"? The latter referred to why so many had their birth parents in their lives, despite the fact that their birth parents had disappointed them on so many occasions. In other words, I wanted to take

complexity and diversity into account, and I wanted to explore in-depth the meaning that the young adults themselves ascribed to their childhoods and family relationships. The qualitative data allowed me to do this.

Analytical strategies

In working with what resulted in paper II, I followed up the question: “Why are more or less “similar” childhood challenges portrayed so differently”? To explore this issue, I drew on the qualitative data from all 26 interviews conducted at T3. Inspired by narrative analytical approaches, I shifted focus from what was told (the topic of childhood), to how and why a particular event was storied, and what the interviewee accomplished by developing the story that way (Riessman, 2008, pp. 12-13). I paid attention to the *whole* interview - “the jigsaw of material” that the interviewee had presented (Brannen, 2017, p. 22). I also brought elements of performative approaches into the analysis. This involved paying attention to how the interviewees positioned themselves and other relevant characters in the interview (Bamberg, 1997). Moreover, and closely related to this issue, it involved acknowledging the context for the interview setting. As described earlier in this chapter, the young adults were not interviewed because they grew up in Norway between 1986 and 1995. Rather, they were interviewed because they grew up in foster care with relatives. If, how, and why they drew on the foster child status in the construction of childhood narratives were essential components. On the basis of their childhood narratives, how they positioned themselves and other relevant characters and how the foster child status was made relevant I constructed four types of childhoods. This way of moving from “lay descriptions of social life, to technical descriptions of that social life” is often referred to as abduction (Blaikie, 2007, pp. 89-91). The “technical descriptions”, or categories which I developed are also known as “second-ordered constructs” (Schutz, 1963, pp. 337-9).

The topic for paper III was relationships with birth parents. Wanting to take advantage of the longitudinal data available, I chose three cases where the young adults had been interviewed also at T1 and T2. The decision to use three cases was based on my wish to conduct an “in-depth” analysis. The choice of cases was based on that I wanted to bring out and explore variation. The analytical process here was influenced by my interpretation of the interviews from T3, as well as T1 and T2 – that there was large variation in terms of the content and meaning the “children” ascribed to the relationships with their birth parents. To avoid a

romanticisation of these relationships, I explored how it was *expressed* at each point in time. In doing so, I adopted a methodological approach with similarities to a biographical one where I drew “life lines” of each case. This enabled me to explore the relationship in relation to wider aspects of the interviewees’ lives, paying attention to other meaningful relationships and their interpretations of their life situations. Unlike the analytical strategy in paper II, this analysis is closer to an inductive analysis. However, the analytical process was not “linear” and “descriptive”, as some would define inductive strategies (Blaikie, 2007, p. 105), but *cyclic*. As such, the reasoning in the analysis had similarities with abductive strategies.

Finally, it must be noted that the analytical process contributing to both papers also consisted of continuous discussions with colleagues. More specifically, these were interactions between Holtan, Thørnblad and myself, where we discussed interpretations of the data. This was important in both cases, but particularly for the longitudinal analysis where Holtan had conducted the interviews at T1, and Thørnblad the interviews for T2.

Qualitative rigour

Rigour is an essential issue in qualitative research. Perceptions of the quality of one’s study are not necessarily the same from one researcher to another, and will depend on the perspective which he or she takes on (Justesen & Mik-Meyer, 2010; Mason, 1996; Riessman, 2008). One criterion, which is common to all, is that there is logical coherence in the research project – from questions asked to methods deployed (Justesen & Mik-Meyer, p. 38). Throughout this project, I have sought to meet this criterion through the adoption of a transparent and open dialogue with the reader – from beginning to end. Unlike “homo academicus” who relishes the finished product (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, pp. 219-220), I have not tried to make the brush, the touching and retouching disappear from my work. Rather, I have sought to expose them. Exposure - or “transparency” as it is often referred to in the qualitative literature (Silverman, 2011, pp. 360-373) - is an essential component in strengthening the validity of one’s study. In the final section of this chapter I shed light on the internal validity of the study, also known as credibility. According to Krefling (1991, p. 218):

“A qualitative study is credible when it presents an accurate description or interpretation of human experience that people who also share the same experience would immediately recognise,”

During the interviews I did follow up with questions along the lines: “If I understand you correctly (...)”. However, I did not “check” or “test” my own interpretations of the data with the young adults I interviewed. As emphasised by Riessman (2008) it is challenging to take our work back to the interviewees because “Life stories are not static; memories and meanings of experiences change as time passes” (p. 198). It might also be that some of the interviewees would disagree with my interpretations. It is therefore important to clearly recognise that there might be a large gap between the views that I have presented through my analysis of these young adults’ experiences, and their own (Riessman, 2008, p. 199).

7. Presentation of papers

Kinship care or upbringing by relatives? The need for ‘new’ understandings in research

Paper I addresses the knowledge production on kinship foster care. It seeks to open up for, and contribute to, critical knowledge discussions around what future kinship care research should focus on and to expand the repertoire of philosophical traditions and research methodologies in the study of this phenomenon. Co-author is Renee Thørnblad and the paper was published in the European Journal of Social Work.

The point of departure is that research on kinship care has emerged in a time when evidence-based research and practice have become a well-established slogan in many areas of society. In social work research more broadly, constructivist and qualitative oriented researchers have challenged this dominant positivist paradigm. They have shown the importance of embracing a wider notion of knowledge, thus created space for different research approaches and perspectives in social work research. In the research field of kinship care, these critical voices have been sparse. As such, little attention has been paid to how kinship care should be understood in research: as a *service* within CPS or as *upbringing by relatives*. The first understanding represents a positivist epistemology, the latter is based on an interpretive epistemology. Whichever of the two understandings we choose in research will offer guidelines for the type of questions asked (and not), and what falls in or out of the focus of our research. If we understand kinship care predominantly as a service within CPS, this directs the researcher toward topics such as stability and breakdown, risk, effects and comparisons of kinship care with other services. Understood as upbringing by relatives, on the other hand, opens up to questions regarding how family, childhood and parenthood are negotiated and lived among women and men, boys and girls, in different places and at different times.

As emphasised in the introduction of this dissertation, kinship care has primarily been studied as a service within CPS. In paper I we use effect studies as a case to demonstrate the limitations of this construction in research. We argue that a complex, varied and context-dependent phenomenon is reduced to factors. The problem, is not so much that researchers take on this understanding in research, but that the majority of studies represented in the knowledge

production reflects this type of construction. As researchers we must acknowledge that we not only produce knowledge through our research, we also produce specific *images*. Because knowledge does not simply circulate within the field in which it is produced, but is used to inform child welfare workers, policy makers and bureaucrats, we should take seriously what images we promote through research. Moreover, because this understanding is based on a system conserving, preconstructed understanding, it limits the possibility of producing new knowledge. Or put differently – because the construction leads us to ask field specific questions it makes it difficult to ask “new” research questions outside the realm of CPS. Rather, we end up recording the logic of CPS at a particular point in history. It serves as a documentation of the influence of the evidence-based movement and the aim to reduce randomness in decisions and to raise the quality of the provided services.

On the basis of the limitations of approaching kinship care as a service within CPS, we show the importance of approaching kinship care as upbringing by relatives. We argue that this can give important knowledge that will enable us to better understand what kinship care entails for the persons we find within this category.

The meaning and making of childhoods in kinship care – young adults’ narratives

Paper II draws on qualitative interviews with 26 young adults who grew up in kinship care and explores their narratives about growing up in foster care with relatives. The point of departure is that the foster child status opens up a frame for interpretation of childhood, but can close off others. The questions asked are how childhood in kinship care can be portrayed and how the formal foster child status is made relevant in this narrative work. Based on how childhood experiences are (re)constructed and how the young adults position themselves and their foster parents in their narratives, we constructed four ways of portraying childhood in kinship care.

The normal childhood is a way of portraying childhood in opposition to contemporary understandings of growing up in foster care – one that was nothing out of the ordinary. Hence, in a setting where one is interviewed as a former foster child, there are “no stories to be told”, as they said. While a few of the interviewees portrayed childhood this way, most of the young adults had stories to tell. These stories often revolved around challenging and problematic

events and relationships from their childhoods, and were constructed in relation to the young adults' subjective opinion of their adult life situation.

The supported childhood was the story about how it went well *because* of ones upbringing. While challenging childhood experiences were central to the supported childhood, they were not presented as unique, but as family issues. Moreover, many of the young adults who portrayed childhood this way, related their childhood experiences to those of friends who grew up in “modern” family arrangements. So, instead of conveying a childhood that deviated from what childhoods should have been, they portrayed childhoods that were not much different from others.

The struggling childhood has similarities with the supported childhood because they are both stories about how it went well. However, the young adults who portray childhood as struggling do not see this as being a result of one's childhood, but how it went well despite of it. He or she positions his or her childhood-self as vulnerable, marginalised or at-risk. This way of portraying one's childhood-self is reminiscent of foster children often described in the foster care literature and close to contemporary understandings of foster children in general.

The neglected childhood is not about how it went well. Rather, it consists of stories of blame and of victimhood – about neglect resulting in inevitable negative outcomes in adult life. In the neglected childhood, the young adults evaluate childhood from a rights perspective. Through this foster child frame, childhood is constructed as a stage where childhood needs and juridical rights have not been fulfilled. From this perspective, the arrangement they grew up in is not so much displayed as family, but as a service – the wrong type of service. The young adults who portrayed childhood this way were the only ones who said it was wrong of CPS to place them in foster care with relatives.

The young adult who portrays the normal or supported childhood does not apply a foster child frame. Rather, he or she reduces the foster child status to a formality, a financial matter or an inconvenience. In the struggling and neglected childhood on the other hand, the foster child status is made relevant. On the basis of these four archetypical categories of how childhoods in kinship care can be portrayed we argue that “the sadder the tale, the more relevant the foster child becomes”.

Childrens relationships with birth parents deprived of parental responsibility

The topic for paper III is children's relationships with birth parents deprived of parental responsibility and how it is expressed over time. We draw on a qualitative longitudinal data set in which children who grew up in kinship care in Norway were interviewed over a 15-year period. Three cases were selected where we follow two girls and one boy through their three interviews as children (T1: 10-11 years old), emerging adults (T2: 19-20 years old) and young adults (T3: 28-29 years old). The aim was to gain knowledge about the *meaning* and *content* which the interviewees themselves ascribed to such relationships in the three interviews. The paper draws on theoretical perspectives from the sociology of family that captures the active aspect of family life and relationships. Co-authors for this paper is Renee Thørnblad and Amy Holtan. The paper is currently in review.

The interviewees' accounts reflect that there is a large gap between cultural notions of what a parent should be, and the reality of their birth parents' involvement in their lives. An important aspect of our analysis is that the interviewees displayed different types of agency in managing their birth parents deviant actions.

While different types of agency were reflected throughout the interviewees' accounts, taking control did not involve "ending" their relationships with their birth parents in any of the cases – despite having very good reasons for doing so. We argue that not only can difficult relationships be understood as meaningful and important in one's life, but one might simply not be able to escape them.

8. Concluding discussion

In past decades, “kinship foster care” has emerged as a category and service alongside other services within CPS, such as foster care and residential care. As such, upbringing by relatives has also become a relevant issue for social work researchers. The majority of research contributions produced since the 1990s, reflects that researchers have adopted the understanding proposed by CPS, exploring stability and breakdown, risk, effects and comparisons of kinship care with other services and so on. From being a phenomenon primarily explored by anthropologists to becoming a central issue also amongst social work researchers, I have argued that family has, to a large degree, fallen out of the equation.

The major aim of this doctoral dissertation has been to bring family back into the study of kinship care. For this purpose, I have presented “upbringing by relatives” as an alternative approach in kinship care research. I will now move on to discuss the research questions posed in the introduction of this dissertation:

What type of knowledge can we gain from approaching kinship care as upbringing by relatives?

In what ways does this knowledge contribute to the area of kinship care research and the sociology of family life?

Why is it important to incorporate this “new” understanding in kinship care research?

Bringing family back into the study of kinship care

When we approach kinship care as upbringing by relatives, we acknowledge that kinship care is not simply a service within CPS, but consists of a range of different family forms and relationships, practiced in different places at different times. We find a small handful of research contributions that explore kinship care as family. As I have shown, they have given knowledge about different family types (Holtan, 2008), the diverse and flexible nature of many of these families (Brown et al, 2002) and children’s family understanding (Thørnblad & Holtan, 2011b). From paper III we have gained insight into the ways in which family relationships can “ebb and flow as people grow and as circumstances and contexts change” (Smart, 2007). Moreover,

upbringing by relatives allows us to explore kinship foster care as a context in which family life is practiced. Hence, instead of asking what kinship foster care does to children, we can ask what the formal aspect of kinship care involves for children and their families in their everyday lives and for how childhood is understood (chapter five and paper II). Taken together, we can say that upbringing by relatives facilitates a locale- and experience-based type of knowledge. In other words, knowledge produced through qualitative methodologies. With that said, it has not been my intention to restrict “upbringing by relatives” to a specific method. Rather, the aim has been to open up for a frame to explore kinship care in where questions posed to all family forms become relevant – where we do not automatically take on perspectives, questions and language offered to us by CPS. As I have argued throughout this dissertation, this allows us to gain *new* knowledge about kinship care instead of reproducing already established understandings.

Contribution to kinship care research

Both empirical papers in this dissertation build on an underlying understanding of kinship care as upbringing by relatives. Paper III gives insight into the ways children negotiate, evaluate and make sense of their relations with their birth parents, from childhood to adulthood. While previous research has provided knowledge about children’s opinions of contact with birth parents (Kiraly & Humphreys, 2013; Messing, 2006), this study gave knowledge about the meaning and content ascribed to relationships with birth parents and how this changed over time. It exemplifies the active aspect of relating, and reminds us that children, in childhood and adulthood, engage in negotiations about what their birth parents mean to them. Moreover, paper III shows just how varied and complex kinship care can be. When we get up close and conduct in-depth analysis of three cases and explore them over time, it becomes difficult to ascribe specific aspects of their lives to kinship care as a service. Rather, we are given insight into the lives of children who grow up under different circumstances, in different families, and with different resources available.

Similar to paper III, paper II also illustrates variation and complexity of family forms and relationships. The most important contribution from paper II, I argue, is that it sheds light on some of the unintended consequences of the formal aspect of kinship care. Both the “struggling” and the “neglected” childhood are expressions of clientisation. An important issue for future research is to better understand what factors can prevent clientisation. Paper II provides some insight into this issue. The same young adults who portrayed childhood as normal and supported

displayed strong family relationships and a strong sense of belonging. Those who portrayed the neglected childhood displayed dysfunctional and/or broken families. The question then is whether a strong sense of family belonging is important for how childhood is portrayed or if one's childhood understanding leads to family being portrayed in a particular way? There is much to indicate that the process can work both ways.

The formal aspect of kinship care surely deserves more attention. A relevant question in relation to this issue is if the state, as today, should have the formal responsibility for all children who grow up with relatives. If we take seriously the findings from effect studies and combine them with the findings from this study, it is reasonable to question whether regulation is necessary in all cases. In a time when CPS is expanding, questions related to how future expansion can be avoided have been less visible. The category kinship care can be a good place to start for such a discussion.

Contribution to the leaving care literature

The study contributes to shed light on a wider aspect of young adult's lives than their transition to independence. Through young adults' accounts, we are given insight into their childhood narratives, constructed from the point of view of the present. As shown in chapter four, people in Western countries almost inevitably look to childhood as the grounds of adulthood, and, for this reason, childhood is ascribed a "special" status (Gullestad, 2004; Lawler, 2002). In child-centered societies, where children's rights, needs and voices are valued, children are given claim on the state to protect their interests and to provide them with what is considered a "good childhood" (chapter two). Hence, for many young adults who grew up in out-of-home care, it is scarcely possible to formulate a coherent life story without relating, in some ways, to whether the right choices were made and what impact this had in their lives. The four childhood types constructed in paper II allow us to explore this issue further.

As shown in chapter three, I did not adopt a resilience framework in my analysis. Many of the young adults in my study did not present themselves as marginalised or vulnerable. To them, their successes and challenges in adult life were related more or less to "normal" experiences of adulthood. A central question for future research in the area of "leaving care" should evolve around the fruitfulness of a resilience framework for future research, particularly in relation to the mainstream conceptions it reproduces. On the basis of this dissertation, I argue that the aim

should be to adopt a broader range of perspectives into the study of young adults who grew up in out-of-home care settings.

Contribution to the sociology of family life

As emphasised in chapter four, the link between the sociology of family life and kinship care is almost non-existing. Because kinship care consists of families who live side-by-side to other families in different societies, this should be viewed as nothing less than a paradox. Similar to other researchers, such as Wildeman & Waldfogel (2014) and Holland and Crowley (2013) (chapter four), I argue that sociologists can gain from including the families who live under the realms of CPS in their research. However, I do not agree with their reason for this being that these families necessarily represent marginalised groups. Rather, I would argue that in a time when the private/public dichotomy has become increasingly challenged and difficult to uphold, kinship care is a fruitful place to explore what state regulations can involve.

Upbringing by relatives: liberation and normalisation

The importance of approaching kinship care as upbringing by relatives has been emphasised throughout this doctoral dissertation. One of the most important reasons is that upbringing by relatives serves as a tool, a reminder of what the category consists of. Hence, we can say that “upbringing by relatives” can help to both liberate and normalise kinship foster care.

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PAPER I

PAPER II

PAPER III

VEDLEGG

Appendix I: Approval for research

Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS
NORWEGIAN SOCIAL SCIENCE DATA SERVICES



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Vår dato: 29.08.2014

Vår ref: 39246 / 3 / AMS

Deres dato:

Deres ref:

TILBAKEMELDING PÅ MELDING OM BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 04.07.2014. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

39246	<i>Fosterbarns sosiale integrasjon som ung voksen i lys av oppvekst i slektsfosterhjem</i>
<i>Behandlingsansvarlig</i>	<i>UiT Norges arktiske universitet, ved institusjonens overste leder</i>
<i>Daglig ansvarlig</i>	<i>Jeanette Skoglund</i>

Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet, og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger vil være regulert av § 7-27 i personopplysningsforskriften. Personvernombudet tilrår at prosjektet gjennomføres.

Personvernombudets tilråding forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet, korrespondanse med ombudet, ombudets kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven og helseregisterloven med forskrifter. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.

Det gjøres oppmerksom på at det skal gis ny melding dersom behandlingen endres i forhold til de opplysninger som ligger til grunn for personvernombudets vurdering. Endringsmeldinger gis via et eget skjema, <http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/meldeplikt/skjema.html>. Det skal også gis melding etter tre år dersom prosjektet fortsatt pågår. Meldinger skal skje skriftlig til ombudet.

Personvernombudet har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet i en offentlig database, <http://pvo.nsd.no/prosjekt>.

Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 02.03.2018, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Vennlig hilsen

Katrine Utaaker Segadal

Anne-Mette Somby

Kontaktperson: Anne-Mette Somby tlf: 55 58 24 10

Vedlegg: Prosjektvurdering

Dokumentet er elektronisk produsert og godkjent ved NSDs rutiner for elektronisk godkjenning.

Avdelingskontorer / District Offices:

OSLO: NSD, Universitetet i Oslo, Postboks 1055 Blindern, 0316 Oslo. Tel: +47-22 85 52 11. nsd@uio.no
TRONDHEIM: NSD, Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet, 7491 Trondheim. Tel: +47-73 59 19 07. kyre.svarva@svt.ntnu.no
TROMSØ: NSD, SVF, Universitetet i Tromsø, 9037 Tromsø. Tel: +47-77 64 43 36. nsdmaa@svt.uib.no



BAKGRUNN

Studien ser nærmere på overgangen til voksenlivet i lys av oppvekst i slektsfosterhjem – dvs. unge voksne i alderen 19-28 år som har vokst opp under offentlig omsorg i egen slekt. Studien vil kombinere kvantitative analyser av virkninger av samfunnets inngrep med kvalitative analyser av de unge voksnes egne erfaringer, opplevelse og forståelse av sin oppvekst og livssituasjon i dag. Den vil også se på utfall og opplevelse av oppvekst i fosterhjem over tid gjennom å benytte prosjektets datamateriale samlet inn i 1999/2000 (prosjektnr. 9523) og 2007/2008 (prosjektnr. 14939). Overordnet problemstilling: Hva er livssituasjonen til unge voksne i lys av oppvekst i slektsfosterhjem? .

Utvalget har samtykket til at data kan brukes i nye prosjekter og til å bli kontaktet på nytt for oppfølgende studier.

INFORMASJON OG SAMTYKKE

Utvalget informeres skriftlig og muntlig om prosjektet og samtykker til deltakelse. Informasjonsskrivet mottatt 22.8.2014 er godt utformet. Det er lagt opp til at deltakerne kan kontaktes på nytt ved eventuelle oppfølgende studier.

DATAMATERIALETS INNHOLD

Det innhentes opplysninger gjennom spørreskjema og intervjuer. I datamaterialet vil det inngå sensitive personopplysninger om helseforhold, jf. personopplysningsloven § 2 nr 8 c.

DATASIKKERHET

Personvernombudet legger til grunn at forsker etterfølger UiT Norges arktiske universitet sine interne rutiner for datasikkerhet.

PROSJEKTSLUTT

Forventet prosjektslutt er 02.03.2018. Ifølge prosjektmeldingen skal innsamlede opplysninger lagres aidentifisert for eventuelle nye studier dersom deltakeren har samtykket til dette. For de som ikke samtykker vil datamaterialet anonymiseres.

Personvernombudet tilrår videre lagring da samfunnsnyttien er stor. Personvernulempen er liten all den tid deltakerne samtykker til dette.

Appendix II: Approval from the Ministry of Children and Equality

RÅDET FOR TAUSHETSPLIKT OG FORSKNING

c/o Institutt for offentlig rett
Postboks 6706
0130 Oslo

BARNE- OG LIKESTILLINGSDEPARTEMENTET
410.8
16/11-07
200702215-005

Barne- og likestillingsdepartementet
Barne- og ungdomsavdelingen
Postboks 8036 Dep
0030

Oslo, 9. november 2007

Søknad om dispensasjon fra taushetsplikt – fosterhjemstiltak

Vi viser til brev 10. september 2007 (200702215), som gjelder en søknad fra Universitetet i Tromsø om samtykke til dispensasjon fra taushetsplikt i forbindelse med et forskningsprosjekt om fosterhjemstiltak.

Søkeren ber om å få innhente opplysninger fra fosterforeldre på to forskjellige måter. For det første ønsker søkeren å sende ut to forskjellige spørreskjemaer, ett egenutviklet og ett standardisert skjema for psykometriske data. For det annet ønsker søkeren å intervjuer fosterforeldrene om de samme forholdene som det egenutviklede spørreskjemaet, for å utfylle de opplysningene som vil fremgå av de skriftlige svarene. Det anslås at det vil være aktuelt å kontakte om lag 250 fosterfamilier. Utvelgelseskriteriene er beskrevet på s. 4-5 i søknaden. Formålet med forskningsprosjektet er bl.a. å frembringe forskningsbasert kunnskap som kan bidra til å forbedre fosterhjemstiltak og som kan gi teoretiske bidrag til barnevernsforskningen, jf. søknaden s. 2.

Det oppstår ikke spørsmål om dispensasjon fra taushetsplikt når det gjelder opplysninger om fosterforeldrene selv og deres personlige erfaringer, iallfall for så vidt de ikke røper taushetsbelagte opplysninger om andre personer som lar seg identifisere. En eventuell dispensasjon vil derfor bare gjelde taushetsbelagte opplysninger om fosterbarna.

Rådet har besluttet å samtykke til at det dispenseres fra taushetsplikten i samsvar med søknaden. Samtykket er betinget av at all innsamling, oppbevaring og bruk av taushetsbelagte opplysninger skjer på en faglig forsvarlig måte, og at alle personidentifiserende

Sak 16-2.doc

opplysninger anonymiseres ved eventuell publisering. På bakgrunn av søknaden legger vi til grunn at prosjektet ledes av en person med førstestillingskompetanse.

Til departementets orientering nevner vi for ordens skyld at det nå er forvaltningslovsforskriften kapittel 3 som regulerer virksomheten til Rådet for taushetsplikt og forskning.

M. Stub

Med vennlig hilsen



Eivind Smith
leder



Marius Stub
sekretær

Appendix III: Information sheet, foster parents



Tromsø, 5. februar 2015

Kjære

Du/dere som mottar dette brevet har i kortere eller lengre tid vært fosterforeldre til en _____ født i _____. Av den grunn har du/dere vært tilknyttet vårt forskningsprosjekt «Utfall og opplevelse av fosterhjemtiltak». Noen ble intervjuet av Amy Holtan i perioden 1998 – 2000, andre fylte ut spørreskjema. Flere deltok også i prosjektet i 2008, gjennomført av Renee Thørnblad.

Vi ønsker nå å gjøre en oppfølgende studie blant de samme barna i familiene. Alle er i dag over 18 år, men på grunn av personvern og taushetsbestemmelser har vi ikke deres navn eller adresser. Vi ber dere fosterforeldre om hjelp og vil derfor kontakte dere via telefon for å innhente disse opplysningene.

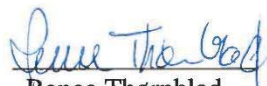
Barne- og likestillingsdepartementets råd for taushetsplikt og forskning har fritatt dere fosterforeldre fra taushetsplikten og dere kan fritt gi disse opplysningene uten at taushetsplikten brytes. Prosjektet er godkjent av Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste (NSD) - personvernombud for forskning, og finansieres av Regionalt kunnskapssenter for barn og unge (RKBU Nord), Universitetet i Tromsø. Studien vil bli gjennomført av Jeanette Skoglund og er en del av hennes doktorgradsavhandling.

På forhånd takk for hjelpen. Deres hjelp bidrar til forskningsbasert kunnskap som er viktig for barn og unge som er i fosterhjem i dag, unge voksne som har vokst opp i fosterhjem, fremtidige fosterforeldre og barneverntjenesten.

Dersom du har spørsmål knyttet til prosjektet kan du kontakte Jeanette Skoglund direkte på:
E-post: jeanette.skoglund@uit.no eller **tlf.:** 77 64 58 62 / **mob.:** 91 12 59 27

Vennlig hilsen


Jeanette Skoglund
Stipendiat


Renee Thørnblad
Førsteamanuensis


Amy Holtan
Prosjektleder og Professor

Appendix IV: Information sheet, young adults



Tromsø, 5. februar 2015

Forespørsel om deltakelse i forskningsprosjektet «Utfall og opplevelse av fosterhjemstiltak» - Ett prosjekt, tre tidspunkt

Du som mottar dette brevet har tidligere vært tilknyttet vårt forskningsprosjekt gjennom foreldre/slektninger og/eller egen deltakelse. Det har nå gått flere år og vi ønsker å følge opp med intervju og spørreskjema blant barna i de samme familiene, som i dag har blitt voksne.

Alle som mottar dette brevet har bodd kortere eller lengre tid av sin oppvekst under offentlig omsorg i egen slekt. I vårt forskningsprosjekt ønsker vi å lære av dine erfaringer. Dette forskningsprosjektet er det eneste i sitt slag i Norge og kunnskapen vi får frem er viktig for barn og unge i fosterhjem i dag, unge voksne med slik erfaring og fremtidige fosterforeldre. For å kunne gjennomføre studien er vi avhengige av tilstrekkelig informasjon. Vi håper derfor at du som har denne erfaringen igjen har mulighet til å delta gjennom intervju og/eller spørreskjema.

Hvis du ønsker å delta ber vi deg returnere utfylt samtykkeerklæring (neste side). Dette kan gjøres på to måter:

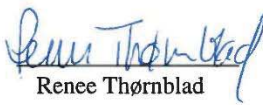
- Pr. post (ferdigfrankert konvolutt ligger vedlagt)
- Send bildemelding (MMS) av utfylt samtykkeerklæring til 911 25 927

Forskningsprosjektet er konfidensielt: forskerne i prosjektet har taushetsplikt, all informasjon blir oppbevart nedlåst og personopplysninger vil bli anonymisert ved publisering. Mer informasjon om prosjektet kan leses på neste side og i brosjyren vedlagt. **Samtlige som intervjues og/eller svarer på spørreskjema vil bli tilsendt et gavekort til en verdi av 200 kr.**

Dersom du har spørsmål knyttet til prosjektet kan du kontakte Jeanette Skoglund direkte på:
E-post: jeanette.skoglund@uit.no eller **tlf.:** 77 64 58 62 / **mob.:** 91 12 59 27

Vennlig hilsen


Jeanette Skoglund
Stipendiat


Renee Thørnblad
Førsteamanuensis


Amy Holtan
Prosjektleder og Professor



Om forskningsprosjektet

Bakgrunn

Amy Holtan gjennomførte i perioden 1998 – 2000 forskningsprosjektet «Barns levekår og hverdag i fosterhjem». Foreldre, fosterforeldre og barn i slektsfosterhjem og fosterhjem deltok gjennom intervju og/eller ved å besvare spørreskjema. Resultatet av denne forskningen ble presentert i doktorgradsavhandlingen «Barndom i fosterhjem i egen slekt» i 2002 og ga ny kunnskap særlig om slektsfosterhjem. I ettertid gjennomførte Renee Thørnblad en oppfølgingsstudie i de samme familiene. Resultatet av denne forskningen ble presentert i doktorgradsavhandlingen «Slektsfosterhjem – offentlige tiltak i private hjem» i 2012. Vi ønsker nå å gjennomføre en tredje datainnsamling med utgangspunkt i barna i de samme familiene som i dag har blitt voksne.

Hva innebærer det å delta?

For å gjennomføre prosjektet vil vi be deg om å besvare to spørreskjemaer pr. e-post eller brev. Det ene omhandler hovedsakelig dine erfaringer knyttet til å bo i fosterhjem og tiden etter eventuell utflytting. Det andre skjemaet som er et standardisert spørreskjema, omhandler din vurdering av egen psykososial fungering. Noen spørsmål vil passe, mens andre kanskje ikke vil passe. Eksempler på temaer det spørres om er hvordan du oppfatter deg selv, hva du synes du får til og hva du har problemer med. Det tar ca. 15 min å fylle ut hvert skjema.

Noen vil i tillegg bli bedt om intervju som tar opp til 1 ½ time. Temaene vil i begge tilfeller omhandle overgangen til voksenlivet: utflytting fra fosterhjemmet, tilknytning til arbeidsliv, opplevelse av egen livssituasjon og kontakt med foreldre og fosterforeldre. De som samtykker til intervju bestemmer selv tid og sted. Under intervjuet ønsker vi å benytte lydopptaker, men dette er opp til den enkelte å samtykke til.

Taushetsplikt og frivillighet

Vi som arbeider med prosjektet har taushetsplikt. Ingen andre enn prosjektledelsen vil ha tilgang til opplysninger av noen art som kan spores tilbake til de som har deltatt i studien. Hvert intervju og spørreskjema behandles strengt fortrolig. Når informasjonen er innhentet, vil den bli oppbevart nedlåst. Når vi skal skrive artikler eller formidle noe fra prosjektet vil vi gjøre det slik at ingen gjenkjenne enkeltpersoner eller enkeltsaker. Deltakelse er frivillig. Personer som har samtykket til å delta kan likevel uten begrunnelse, når som helst trekke seg fra undersøkelsen.

Hva skjer med informasjonen etter prosjektslutt?

Det er ikke planlagt en videre oppfølging. Likevel ønsker vi å holde denne muligheten åpen da prosjektet er unikt i sitt slag. De som ønsker å bli kontaktet igjen ved en senere forespørsel krysser av for dette i samtykkeskjemaet. Dette innebærer at vi beholder kontaktinformasjonen etter prosjektslutt (2018). Dersom du ikke krysser av i dette feltet vil alle identifiserbare opplysninger tilintetgjøres når prosjektet er avsluttet.

Gjennomføring

Prosjektet godkjent av Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste (NSD) - personvernombud for forskning, og finansieres av Regionalt kunnskapssenter for barn og unge (RKBU Nord),

Universitetet i Tromsø. Prosjektleder er Amy Holtan og hovedveileder er Renee Thørnblad, RKBU Nord. Prosjektet utføres av stipendiat, Jeanette Skoglund som er sosiolog.



SAMTYKKEERKLÆRING

Deltakelse i forskningsprosjektet innebærer at tidligere innsamlet materiale vil bli benyttet. Jeg har lest informasjonen om prosjektet «Utfall og opplevelse av fosterhjemstiltak».

Jeg samtykker med dette til: (Sett kryss. Du velger selv hvor mange steder du ønsker å krysse av).

Å BLI INTERVJUET

Å BESVARE SPØRRESKJEMA

Jeg foretrekker å besvare skjemaene på:

E-post (Elektronisk)

Papir (Sendt pr. post)

Å bli kontaktet på et senere tidspunkt med forespørsel om tilleggsundersøkelse

	ID-NUMMER:
DATO:	
MITT NAVN:	
ADRESSE:	
TELEFON:	MOBIL:
E-POST	
UNDERSKRIFT:	

Appendix V: Original interview guide

Tema	Kontrollspørsmål
Innledning Kan ikke du fortelle litt om deg selv?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Navn, • Alder • Bosted • Jobber du? • Studerer du? • Familie • Søsken?
Oppvekst Kan du fortelle meg om oppveksten din?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hvordan vokste du opp? • Hvor gammel var du da du kom til x? • Hva var årsaken til at du ikke kunne bo hos foreldrene dine? • Har du vært i flere fosterhjem? / Antall flyttinger • Hvilke slektsrelasjoner? • Hvem bor/bodde i familien? • Søsken? • Fosterhjemets varighet? • Hvis du ser tilbake på din barndom – hvordan vil du beskrive den? • Hva synes du om den vurderingen i dag?
Utflytting Kan du fortelle meg litt om perioden da du flyttet ut?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hvor bor du i dag? • Hvor gammel var du da du flyttet hjemmefra? (Hvis ikke flyttet: har du planer om eller tenkt noe over det?) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hvis du tenker tilbake – hva var grunnen til at du flyttet ut? Var det planlagt? • Hadde du snakket om dette med fosterforeldrene dine? • Hvordan opplevde de at du skulle flytte ut? • Var det noen som hjalp deg i denne prosessen – evt hvem? • Fikk du noen annet form for hjelp? Eks. penger, ting.. • Hvor flyttet du? – var dette et tema? • Hva syntes fosterforeldrene dine om at du flyttet? • Hvordan opplevde du denne prosessen?
Familien du vokste opp i	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Har du kontakt med familien du vokste opp i? • Hvordan vil du beskrive ditt forhold til dem i dag? • Er det kontakt mellom dere? Evt. hvem • Hva gjør dere sammen? (spontan/høytider) • JA: Hvordan? - hvem initierer til kontakt? • NEI: hvorfor ikke • Kan du fortelle om siste gang dere var sammen? • Var du redd for at kontakten kom til å opphøre når du ble 18 år?
Om de biologiske foreldrene Kan du fortelle meg litt om dine biologiske foreldre?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hadde du kontakt med foreldrene dine da du vokste opp? • Har du det i dag? Evt. Hvor ofte? • Hvis dere treffes – hva slags samvær er det snakk om? • Hvordan vil du beskrive forholdet med foreldrene dine i dag?
Etablering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Har du etablert deg på noe vis? – samboer, ektefelle, barn?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Har han/hun møtt foreldrene dine? • Har han/hun møtt fosterforeldrene dine?
<p>-----</p> <p>Hvis barn</p>	<p>-----</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hvis barn: hvem ser du på som besteforeldrene til barna? Hvem har fått tittelen bestemor/bestefar? Hvem passer barna hvis du skal ut? • Hvilke forhold har foreldrene dine til barnet? • Har barnevernet vært involvert i oppveksten til ditt barn? • Hva mener du er en god oppvekst? • Hvordan se du på deg selv som forelder? • Har du noen mål for barnet ditt?
Tegne familie/nettverkskart	
Livssituasjon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hva er voksenlivet for deg? • Har du blitt voksen? • Når du vokste opp – hadde du noen mål eller forestillinger om hva du ville gjøre eller hvordan voksenlivet skulle bli? • Hvordan er disse forestillingene i dag? • Hvordan vil du beskrive din egen livssituasjon i dag? • Hva er suksess for deg? • Har du noen mål/ønsker for fremtiden? • Variabler å komme inn på: arbeid, utdanning osv. • Hva mener du har bidratt til din livssituasjon i dag? • Er det noe du skulle ønske var annerledes?
Hjelpeapparat/barnevernet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hvordan har du opplevd hjelpen du har fått fra barnevernet? • Har du fått noe støtte etter du fylte 18 år? • Har du følt behov for noen annen form for hjelp? • Har du fortalt noen at du får ettervern? Venner/familie
Venner og fritid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hva liker du å gjøre på fritiden? • Har du venner fra ungdomstiden? • Hvilke betydning har vennene dine?
Møte med samfunnet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Er du åpen om din oppvekst? • Er du åpen om hvorfor du vokste opp slik? • Hvis noen spør – hva sier du da? Eventuelt til hvem? • Har du fått reaksjoner for oppveksten din noen gang? – evt. hva slags`?
Fremtiden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hva har du lyst til å gjøre i fremtiden? • Hvordan tror du din fremtid vil være? • Har du noen mål? • Hvordan tror du ditt forhold med familie og fosterfamilie vil være i fremtiden?
Avslutning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Er det noe du føler jeg ikke har spurt som du ønsker å si? • Hvordan opplevde du intervjuet?

Appendix VI: Questionnaire



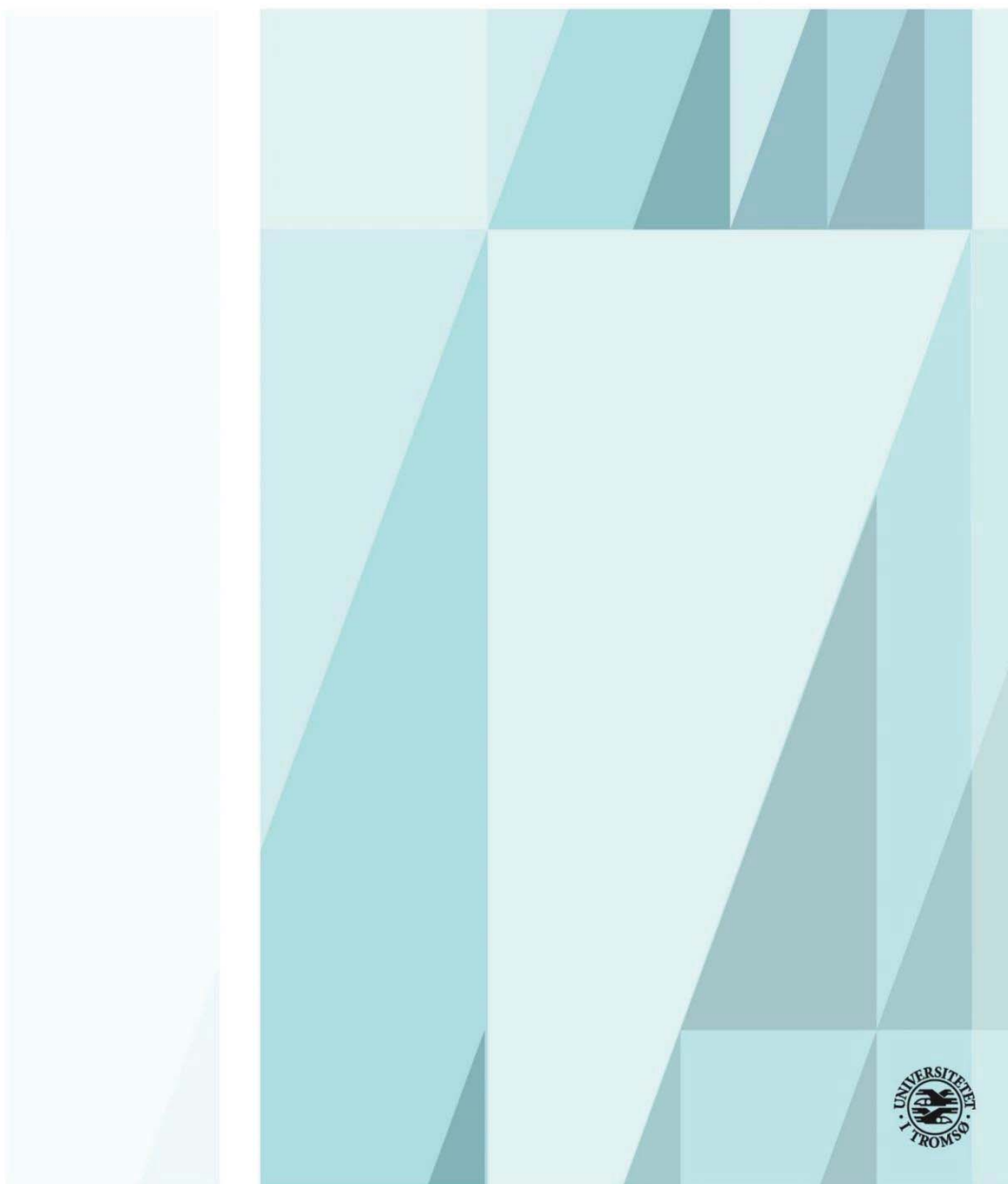
2015

Utfall og opplevelse av fosterhjemstiltak

Spørreskjema T3

RKBU Nord, Helsefak

ID:



BAKGRUNNSINFORMASJON

1 Fødselsdato

Dag: Måned: År:

2 Kjønn

Kvinne

Mann

3 Sivilstatus

Gift/samboende/registrert partner

Enslig

4 Antall innbyggere på stedet der du bor

under 2000 personer

mellom 2000 og 20 000 personer

mellom 20 000 og 100 000 personer

100 000 personer eller flere

5 Hvor gammel var du da du første gang flyttet i fosterhjem?

→ Jeg var _____ år.

6 Hvor mange fosterhjem har du bodd i?

→ Jeg har bodd i _____ fosterhjem.

7 Det siste fosterhjemmet du bodde/bor i, er dette det samme som du bodde i, i år 2000?

Ja

Nei

Dersom du har bodd i flere fosterfamilier, vil spørsmålene gjelde din siste fosterfamilie.

8 Hvis du tenker tilbake i tid – kjente du én eller begge fosterforeldrene før du flyttet til dem?

Nei

Ja, fostermor

Ja, fosterfar

Ja, begge

9 Er du i slekt med fosterforeldrene?

- Ja → Svar på neste spørsmål
 Nei → Gå til spørsmål 12

10 Hvis du er i slekt med fosterforeldrene, hvem bodde/bor du sammen med? (Flere svar er mulig)

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mormor | <input type="checkbox"/> Tante (morssiden) | <input type="checkbox"/> Søster |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Morfar | <input type="checkbox"/> Onkel (morssiden) | <input type="checkbox"/> Bror |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Farmor | <input type="checkbox"/> Tante (farssiden) | <input type="checkbox"/> Andre, vennligst spesifiser hvem: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Farfar | <input type="checkbox"/> Onkel (farssiden) | → _____ |

11 Dersom du har krysset av for tante og/eller onkel, hvem av fosterforeldrene er din slektning?

- Han
 Henne
 Begge

12 Er du adoptert av dine fosterforeldre?

- Ja
 Nei

13 Etter at du flyttet til dine fosterforeldre, har de skilt seg eller flyttet fra hverandre?

- Ja
 Nei
 Vet ikke

14 Dersom noen av dine foreldre eller fosterforeldre er døde, vennligst kryss av for hvem det gjelder:

- Mor
 Far
 Fostermor
 Fosterfar

FLYTTING OG BOSITUASJON

15 Hvor bor du i dag?

- | | | |
|---|--|-------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> For meg selv (Eier bolig) | | → Besvar neste spørsmål |
| <input type="checkbox"/> For meg selv (Leier bolig) | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hos far | | → Gå til spørsmål 19 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hos mor | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hos fostermor | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hos fosterfar | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Annet, vennligst spesifiser: _____ | | |

16 Hvor gammel var du da du flyttet for deg selv?

→ Jeg var _____ år.

17 Hva var den viktigste grunnen til at du flyttet da? Vennligst beskriv i feltet:

18 Hvor mye hjelp fikk du da du flyttet for deg selv? Med hjelp til å flytte menes planlegging, praktisk og/eller økonomisk hjelp. Vennligst sett ett kryss for hver av personene nedenfor.

	Mye hjelp	Litt hjelp	Ingen hjelp	Ikke aktuelt
Far.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Søsken.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Besteforeldre (morsside).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Besteforeldre (farsside).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tanter/onkler (morsside).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tanter/onkler (farsside).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fostermor.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fosterfar.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fostersøsken.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kjæreste/samboer.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Barnevernet.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Venner.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Andre, vennligst spesifiser hvem og hvor mye hjelp:.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

UTDANNING, ARBEID OG INNTEKT

19 Hva er din hovedbeskjeftigelse i dag?

- Skole/utdanning
- Arbeidssøkende
- Jobb, hvilket yrke: _____
- Annet, vennligst spesifiser: _____

20 Hvis du er under utdanning, hva slags type skole/utdanning?

- Kurs (Privat/via Nav etc.)
- Grunnskole
- Videregående skole
- Høgskole/universitet
- Annet, vennligst spesifiser _____

21 Hva er ditt høyeste utdanningsnivå nå?

- Grunnskole
- Videregående skole
- Bachelorgrad
- Mastergrad
- Doktorgrad

22 Hvilke planer har du for utdanning?

- Grunnskole
- Videregående skole
- Høgskole/universitet
- Vet ikke/har foreløpig ingen planer

23 Hva er din hovedinntektskilde?

- Arbeidsinntekt
- Studielån/stipend
- Blir forsørget av foreldre
- Blir forsørget av fosterforeldre
- Stønad/trygd
- Annet, vennligst spesifiser: _____

24 Hvis du mottar økonomisk stønad/trygd, hva slags stønad er det? (Flere kryss er mulig)

- Sykepenger
- Arbeidsavklaringspenger (AAP)
- Dagpenger
- Uføretrygd
- Økonomisk stønad (økonomisk sosialhjelp)
- Økonomisk støtte fra barnevernstjenesten
- Annet, vennligst spesifiser _____

25 Hvor mye jobber du? (Inntektsgivende arbeid)

- Heltid
- Deltid, ca. antall timer i uken: _____ t.
- Ikke yrkesaktiv

26 Hva er din samlede brutto årsinntekt, før skatt og fradrag?

→ NOK

27 Dersom du er gift/samboende: Hva er husstandens samlede brutto årsinntekt, før skatt og fradrag?

→ NOK

FAMILIEETABLERING

28 Har du egne barn? (Biologiske/adopterte)

- Ja, jeg har _____ barn (antall). → Svar på neste spørsmål
 Nei → Gå til spørsmål 34

29 Hvem har foreldreansvaret for dine barn/barnet? Sett ett kryss for hvert barn du har.

	Vi har felles foreldreansvar	Jeg har foreldreansvaret	Den andre forelder har foreldreansvaret	Andre/ingen av oss
Barn 1.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Barn 2.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Barn 3.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

30 Bor du sammen med barnets/barnas andre forelder?

	Ja	Nei
Barn 1.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Barn 2.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Barn 3.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

31 Dersom du ikke bor sammen med barnets andre forelder, hvordan er daglig omsorg fordelt?

Barnet/barna bor hos meg:	0%	20-30%	40-60%	70-90%	100%
Barn 1.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Barn 2.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Barn 3.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6

32 Hvor ofte har dine barn kontakt med dine foreldre, fosterforeldre og søsken?

Spørsmålet gjelder både fysisk kontakt og kontakt via telefon og/eller andre kommunikasjonsmidler

	Daglig	Hver uke	Hver måned	Noen ganger i året	Sjeldnere enn hvert år	Aldri/ ikke aktuelt
Mor.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Far.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Søsken.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fostermor.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fosterfar.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fostersøsken.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

33 Er det kontakt med barnevernet i forbindelse med dine/ditt barn?

- Ja
 Nei
 Vet ikke

KONTAKT MED FAMILIE OG VENNER (De siste 12 månedene)

Nå kommer noen spørsmål om din kontakt med familie og venner. Hvis du tenker på de siste 12 månedene:

KONTAKT MED FOSTERFAMILIEN**34** Omtrent hvor ofte har du kontakt med dine fosterforeldre og fostersøsken? Spørsmålet gjelder både fysisk kontakt og kontakt via telefon, mobil, internett og andre kommunikasjonsmidler. Vennligst sett ett kryss for hver person:

	Daglig	Hver uke	Hver måned	Noen ganger i året	Sjeldnere enn hvert år	Aldri/ ikke aktuelt
Fostermor.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fosterfar.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fostersøsken.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Hvis du har kontakt med andre medlemmer fra din fosterfamilie, vennligst spesifiser hvem og hvor ofte:

→ _____

KONTAKT MED FORELDRE OG SØSKEN

35 Da du bodde i fosterhjem, hadde du da kontakt med dine foreldre og eventuelle søsken?

Spørsmålet gjelder både fysisk kontakt og kontakt via telefon, mobil, internett og andre kommunikasjonsmidler.

	Ja	Nei	Ikke aktuelt
Mor.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Far.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Søsken	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

36 Hvordan vurderer du som voksen samvær/kontakt med din familie og dine slektninger mens du bodde i fosterhjem?

	Jeg skulle ønsket mindre kontakt	Jeg er fornøyd med omfanget av kontakten	Jeg skulle ønsket mer kontakt	Ikke aktuelt
Mor.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Far.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Søsken.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Andre slektninger.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

37 Omtrent hvor ofte har du kontakt med dine foreldre, søsken og eventuelle steforeldre i dag?

Spørsmålet gjelder både fysisk kontakt og kontakt via telefon, mobil, internett og andre kommunikasjonsmidler. Vennligst sett ett kryss for hver person:

	Daglig	Hver uke	Hver måned	Noen ganger i året	Sjeldnere enn hvert år	Aldri/ ikke aktuelt
Mor.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Far.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Søsken.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mors samboer/ektefelle.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fars samboer/ektefelle.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hvis du treffer andre medlemmer fra din opprinnelsesfamilie, vennligst spesifiser hvem og hvor ofte: → _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SOSIALT NETTVERK

38 Bortsett fra medlemmene av din familie, har du venner på stedet der du bor?

- Ja
 Nei

39 Har du venner andre steder?

- Ja
 Nei

40 Hvor ofte har du kontakt med vennene dine? Spørsmålet gjelder både fysisk kontakt og kontakt via telefon, mobil, internett og andre kommunikasjonsmidler.

- Omtrent daglig
 Omtrent hver uke
 Omtrent hver måned
 Sjeldnere enn hvert år

41 Har du noen som står deg nær, og som du kan snakke fortrolig med?

- Ja
 Nei

42 Hvor mange står deg så nær at du kan regne med dem hvis du får store (personlige) problemer? Regn også med din nærmeste familie/fosterfamilie. Sett ett kryss.

- Ingen
 1 eller 2 personer
 3 til 5 personer
 6 eller flere personer

43 Hvem foretrekker du å kontakte dersom du trenger hjelp og støtte? (Flere kryss er mulig)

- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ingen | <input type="checkbox"/> Fosteremor | <input type="checkbox"/> Farfar | <input type="checkbox"/> Kjæreste/samboer/ektefelle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mor | <input type="checkbox"/> Fostersøsken | <input type="checkbox"/> Tanter | <input type="checkbox"/> Offentlige instanser |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Far | <input type="checkbox"/> Mormor | <input type="checkbox"/> Onkler | <input type="checkbox"/> Andre, vennligst spesifiser: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Søsken | <input type="checkbox"/> Morfar | <input type="checkbox"/> Venner | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fosterfar | <input type="checkbox"/> Farmor | <input type="checkbox"/> Mine barn | _____ |

- 44** Dersom du satt flere enn ett kryss ovenfor: hvem av disse relasjonene ville du kontaktet først?
↓ Vennligst skriv i feltet nedenfor:

FRITID (Sist måned)

Nå kommer noen spørsmål om aktiviteter på fritiden sammen med andre. Spørsmålene gjelder i løpet av den siste månededen.

- 45** Hvis du tenker tilbake på den siste måneden, hvor ofte:

	Aldri	1-2 ganger	3-4 ganger	5 ganger eller oftere
Deltok du i noen form for sport/trening eller fysisk aktivitet sammen med andre?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Var du sammen med andre for å dyrke felles hobbyer eller interesser?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deltok du i kulturelle aktiviteter sammen med andre? (kino, opera, konsert eller kunstutstilling)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Var du på kafé, bar eller restaurant sammen med andre?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

HELSE OG LIVSSITUASJON

- 46** Hvordan vil du vurdere din egen helse sånn i alminnelighet?
Vil du si at den er...: Sett ett kryss

- Meget god
- God
- Verken god eller dårlig
- Dårlig
- Meget dårlig

47 Hvis du tar alt i betraktning, hvor tilfreds er du med livet ditt nå?

Sett kryss på en skala fra 1 til 10, der 1 er svært misfornøyd og 10 er svært fornøyd.

Svært misfornøyd											Svært fornøyd
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

48 Nedenfor er det satt opp fem utsagn om tilfredshet med livet. Hvor enig eller uenig er du når du tenker på deg selv nå for tiden?

Vennligst sett ett kryss for hvert spørsmål

	Svært uenig	Uenig	Litt uenig	Verken enig eller uenig	Litt enig	Enig	Svært enig
På de fleste måter er livet mitt nær idealet mitt.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Livsbetaingelsene mine er svært gode.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jeg er fornøyd med livet mitt.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Så langt har jeg oppnådd det som er viktig for meg i livet.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hadde jeg levd på nytt ville jeg nesten ikke forandret noe.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

49 Har du noen varig sykdom eller lidelse? Med varig sykdom menes fysisk og/eller psykisk sykdom/lidelse som har vart i minst 6 måneder eller nyere lidelse som du regner med blir varig.

- Nei
 Ja. Vennligst spesifiser hva slags sykdom: _____

RUSMIDDELBRUK OG LOVBRUDD (De siste 12 månedene)

Nå kommer to spørsmål om rusmiddelbruk og kriminell atferd. Husk at alle opplysninger som oppgis vil bli behandlet strengt konfidensielt.

50 Hvor mange ganger har du brukt følgende rusmidler de siste 12 månedene:

	Aldri	1 gang	2-5 ganger	6-10 ganger	11 ganger eller flere
Alkohol	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cannabis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Heroin	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Amfetamin	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kokain	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ecstasy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
LSD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Annet, vennligst spesifiser hva og kryss av for hvor ofte: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

51 Hvor mange ganger har du vært med på eller gjort noe av dette de siste 12 månedene?

	Aldri	1 gang	2-5 ganger	6-10 ganger	11 ganger eller flere
Brutt deg inn for å stjele noe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vært i slåsskamp	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Truet til deg penger eller ting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Solgt ulovlige rusmidler	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tatt med deg varer fra butikk uten å betale	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

52 Har du noen gang blitt dømt for lovbrudd du har begått?

- Ja
 Nei

OPPLEVD DISKRIMINERING

53 Har du i løpet av de siste 12 månedene opplevd å bli diskriminert, trakassert, krenket eller mobbet på grunn av noen av de følgende alternativene nedenfor? (Flere svar er mulig)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jeg har ikke blitt diskriminert | <input type="checkbox"/> Alder |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Oppvekst i fosterhjem | <input type="checkbox"/> Helseproblemer, sykdom, skade |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hudfarge | <input type="checkbox"/> Kjønn |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seksuell identitet | <input type="checkbox"/> Funksjonshemming |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/livssyn | <input type="checkbox"/> Annet, vennligst spesifiser:
→ _____ |

54 Hvis du tenker tilbake på din oppvekst, har du noen gang opplevd å bli diskriminert på grunn av din oppvekst i fosterhjem?

- Nei
 Ja. Vennligst spesifiser hva slags diskriminering i feltet nedenfor: (eks.: verbal mobbing)

HELSE- OG VELFERDSTJENESTER

55 I hvor stor grad opplevde du at barnevernet hjalp deg til å planlegge og forberede overgangen til en selvstendig tilværelse, før du fylte 18 år? (For eksempel ved at saksbehandler hjalp deg).

- I svært liten grad
 I liten grad
 I noen grad
 I stor grad
 I svært stor grad

56 Unge voksne som har vokst opp i fosterhjem har mulighet til å motta tiltak fra barnevernet etter fylte 18 år hvis han eller hun selv samtykker til dette (ettervern). Dette kan bla. innebære: økonomisk støtte, hjelp til bolig, utdanning og arbeid. **Mottar eller har du tidligere mottatt ettervern?**

- Ja. Vennligst spesifiser type ettervern: _____
 Nei
 Vet ikke

57 Skulle du ønske at du fikk mer hjelp eller støtte fra barnevernet i overgangen til en selvstendig tilværelse?

- Nei
 Ja. Hvis du ønsker å spesifisere hva slags hjelp/støtte du skulle ønsket, kan du benytte feltet nedenfor:

58 Har du kontakt med barnevernet i dag?

- Nei
 Ja. Vennligst spesifiser hva slags kontakt: _____

59 Har du kontakt med andre hjelpeinstanser enn barnevernstjenesten?

- Nei
 Ja. Vennligst beskriv hvilke: _____

VURDERING AV FOSTERHJEM

60 Hvordan vil du vurdere fosterhjemmet du har bodd i? (Det siste hvis du har bodd i flere)

- Svært bra
 Bra
 Verken bra eller dårlig
 Dårlig
 Svært dårlig

61 Hvis du ønsker å utdype din vurdering av det siste fosterhjemmet du bodde i, kan du gjøre det i dette feltet.

AVSLUTNING

Dersom du ønsker å komme med kommentarer til spørsmålene eller utdypninger kan du benytte feltet her:

Takk for at du tok deg tiden til å fylle ut spørreskjemaet!

Appendix VII: List of publications from the project

Skoglund, J., Holtan, A., & Thørnblad, R. (in review): Relationships with birth parents deprived of parental responsibility

Skoglund, J., Holtan, A., & Thørnblad, R. (2017). The meaning and making of childhoods in kinship care – young adults' narratives. *Nordic Social Work Research*. Advance online publication. doi:10.1080/2156857X.2017.1422139

Skoglund, J., & Thørnblad, R. (2017). Kinship care or upbringing by relatives? The need for 'new' understandings in research. *European Journal of Social Work*. Advance online publication. doi:10.1080/13691457.2017.1364702

Vis, S.-A., Lauritzen, C., Fossum, S., & Holtan, A. (2017). Parenting stress among Norwegian kinship and non-kinship foster parents. *Nordic Social Work Research*, 3, 249-259, doi:10.1080/2156857X.2017.1326977

Vis, S.-A., Handegård, B.H., Holtan, A., Fossum, S. & Thørnblad, R. (2016). Social functioning and mental health among children who have been living in kinship and non-kinship foster care: results from an 8-year follow-up with a Norwegian sample. *Child & Family Social Work*, 21, 557–567. doi:10.1111/cfs.12180

Holtan, A., Handegård, B. H., Thørnblad, R., & Vis S.A. (2013). Placement disruption in long long-lasting kinship and nonkinship foster care. *Children-and-Youth-Services-Review*, 35, 1087-1094. doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2013.04.022

Thørnblad, R. (2013). Fra oppvekst i slekt – til slektsfosterhjem [From growing up with relatives to kinship care]. In BUFetat (Ed.), *Fosterhjem i slekt og nettverk - artikkelsamling* (39-43). Oslo: Bufetat.

Holtan, A. (2013). Slektskapsposisjoner og relasjonens historie; to nyttige begreper i arbeid med slekts-plasseringer [Kinship positions and the history of relations; two useful terms in work with kinship care placements]. In BUFetat (Ed.), *Fosterhjem i slekt og nettverk - artikkelsamling* (34-38). Oslo: Bufetat.

Thørnblad, R. & Holtan, A. (2012). Fosterbarns aktørskap i møtet med barnevernet [Kinship Foster Children: Actors in encounter with the Child Protection System]. *Sosiologi i dag*, 42, 36-53.

Thørnblad, R. (2012). *Slektsfosterhjem - offentlig tiltak i private hjem* [Kinship care – public services in private homes]. Doctoral dissertation, Universitetet i Tromsø.

Thørnblad, R., & Holtan, A. (2011) Kinship Foster Children: Actors in encounter with the Child Protection System. *Qualitative Social Work*, 12, 307-322.

Thørnblad, R., & Holtan, A. (2011). Oppvekst i slektsfosterhjem: unge voksne fosterbarns familieforståelser [Growing up in kinship care: young adult foster childrens understanding of family]. *Tidsskrift for ungdomsforskning*, 11, 49-67.

Strandbu, A., & Thørnblad, R. (2010). "Sårbare" barn som deltakere i kvalitativ forskning. ["Vulnerable" Children Participating in Qualitative Research. Research Ethics and Ethical Research]. *Forskningsetikk og etisk forskning. Barn [Children]*, 27-41.

Holtan, A., & Thørnblad, R. (2009). Kinship foster parenting; gender, class and labour-force participation. *European Journal of Social Work European Journal of Social Work*, 12, 465-478. doi:10.1080/13691450902840655

Thørnblad, R. (2009). Slektsfosterhjem i offentlig barnevern. [Kinship care in public child protection]. *Norges Barnevern*, 86(4), 221 - 235.

Holtan, A. (2008). Family types and social integration in kinship foster care. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 30, 1022-1036. doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2008.01.002

Holtan, A. (2006). Barndom i fosterhjem i egen slekt [Childhood in kinship foster care]. <http://www.forebygging.no/en/Artikler/2004-2001/Barndom-i-fosterhjem-i-egen-slekt/>, *Forebygging.no – en kunnskapsbase for rusforebyggende og helsefremmende arbeid*.
Reference type: Online source.

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